CONTRIBUTIONS

TO

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

BY

FRANCIS JEFFREY.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1853.

London:
Spottiswoodes and Shaw,
New-street-Square.

TO

THE REVEREND SYDNEY SMITH,

THE ORIGINAL PROJECTOR OF THE EDINBURGH REVIEW,

LONG ITS BRIGHTEST ORNAMENT,

AND ALWAYS MY TRUE AND INDULGENT FRIEND,

I NOW DEDICATE THIS REPUBLICATION

FROM LOVE OF OLD RECOLLECTIONS,

AND IN TOKEN

OF UNCHANGED AFFECTION AND ESTEEM.

F. JEFFREY.



PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION, IN FOUR VOLUMES.

No reasonable man, I suppose, could contemplate without alarm, a project for reprinting, with his name, a long series of miscellaneous papers — written hastily, in the intervals of graver occupations, and published anonymously, during the long course of Forty preceding years! — especially if, before such a suggestion was made, he had come to be placed in a situation which made any recurrence to past indiscretions, or rash judgments, peculiarly unbecoming. I expect therefore to be very readily believed, when I say that the project of this publication did not originate, and never would have originated with me: and that I have been induced to consent to it, only after great hesitation; and not without misgivings — which have not yet been entirely got over. The true account of the matter is this.

The papers in question are the lawful property, and substantially at the disposal, of the publishers of the Edinburgh Review: and they, having conceived an opinion that such a publication would be for their advantage, expressed a strong desire that I should allow it to go out with the sanction of my name, and the benefit of such suggestions as I might be disposed to offer for its improvement: and having, in the end, most liberally agreed that I should have the sole power both of determining to what extent it should be carried, and also of selecting the materials of which it should be composed, I was at last persuaded to agree to the proposition: and this the more readily, in consequence of intimation having been received of a similar publication being in contemplation in the United States of America; — over which, of course, I could not, under any arrangements, expect to exercise the same efficient control.

With all this, however, I still feel that I am exposed to the imputation, not only of great presumption, in supposing that any of these old things could be worth reprinting, but of a more serious impropriety, in thus openly acknowledging, and giving a voluntary sanction to the republication (of some at least) of the following pieces: and I am far from being sure that there may not be just grounds for such an imputation. In palliation of the offence, however — if such offence shall be taken — I would beg leave humbly to state, First, that what I now venture to reprint, is but a small part — less I believe than a third, — of what I actually contributed to the Review; and, Secondly, that I have honestly endeavoured to select from that great mass — *not* those articles which I might think most likely still to attract notice, by boldness of view, severity of remark, or vivacity of expression — but those, much rather, which, by enforcing what appeared to me just principles and useful opinions, I really thought had a tendency to make men happier and better.

I am quite aware of the arrogance which may be ascribed to this statement — and even of the ridicule which may attach to it. Nevertheless, it is the only apology which I now wish to make — or could seriously think of making, for the present publication: and if it should be thought utterly to fail me, I shall certainly feel that I have been betrayed into an act, not of imprudence merely, but of great impropriety. I trust, however, that I shall

not be driven back on so painful a conviction.

The Edinburgh Review, it is well known, aimed high from the beginning: — and refusing to confine itself to the humble task* of pronouncing on the mere literary merits of the works that came before it, professed to go deeply into *the Principles* on which its judgments were to be rested; as well as to take large and original views of all the important questions to which those works might relate. And, on the whole, I think it is now pretty generally admitted that it attained the end it aimed at. Many errors there were, of course — and some considerable blunders: — abundance of indiscretions, especially in the earlier numbers; and far too many excesses, both of party zeal, overweening confidence, and intemperate blame. But with all these drawbacks, I think it must be allowed to have substantially succeeded — in familiarizing the public mind (that is, the minds of very many individuals) with higher speculations, and sounder and larger views of the great objects of human pursuit, than had ever before been brought as effectually home to their apprehensions; and also, in permanently raising the standard, and increasing the influence of all such Occasional writings; not only in this country, but over the greater part of Europe, and the free States of America: while it proportionally enlarged the capacity, and improved the relish of the growing multitudes to whom such writings were addressed, for "the stronger meats" which were then first provided for their digestion.

With these convictions and impressions, it will not I think be expected, or required of me, that I should look back—from *any* station — upon the part I took in originating and conducting such a work, without some mixture of agreeable feelings: and, while I seek not to decline my full share of the faults and follies to which I have alluded, I trust I may be allowed to take credit, at the same time, for some participation in the merits by which these were, to a certain extent at least, redeemed or atoned for.

If I might be permitted farther to state, in what particular department, and generally, on account of what, I should most wish to claim a share of those merits, I should certainly say, that it was by having constantly endeavoured to combine Ethical precepts with Literary Criticism, and earnestly sought to impress my readers with a sense, both of the close connection between sound Intellectual attainments and the higher elements of Duty and Enjoyment; and of the just and ultimate subordination of the former to the latter. The praise in short to which I aspire, and to merit which I am conscious that my efforts were most constantly directed, is, that I have, more uniformly and earnestly than any preceding critic, made the Moral tendencies of the works under consideration a leading subject of discussion; and neglected no opportunity, in reviews of Poems and Novels as well as of graver productions, of elucidating the true constituents of human happiness and virtue: and combating those besetting prejudices and errors of opinion which appear so often to withhold men from the path of their duty — or to array them in foolish and fatal hostility to each other. I cannot, of course, do more, in this place, than *intimate* this proud claim: but for the proof— or at least the explanation of it, — I think I may venture to refer to the greater part of the papers that follow.

I wrote the first article in the first Number of the Review, in October, 1802: — and sent my last contribution to it, in October, 1840! It is a long period, to have persevered in well — or in ill doing! But I was by no means equally alert in the service during all the intermediate time. I was sole Editor from 1803 till late in 1829; and during that period was no doubt a large and regular contributor. In that last year, however, I received the great honour of being elected, by my brethren of the Bar, to the office of Dean of the Faculty of Advocates:—when it immediately occurred to me that it was not quite fitting that the official head of a great Law Corporation should continue to be the conductor of what might be fairly enough represented as, in many respects, a Party Journal: and I consequently withdrew at once and altogether from the management*: — which has ever since been in such

* For my own sake in part, but principally for the honour of my Conservative Brethren who ultimately concurred in my appointment, I think it right to

hands, as can have left those who take an interest in its success, no cause to regret my retirement. But I should not have acted up to the spirit of this resignation, nor felt that I had redeemed the pledge of neutrality I meant to give by it, if I had not at the same time substantially ceased to contribute to, or to concern myself, in any way, with the conduct or future fortunes of the Review. I wrote nothing for it, accordingly, for a considerable time subsequent to 1829: and during the whole fourteen years that have since elapsed, have sent in all but Four papers to that work — none of them on political subjects. I ceased, in reality, to be a contributor, in 1829.

In a professed Reprint of former publications I did not of course think myself entitled to make (and accordingly I have not made) any change in the substance of what was originally published — nor even in the expression, except where a slight verbal correction seemed necessary, to clear the meaning, or to remedy some mere slip of the pen. I have not however held myself equally precluded from making occasional *retrenchments* from the papers as they first appeared; though these are mostly confined to *the citations* that had been given from the books reviewed — at least in the first two of these volumes: but notice, I believe, is given of all the considerable omissions — (with some intimation of the reasons) — in the places where they occur.

It will be observed that, in the Arrangement of the pieces composing this collection, I have not followed, in any degree, the Chronological order of the original publications: though the actual date of its first appearance is prefixed to each paper. The great extent and very miscellaneous nature of the subjects discussed, seemed to make such a course ineligible; and rather to suggest the propriety of a distribution with reference to these subjects. I have now attempted therefore to class them under a few general Heads or titles, with a view to such a connection: and, though not very artificially digested, or strictly adhered to, I think the convenience of most readers will be found to have been consulted by this arrangement. The particular papers in each group or division, have also been placed in the order, rather of their natural dependence, or analogy to each other, than of the times when they were respectively written. I am now sensible that, by adopting this plan, I have brought more strikingly into view, the repetitions, as well as the discrepancies and small inconsistencies, which I take to be incident to this kind of writing. But this is a reproach, or disadvantage, to which I must be content to submit: and from which I do not apprehend that I shall have much to suffer, in the judgment of good-natured readers. There are many more important matters as to which I am conscious that I shall need all their indulgence: but to which I do not think it necessary, as I am sure it would not be *prudent* now to direct their attention.

Before closing this notice, there is a little matter as to which several of my friends have suggested that I ought to take this opportunity of giving an explanation. My own first impression was, that this was unnecessary; and but for the illustrious name which is connected with the subject, I should still be of that opinion. As it is, I cannot now refuse to say a few words on it.

In the second volume of Mr. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott, there are (at page 219.) several extracts from letters of Sir Walter to Mr. George Ellis, dated in December, 1808, and referring among other things to the projected establishment of the Quarterly Review: in connection with which topic, the following passage occurs; — "Jeffrey has offered terms "of pacification — *engaging that no party po-"litics should again appear in his Review.* I "told him I thought it was now too late; and "reminded him that I had often pointed out "to him the consequences of letting his work "become a party tool. He said, he did not "care for the consequences: there were but

state, that this resignation was in no degree a matter of compromise or arrangement with a view to that appointment: — the fact being, on the contrary, that I gave no hint of my purpose, in any quarter, till after the election was over — or at all events till after the withdrawal of the learned and distinguished person who had been put in nomination against me, had made it certain that my return would be unanimous. His perseverance, I doubt not, might have endangered that result: for, though considerably my junior, his eminence in the profession was, even then I believe, quite equal to mine. But he generously deferred to my seniority.

"four men he feared as opponents, &c. All "this was in great good humour. He has no "suspicion of our Review whatever."

Now though I have no particular recollection of the conversation here alluded to, and should never dream, at any rate, of setting up any recollection of so distant an occurrence in opposition to a contemporary record of it by such a man as Sir Walter Scott — I feel myself fully warranted in saying that the words I have put in Italics are calculated to convey an inaccurate impression of any thing I could possibly have said on that occasion; — and that I am morally certain that I never offered to come under any such engagement as these words, in their broad and unqualified sense, would seem to imply. Of course, I impute no intentional misrepresentation to Sir Walter Scott. Of that he was as incapable, as I trust I am of the baseness of making the imputation. Neither can I think it possible that he should have misunderstood me at the time. But in hastily writing a familiar letter I am satisfied that he has expressed himself inaccurately — or at least imperfectly — and used words which convey a far larger and more peremptory meaning than truly belonged to any thing I could have uttered. My reasons for this conviction I think may be stated, to the satisfaction even of those to whom the circumstances of the parties may yet be unknown.

My first reason is, that I most certainly *had no power* to come under any such engagement, without the consent of the original and leading Contributors — from whom no such consent could then have been expected. I was not the Proprietor of the work — nor the representative, in any sense, of the proprietors — but merely the chosen (and removable) manager for the leading contributors; the greater part of whom certainly then looked upon the *Political* influence of the Review, as that which gave it its chief value and importance. This condition of things was matter of notoriety in Edinburgh at the time. But, at all events, nobody was more thoroughly aware of it than Sir Walter Scott. He has himself mentioned, in the passage already quoted, that he had frequently before remonstrated with me on what he thought the intemperate tone of some of our political articles: and though I generally made the best defence I could for them, I distinctly remember more than one occasion on which, after admitting that the youthful ardour of some of our associates had carried them farther than I could approve of, I begged him to consider that it was quite impossible for me always to repress this — and to remember that I was but a *Feudal* monarch, who had but a slender control over his greater Barons — and really could not prevent them from occasionally waging a little private war, upon griefs or resentments of their own. I am as certain of having repeatedly expressed this sentiment, and used this illustration to Sir Walter Scott, as I am of my own existence.

But in the next place it requires no precise recollection of words or occasions, to enable me now to say, that, neither in 1808, nor for long periods before and after, did my party principles (or prejudices or predilections) sit so loosely upon me, as that I should ever have agreed to lay them aside, or to desist from their assertion, merely to secure the assistance of a contributor (however distinguished), to what would then have been a mere literary undertaking. For the value I then set on those principles I may still venture to refer to twenty-five years spent as their uncompromising advocate — at the hazard at least, if not to the injury, of my personal and professional interests. I have no wish at this moment to recall the particulars of that advocacy: but I think I may safely say that if, in December, 1808, I could have bargained to desist from it, *and to silence the Edinburgh Review as an organ of party*, I might have stipulated for somewhat higher advantages than the occasional cooperation of Sir Walter Scott (for he never was a *regular* contributor even to the Quarterly) in a work in which I had little interest beyond that of commanding a ready vehicle for the dissemination of my own favoured opinions.

All this rests, it will be observed, not upon the terms of any particular conversation, which might of course be imperfectly remembered — but upon my own certain knowledge of the principles by which I was actuated for a long course of years; and which I cannot but think were then indicated by a sufficient number of overt acts, to make it easy to establish the mastery they exercised over me, by extrinsic evidence, if necessary. If the prevalence of these principles, however, is plainly

inconsistent with the literal accuracy of the passage in question, or the fact of my having actually made such an offer as is there mentioned, I think myself entitled to conclude that the statement in that passage *is* inaccurate; and that a careless expression has led to an incorrect representation of the fact.

And here also I hope I may be permitted to refer to a very distinct recollection of the tenor, not of one but of many conversations with Sir Walter, in which he was directly apprised of the impossibility (even if I could have desired it) of excluding politics (which of course could mean nothing but party politics) from the Review. The undue preponderance of such articles in that journal was a frequent subject of remonstrance with him: and I perfectly remember that, when urging upon me the expediency of making Literature our great staple, and only indulging occasionally in those more exciting discussions, I have repeatedly told him that, with the political influence we had already acquired, this was not to be expected—and that by such a course the popularity and authority of the Review would be fatally impaired, even for its literary judgments:—and upon one of these occasions, I am quite certain that I made use of this expression to him,—"The Review, in short, has but two legs to stand on. Literature no doubt is one of them: but its *Right leg* is Politics." Of this I have the clearest recollection.

I have dwelt too long, I fear, on this slight but somewhat painful incident of my early days. But I cannot finally take leave of it without stating my own strong conviction of what must have actually passed on the occasion so often referred to; and of the way in which I conceive my illustrious friend to have been led to the inaccuracy I have already noticed, in his report of it. I have already said, that I do not pretend to have any recollection of this particular conversation: but combining the details which are given in Sir Walter's letter, with my certain knowledge of the tenor of many previous conversations on the same subject, I have now little doubt that, after deprecating his threatened secession from our ranks, I acknowledged my regret at the needless asperity of some of our recent *diatribes* on politics—expressed my own disapprobation of violence and personality in such discussions—and engaged to do what I could to repress or avoid such excesses for the future. It is easy, I think, to see how *this* engagement—to discourage, so far as my influence went, *all violent and unfair party politics*,—might be represented, in Sir Walter's brief and summary report, as an engagement to avoid party politics altogether:—the inaccuracy amounting only to the omission of a qualification,—to which he probably ascribed less importance than truly belonged to it.

Other imputations, I am aware, have been publicly made against me, far heavier than this which has tempted me into so long an explanation. But with these I do not now concern myself: and, as they never gave me a moment's anxiety at the time, so I am now contented to refer, for their refutation, to the tenor of all I have ever written, and the testimony of all to whom I have been personally known. With any thing bearing the name of Sir Walter Scott, however, the case is different: and when, from any statement of his, I feel that I may be accused, even of the venial offences of assuming a power which did not truly belong to me—or of being too ready to compromise my political opinions, from general love to literature or deference to individual genius, I think myself called upon to offer all the explanations in my power:—while I do not stoop to meet, even with a formal denial, the absurd and degrading charges with which I have been occasionally assailed, by persons of a different description.

F. JEFFREY.

Craigcrook,
10th November, 1848.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO

THE SECOND EDITION, IN THREE VOLUMES.

I AM very proud to learn that a new Edition of this collection is required: and, as books in three volumes are understood to sell better than books in four, I am also well pleased that it is to appear in this form.

The first suggestion was, that the retrenchment would be best made by leaving out the dullest fourth of the original publication,— without any change in the size of the volumes: and the proposal appeared to me so reasonable, that I readily undertook to point out the necessary omissions. But I soon found that I had not sufficiently calculated on the natural weaknesses of an author. For I had scarcely taken up the expurgatory pencil, till — *patriæ cecidere manus!* and I was forced to acknowledge that I had not Roman virtue enough, so to decimate the hapless issue of my brain. I was obliged therefore to throw myself upon the generosity of the Proprietors; who, with their wonted courtesy, at once consented to spare me this sacrifice; and to accomplish the requisite reduction, by such a multiplication of the pages in each volume, as has now enabled them to compress the whole contents of the former four into the present three.

Some *old* readers of the Review have assured me, that the selection (which is now again submitted to the public) had been very injudiciously made; and several have even favoured me with hints for amending it, — in the event of such an opportunity arising as has now fortunately occurred. But I have not courage enough to avail myself of these suggestions: and feel that my most becoming as well as most prudent course is, to abide by the one appeal I have so recently made to the public — and to await the sequel of that judgment which admits of no ultimate question, and has hitherto been so much more favourable to me than I had any reason to expect.

Craigcrook, Sept. 1846.

CONTENTS.

GENERAL LITERATURE AND LITERARY BIOGRAPHY.

HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MEMOIRS.

POETRY.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MIND, METAPHYSICS, AND JURISPRUDENCE.

NOVELS, TALES, AND PROSE WORKS OF FICTION.

GENERAL POLITICS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

CONTENTS.



CONTRIBUTIONS

TO

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

GENERAL LITERATURE AND LITERARY BIOGRAPHY.

(MAY, 1811.)

Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste. — By ARCHIBALD ALISON, LL.B., F.R.S., Prebendary of Sarum*, &c. 2 vols 8vo.

THERE are few parts of our nature which have given more trouble to philosophers, or appeared more simple to the unreflecting, than the perceptions we have of Beauty, and the circumstances under which these are presented to us. If we ask one of the latter (and larger) class, what beauty is? we shall most probably be answered, that it is what makes things pleasant to look at; and if we remind him that many other things are called and perceived to be beautiful, besides objects of sight, and ask how, or by what faculty he supposes that we distinguish such objects, we must generally be satisfied with hearing that it has pleased God to make us capable of such a perception. The science of mind may not appear to be much advanced by these responses; and yet, if it could be made out, as some have alleged, that our perception of beauty was a simple sensation, like our perception of colour, and that the faculty of taste was an original and distinct sense, like that of seeing or hearing; this would be truly the only account that could be given, either of the sense or of its object;—and all that we could do, in investigating the nature of the latter, would be to ascertain and enumerate the circumstances under which it was found to indicate itself to its appropriate organ. All that we can say of colour, if we consider it very strictly, is, that it is that property in objects by which they make themselves known to the faculty of sight; and the faculty of sight can scarcely be defined in any other way than as that by which we are enabled to discover the existence of colour. When we attempt to proceed farther, and, on being asked to define what green or red is, say that green is the colour of grass, and red of roses or of blood, it is plain that we do not in any respect explain the nature of those colours, but only *give instances* of their occurrence; and that one who had never seen the objects referred to, could learn nothing whatever from these pretended definitions. Complex ideas, on the other hand, and compound emotions, may always be defined, and explained to a certain extent, by enumerating the parts of which they are made up, or resolving them into the elements of which they are composed: and we may thus acquire, not only a substantial, though limited, knowledge of their nature, but a practical power in their regulation or production.

It becomes of importance, therefore, in the very outset of this inquiry, to consider whether

* The greater part of this paper was first printed in the Edinburgh Review for May, 1811; but was afterwards considerably enlarged, and inserted as a separate article (under the word BEAUTY) in the supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, published in 1824, and subsequently incorporated into the new edition of that great work in 1841, from which it is now reprinted in its complete form, by the liberal allowance of the proprietors.

our sense of beauty be really a simple sensation, like some of those we have enumerated, or a compound or derivative feeling, the sources or elements of which may be investigated and ascertained. If it be the former, we have then only to refer it to the peculiar sense or faculty of which it is the object; and to determine, by repeated observation, under what circumstances that sense is called into action: but if it be the latter, we shall have to proceed, by a joint process of observation and reflection, to ascertain what are the primary feelings to which it may be referred; and by what peculiar modification of them it is produced and distinguished. We are not quite prepared, as yet, to exhaust the whole of this important discussion, to which we shall be obliged to return in the sequel of our inquiry; but it is necessary, in order to explain and to set forth, in their natural order, the difficulties with which the subject is surrounded, to state here, in a very few words, one or two of the most obvious, and, as we think, decisive objections against the notion of beauty being a simple sensation, or the object of a separate and peculiar faculty.

The first, and perhaps the most considerable, is the want of agreement as to the presence and existence of beauty in particular objects, among men whose organisation is perfect, and who are plainly possessed of the faculty, whatever it may be, by which beauty is discerned. Now, no such thing happens, we imagine, or can be conceived to happen, in the case of any other simple sensation, or the exercise of any other distinct faculty. Where one man sees light, all men who have eyes see light also. All men allow grass to be green, and sugar to be sweet, and ice to be cold; and the unavoidable inference from any apparent disagreement in such matters necessarily is, that the party is insane, or entirely destitute of the sense or organ concerned in the perception. With regard to beauty, however, it is obvious, at first sight, that the case is entirely different. One man sees it perpetually, where to another it is quite invisible, or even where its reverse seems to be conspicuous. Nor is this owing to the insensibility of either of the parties; for the same contrariety exists where both are keenly alive to the influences of the beauty they respectively discern. A Chinese or African lover would probably see nothing at all attractive in a belle of London or Paris; and, undoubtedly, an *elegans formarum spectator* from either of those cities would discover nothing but deformity in the Venus of the Hottentots. A little distance in time often produces the same effects as distance in place; — the gardens, the furniture, the dress, which appeared beautiful in the eyes of our grandfathers, are odious and ridiculous in ours. Nay, the difference of rank, education, or employments, gives rise to the same diversity of sensation. The little shopkeeper sees a beauty in his roadside box, and in the staring tile roof, wooden lions, and clipped boxwood, which strike horror into the soul of the student of the picturesque; while *he* is transported in surveying the fragments of ancient sculpture, which are nothing but ugly masses of mouldering stone, in the judgment of the admirer of neatness. It is needless, however, to multiply instances, since the fact admits of no contradiction. But how can we believe that beauty is the object of a peculiar sense or faculty, when persons undoubtedly possessed of the faculty, and even in an eminent degree, can discover nothing of it in objects where it is distinctly felt and perceived by others with the same use of the faculty?

This one consideration, we confess, appears to us conclusive against the supposition of beauty being a real property of objects, addressing itself to the power of taste as a separate sense or faculty; and it seems to point irresistibly to the conclusion, that our sense of it is the result of other more elementary feelings, into which it may be analysed or resolved. A second objection, however, if possible of still greater force, is suggested, by considering the prodigious and almost infinite variety of things to which this property of beauty is ascribed; and the impossibility of imagining any one inherent quality which can belong to them all, and yet at the same time possess so much unity as to pass universally by the same name, and be recognised as the peculiar object of a separate sense or faculty. All simple qualities that are perceived in any one object, are immediately recognised to be *the same*, when they are again perceived in another; and the objects in which they are thus perceived are at once felt so far to resemble each other, and to partake of the same nature. Thus snow is seen to be white, and chalk is seen to be white; but

this is no sooner seen, than the two substances, however unlike in other respects, are felt at once to have *this* quality in common, and to resemble each other completely in all that relates to the quality of colour, and the sense of seeing. But is this felt, or could it even be intelligibly asserted, with regard to the quality of beauty? Take even a limited and specific sort of beauty, —for instance, the beauty of form. The form of a fine tree is beautiful, and the form of a fine woman, and the form of a column, and a vase, and a chandelier. Yet how can it be said that the form of a woman has any thing in common with that of a tree or a temple? or to which of the senses by which forms are distinguished can it be supposed to appear that they have any resemblance or affinity?

The matter, however, becomes still more inextricable when we recollect that beauty does not belong merely to forms or colours, but to sounds, and perhaps to the objects of other senses; nay, that in all languages and in all nations, it is not supposed to reside exclusively in material objects, but to belong also to sentiments and ideas, and intellectual and moral existences. Not only is a tree beautiful, as well as a palace or a waterfall; but a poem is beautiful, and a theorem in mathematics, and a contrivance in mechanics. But if things intellectual and totally segregated from matter may thus possess beauty, how can it possibly be a quality of material objects? or what sense or faculty can that be, whose proper office it is to intimate to us the existence of some property which is common to a flower and a demonstration, a valley and an eloquent discourse?

The only answer which occurs to this is plainly enough a bad one; but the statement of it, and of its insufficiency, will serve better, perhaps, than any thing else, to develope the actual difficulties of the subject, and the true state of the question with regard to them. It may be said, then, in answer to the questions we have suggested above, that all these objects, however various and dissimilar, agree at least in being agreeable, and that this *agreeableness*, which is the only quality they possess in common, may probably be the beauty which is ascribed to them all. Now, to those who are accustomed to such discussions, it would be quite enough to reply, that though the agreeableness of such objects depend plainly enough upon their beauty, it by no means follows, but quite the contrary, that their beauty depends upon their agreeableness; the latter being the more comprehensive or generic term, under which beauty must rank as one of the species. Its nature, therefore, is no more explained, nor is less absurdity substantially committed, by saying that things are beautiful because they are agreeable, than if we were to give the same explanation of the sweetness of sugar; for no one, we suppose, will dispute, that though it be very true that sugar is agreeable because it is sweet, it would be manifestly preposterous to say that it was sweet because it was agreeable. For the benefit, however, of those who wish or require to be more regularly initiated in these mysteries, we beg leave to add a few observations.

In the first place, then, it seems evident, that agreeableness, in general, cannot be the same with beauty, because there are very many things in the highest degree agreeable, that can in no sense be called beautiful. Moderate heat, and savoury food, and rest, and exercise, are agreeable to the body; but none of these can be called beautiful; and among objects of a higher class, the love and esteem of others, and fame, and a good conscience, and health, and riches, and wisdom, are all eminently agreeable; but not at all beautiful, according to any intelligible use of the word. It is plainly quite absurd, therefore, to say that beauty consists in agreeableness, without specifying in consequence of what it is agreeable,—or to hold that any thing whatever is taught as to its nature, by merely classing it among our pleasurable emotions.

In the second place, however, we may remark, that among all the objects that are agreeable, whether they are also beautiful or not, scarcely any two are agreeable on account of the same qualities, or even suggest their agreeableness to the same faculty or organ. Most certainly there is no resemblance or affinity whatever between the qualities which make a peach agreeable to the palate, and a beautiful statue to the eye; which soothe us in an easy chair by the fire, or delight us in a philosophical discovery. The truth is, that agreeableness is not properly a quality of any object whatsoever, but the effect or result of certain qualities, the nature of which, in every particular instance, we can generally define

pretty exactly, or of which we know at least with certainty that they manifest themselves respectively to some one particular sense or faculty, and to no other; and consequently it would be just as obviously ridiculous to suppose a faculty or organ, whose office it was to perceive agreeableness in general, as to suppose that agreeableness was a distinct quality that could thus be perceived.

The class of agreeable objects, thanks to the bounty of Providence, is exceedingly large. Certain things are agreeable to the palate, and others to the smell and to the touch. Some again are agreeable to our faculty of imagination, or to our understanding, or to our moral feelings; and none of all these we call beautiful. But there are others which we do call beautiful; and those we say are agreeable to our faculty of taste; — but when we come to ask what is the faculty of taste, and what are the qualities which recommend the subjects to that faculty? — we have no such answer to give; and find ourselves just where we were at the beginning of the discussion, and embarrassed with all the difficulties arising from the prodigious diversity of objects which seem to possess these qualities.

We know pretty well what is the faculty of seeing or hearing; or, at least, we know that what is agreeable to one of those faculties, has no effect whatever on the other. We know that bright colours afford no delight to the ear, nor sweet tones to the eye; and are therefore perfectly assured that the qualities which make the visible objects agreeable, cannot be the same with those which give pleasure to the ear. But it is by the eye and by the ear that all material beauty is perceived: and yet the beauty which discloses itself to these two separate senses, and consequently *must* depend upon qualities which have no sort of affinity, is supposed to be one distinct quality, and to be perceived by a peculiar sense or faculty! The perplexity becomes still greater when we think of the beauty of poems or theorems, and endeavour to imagine what qualities they can possess in common with the agreeable modifications of light or of sound.

It is in these considerations undoubtedly that the difficulty of the subject consists. The faculty of taste, plainly, is not a faculty like any of the external senses, the range of whose objects is limited and precise, as well as the qualities by which they are gratified or offended; and beauty, accordingly, is discovered in an infinite variety of objects, among which it seems, at first sight, impossible to discover any other bond of connection. Yet boundless as their diversity may appear, it is plain that they *must* resemble each other in *something*, and in something more definite and definable than merely in being agreeable; since they are all classed together, in every tongue and nation, under the common appellation of beautiful, and are felt indeed to produce emotions in the mind that have some sort of kindred or affinity. The words beauty and beautiful, in short, do and must mean something; and are universally felt to mean something much more definite than agreeableness or gratification in general; and while it is confessedly by no means easy to describe or define what that something is, the force and clearness of our perception of it is demonstrated by the readiness with which we determine, in any particular instance, whether the object of a given pleasurable emotion is or is not properly described as beauty.

What we have already said, we confess, appears to us conclusive against the idea of this beauty being any fixed or inherent property of the objects to which it is ascribed, or itself the object of any separate and independent faculty; and we will no longer conceal from the reader what we take to be the true solution of the difficulty. In our opinion, then, our sense of beauty depends entirely on our previous experience of simpler pleasures or emotions, and consists in the *suggestion* of agreeable or interesting sensations with which we had formerly been made familiar by the direct and intelligible agency of our common sensibilities; and that vast variety of objects, to which we give the common name of beautiful, become entitled to that appellation, merely because they all possess the power of recalling or reflecting those sensations of which they have been the accompaniments, or with which they have been associated in our imagination by any other more casual bond of connection. According to this view of the matter, therefore, beauty is not an inherent property or quality of objects at all, but the result of the accidental relations in which they may stand to our experience of pleasures or emotions; and does not depend

upon any particular configuration of parts, proportions, or colours, in external things, nor upon the unity, coherence, or simplicity of intellectual creations, — but merely upon the associations which, in the case of every individual, may enable these inherent, and otherwise indifferent qualities, to suggest or recall to the mind emotions of a pleasurable or interesting description. It follows, therefore, that no object is beautiful in itself, or could appear so antecedent to our experience of direct pleasures or emotions; and that, as an infinite variety of objects may thus reflect interesting ideas, so all of them may acquire the title of beautiful, although utterly diverse and disparate in their nature, and possessing nothing in common but this accidental power of reminding us of other emotions.

This theory, which, we believe, is now very generally adopted, though under many needless qualifications, shall be farther developed and illustrated in the sequel. But at present we shall only remark, that it serves, at least, to solve the great problem involved in the discussion, by rendering it easily conceivable how objects which have no inherent resemblance, nor, indeed, any one quality in common, should yet be united in one common relation, and consequently acquire one common name; just as all the things that belonged to a beloved individual may serve to remind us of him, and thus to awake a kindred class of emotions, though just as unlike each other as any of the objects that are classed under the general name of beautiful. His poetry, for instance, or his slippers, — his acts of bounty or his saddle-horse, — may lead to the same chain of interesting remembrances, and thus agree in possessing a power of excitement, for the sources of which we should look in vain through all the variety of their physical or metaphysical qualities.

By the help of the same consideration, we get rid of all the mystery of a peculiar sense or faculty, imagined for the express purpose of perceiving beauty; and discover that the power of taste is nothing more than the habit of tracing those associations, by which almost all objects may be connected with interesting emotions. It is easy to understand, that the recollection of any scene of delight or emotion must produce a certain agreeable sensation, and that the objects which introduce these recollections should not appear altogether indifferent to us: nor is it, perhaps, very difficult to imagine, that recollections thus strikingly suggested by some real and present existence, should present themselves under a different aspect, and move the mind somewhat differently from those which arise spontaneously in the ordinary course of our reflections, and do not thus grow out of a direct, present, and peculiar impression.

The whole of this doctrine, however, we shall endeavour by and by to establish upon more direct evidence. But having now explained, in a general way, both the difficulties of the subject, and our suggestion as to their true solution, it is proper that we should take a short review of the more considerable theories that have been proposed for the elucidation of this curious question; which is one of the most delicate as well as the most popular in the science of metaphysics, — was one of the earliest which exercised the speculative ingenuity of philosophers, — and has at last, we think, been more successfully treated than any other of a similar description.

In most of these speculations we shall find rather imperfect truth than fundamental error; or, at all events, such errors only as arise naturally from that peculiar difficulty which we have already endeavoured to explain, as consisting in the prodigious multitude and diversity of the objects in which the common quality of beauty was to be accounted for. Those who have not been sufficiently aware of the difficulty, have generally dogmatised from a small number of instances, and have rather given examples of the occurrence of beauty in some few classes of objects, than afforded any light as to that upon which it essentially depended in all; while those who felt its full force have very often found no other resource, than to represent beauty as consisting in properties so extremely vague and general, (such, for example, as the power of exciting ideas of relation,) as almost to elude our comprehension, and, at the same time, of so abstract and metaphysical a description, as not to be very intelligibly stated, as the elements of a strong, familiar, and pleasurable emotion.

This last observation leads us to make one other remark upon the general character of

these theories; and this is, that some of them, though not openly professing that doctrine, seem necessarily to *imply* the existence of a peculiar sense or faculty for the perception of beauty; as they resolve it into properties that are not in any way interesting or agreeable to any of our known faculties. Such are all those which make it consist in proportion, — or in variety, combined with regularity, — or in waving lines, — or in unity, — or in the perception of relations, — without explaining, or attempting to explain, how any of these things should, in any circumstances, affect us with delight or emotion. Others, again, do not require the supposition of any such separate faculty; because in them the sense of beauty is considered as arising from other more simple and familiar emotions, which are in themselves and beyond all dispute agreeable. Such are those which teach that beauty depends on the perception of utility, or of design, or fitness, or in tracing associations between its objects and the common joys or emotions of our nature. Which of these two classes of speculation, to one or other of which, we believe, all theories of beauty may be reduced, is the most philosophical in itself, we imagine can admit of no question; and we hope in the sequel to leave it as little doubtful, which is to be considered as most consistent with the fact. In the mean time, we must give a short account of some of the theories themselves.

The most ancient of which it seems necessary to take any notice, is that which may be traced in the Dialogues of Plato, — though we are very far from pretending that it is possible to give any intelligible or consistent account of its tenor. It should never be forgotten, however, that it is to this subtle and ingenious spirit that we owe the suggestion, that it is *mind* alone that is beautiful; and that, in perceiving beauty, it only contemplates the shadow of its own affections; — a doctrine which, however mystically unfolded in his writings, or however combined with extravagant or absurd speculations, unquestionably carries in it the germ of all the truth that has since been revealed on the subject. By far the largest dissertation, however, that this great philosopher has left upon the nature of beauty, is to be found in the dialogue entitled *The Greater Hippias*, which is entirely devoted to that inquiry. We do not learn a great deal of the author's own opinion, indeed, from this performance; for it is one of the dialogues which have been termed *Anatreptic*, or confuting, — in which nothing is concluded in the affirmative, but a series of sophistical suggestions or hypotheses are successively exposed. The plan of it is to lead on Hippias, a shallow and confident sophist, to make a variety of dogmatical assertions as to the nature of beauty, and then to make him retract and abandon them, upon the statement of some obvious objections. Socrates and he agree at first in the notable proposition, "that beauty is that by which all beautiful things are beautiful;" and then, after a great number of suggestions, by far too childish and absurd to be worthy of any notice, — such as, that the beautiful may peradventure be gold, or a fine woman, or a handsome mare, — they at last get to some suppositions, which show that almost all the theories that have since been propounded on this interesting subject had occurred thus early to the active and original mind of this keen and curious inquirer. Thus, Socrates first suggests that beauty may consist in the fitness or suitableness of any object to the place it occupies; and afterwards, more generally and directly, that it may consist in utility, — a notion which is ultimately rejected, however, upon the subtle consideration that the useful is that which produces good, and that the producer and the product being necessarily different, it would follow, upon that supposition, that beauty could not be good, nor good beautiful. Finally, he suggests that beauty may be the mere organic delight of the eye or the ear; to which, after stating very slightly the objection, that it would be impossible to account upon this ground for the beauty of poetry or eloquence, he proceeds to rear up a more refined and elaborate refutation, upon such grounds as these: — If beauty be the proper name of that which is naturally agreeable to the sight and hearing, it is plain, that the objects to which it is ascribed must possess some common and distinguishable property, besides that of being agreeable, in consequence of which they are separated and set apart from objects that are agreeable to our *other* senses and faculties, and, at the same time, classed together under the common ap-

pellation of beautiful. Now, we are not only quite unable to discover what this property is, but it is manifest, that objects which make themselves known to the ear, *can* have no property as such, in common with objects that make themselves known to the eye; it being impossible that an object which is beautiful by its colour, can be beautiful, from the same quality, with another which is beautiful by its sound. From all which it is inferred, that as beauty is admitted to be something real, it cannot be merely what is agreeable to the organs of sight or hearing.

There is no practical wisdom, we admit, in those fine-drawn speculations; nor any of that spirit of patient observation by which alone any sound view of such objects can ever be attained. There are also many marks of that singular incapacity to distinguish between what is absolutely puerile and foolish, and what is plausible, at least, and ingenious, which may be reckoned among the characteristics of "the divine philosopher," and in some degree of all the philosophers of antiquity: but they show clearly enough the subtle and abstract character of Greek speculation, and prove at how early a period, and to how great an extent, the inherent difficulties of the subject were felt, and produced their appropriate effects.

There are some hints on these subjects in the works of Xenophon; and some scattered observations in those of Cicero; who was the first, we believe, to observe, that the sense of beauty is peculiar to man; but nothing else, we believe, in classical antiquity, which requires to be analysed or explained. It appears that St. Augustin composed a large treatise on beauty; and it is to be lamented, that the speculations of that acute and ardent genius on such a subject have been lost. We discover, from incidental notices in other parts of his writings, that he conceived the beauty of all objects to depend on their unity, or on the perception of that principle of design which fixed the relations of their various parts, and presented them to the intellect or imagination as one harmonious whole. It would not be fair to deal very strictly with a theory with which we are so imperfectly acquainted: but it may be observed, that, while the author is so far in the right as to make beauty consist in a relation to mind, and not in any physical quality, he has taken far too narrow and circumscribed a view of the matter, and one which seems almost exclusively applicable to works of human art; it being plain enough, we think, that a beautiful landscape, or a beautiful horse, has no more unity, and no more traces of design, than one which is not beautiful.

We do not pretend to know what the schoolmen taught upon this subject during the dark ages; but the discussion does not seem to have been resumed for long after the revival of letters. The followers of Leibnitz were pleased to maintain that beauty consisted in perfection; but what constituted perfection (in this respect) they did not attempt to define. M. Crouzas wrote a long essay, to show that beauty depended on these five elements, variety, unity, regularity, order, and proportion; and the Père André, a still longer one to prove, that, admitting these to be the true foundations of beauty, it was still most important to consider, that the beauty which results from them is either essential, or natural, or artificial,—and that it may be greater or less, according as the characteristics of each of these classes are combined or set in opposition.

Among ourselves, we are not aware of any considerable publication on the subject till the appearance of Lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristics;* in which a sort of rapturous Platonic doctrine is delivered as to the existence of a primitive and Supreme Good and Beauty, and of a certain internal sense, by which both beauty and moral merit are distinguished. Addison published several ingenious papers in *The Spectator*, on the pleasures of the imagination, and was the first, we believe, who referred them to the specific sources of beauty, sublimity, and novelty. He did not enter much, however, into the metaphysical discussion of the nature of beauty itself; and the first philosophical treatise of note that appeared on the subject, may be said to have been the *Inquiry* of Dr. Hucheson, first published, we believe, in 1735.

In this work, the notion of a peculiar internal sense, by which we are made sensible of the existence of beauty, is very boldly promulgated, and maintained by many ingenious arguments: Yet nothing, we conceive, can be more extravagant than such a proposition; and nothing but the radical faults of the other

parts of his theory could possibly have driven the learned author to its adoption. Even after the existence of the sixth sense was assumed, he felt that it was still necessary that he should explain what were the qualities by which it was gratified; and these, he was pleased to allege, were nothing but the combinations of variety with uniformity; all objects, as he has himself expressed it, which are equally uniform, being beautiful in proportion to their variety,—and all objects equally various being beautiful in proportion to their uniformity. Now, not to insist upon the obvious and radical objection that this is not true in fact, as to flowers, landscapes, or indeed of any thing but architecture, if it be true of that,—it could not fail to strike the ingenious author that these qualities of uniformity and variety were not of themselves agreeable to any of our known senses or faculties, except when considered as symbols of utility or design, and therefore could not intelligibly account for the very lively emotions which we often experience from the perception of beauty, where the notion of design or utility is not at all suggested. He was constrained, therefore, either to abandon this view of the nature of beauty altogether, or to imagine a new sense or faculty, whose only function it should be to receive delight from the combinations of uniformity and variety, without any consideration of their being significant of things agreeable to our other faculties; and this being accomplished by the mere force of the definition, there was no room for farther dispute or difficulty in the matter.

Some of Hucheson's followers, such as Gerard and others, who were a little startled at the notion of a separate faculty, and yet wished to retain the doctrine of beauty depending on variety and uniformity, endeavoured, accordingly, to show that these qualities were *naturally* agreeable to the mind, and were recommended by considerations arising from its most familiar properties. Uniformity or simplicity, they observed, renders our conception of objects easy, and saves the mind from all fatigue and distraction in the consideration of them; whilst variety, if circumscribed and limited by an ultimate uniformity, gives it a pleasing exercise and excitement, and keeps its energies in a state of pleasurable activity. Now, this appears to us to be mere trifling. The varied and lively emotions which we receive from the perception of beauty, obviously have no sort of resemblance to the pleasure of moderate intellectual exertion; nor can any thing be conceived more utterly dissimilar than the gratification we have in gazing on the form of a lovely woman, and the satisfaction we receive from working an easy problem in arithmetic or geometry. If a triangle is more beautiful than a regular polygon, as those authors maintain, merely because its figure is more easily comprehended, the number *four* should be more beautiful than the number 327, and the form of a gibbet far more agreeable than that of a branching oak. The radical error, in short, consists in fixing upon properties that are not interesting in themselves, and can never be conceived, therefore, to excite any emotion, as the fountain-spring of all our emotions of beauty: and it is an absurdity that must infallibly lead to others, — whether these take the shape of a violent attempt to disguise the truly different nature of the properties so selected, or of the bolder expedient of creating a peculiar faculty, whose office it is to find them interesting.

The next remarkable theory was that proposed by Edmund Burke, in his *Treatise of the Sublime and Beautiful.* But of this, in spite of the great name of the author, we cannot persuade ourselves that it is necessary to say much. His explanation is founded upon a species of materialism, — not much to have been expected from the general character of his genius, or the strain of his other speculations, — for it all resolves into this, — that all objects appear beautiful which have the power of producing a peculiar relaxation of our nerves and fibres, and thus inducing a certain degree of bodily languor and sinking. Of all the suppositions that have been at any time hazarded to explain the phenomena of beauty, this, we think, is the most unfortunately imagined, and the most weakly supported. There is no philosophy in the doctrine, — and the fundamental assumption is in every way contradicted by the most familiar experience. There is no relaxation of the fibres in the perception of beauty,— and there is no pleasure in the relaxation of the fibres. If there were, it would follow, that a warm bath would be by far the most beautiful

thing in the world — and that the brilliant lights, and bracing airs of a fine autumn morning, would be the very reverse of beautiful. Accordingly, though the treatise alluded to will always be valuable on account of the many fine and just remarks it contains, we are not aware that there is any accurate inquirer into the subject (with the exception, perhaps, of Mr. Price, in whose hands, however, the doctrine assumes a new character), by whom the fundamental principle of the theory has not been explicitly abandoned.

A yet more extravagant doctrine was soon afterwards inculcated, and in a tone of great authority, in a long article from the brilliant pen of Diderot, in the French *Encyclopédie;* and one which exemplifies, in a very striking manner, the nature of the difficulties with which the discussion is embarrassed. This ingenious person, perceiving at once, that the beauty which we ascribe to a particular class of objects could not be referred to any peculiar and inherent quality in the objects themselves, but depended upon their power of exciting certain sentiments in our minds; and being, at the same time, at a loss to discover what common power could belong to so vast a variety of objects as pass under the general appellation of beautiful, or by what tie all the various emotions which are excited by the perception of beauty could be united, was at last driven, by the necessity of keeping his definition sufficiently wide and comprehensive, to hazard the strange assertion, that all objects were beautiful which excite in us the idea of *relation;* that our sense of beauty consisted in tracing out the relations which the object possessing it might have to other objects; and that its actual beauty was in proportion to the number and clearness of the relations thus suggested and perceived. It is scarcely necessary, we presume, to expose by any arguments the manifest fallacy, or rather the palpable absurdity, of such a theory as this. In the first place, we conceive it to be obvious, that all objects whatever have an *infinite*, and, consequently, an equal number of relations, and are equally likely to suggest them to those to whom they are presented; — or, at all events, it is certain, that ugly and disagreeable objects have just as many relations as those that are agreeable, and ought, therefore, to be just as beautiful, if the sense of beauty consisted in the perception of relations. In the next place, it seems to be sufficiently certain, from the experience and common feelings of all men, that the perception of relations among objects is not in itself accompanied by any pleasure whatever; and in particular has no conceivable resemblance to the emotion we receive from the perception of beauty. When we perceive one ugly old woman sitting exactly opposite to two other ugly old women, and observe, at the same moment, that the first is as big as the other two taken together, we humbly conceive, that this clear perception of the relations in which these three Graces stand to each other, cannot well be mistaken for a sense of beauty, and that it does not in the least abate or interfere with our sense of their ugliness. Finally, we may observe, that the sense of beauty results instantaneously from the perception of the object; whereas the discovery of its relations to other objects must necessarily be a work of time and reflection, in the course of which the beauty of the object, so far from being created or brought into notice, must, in fact, be lost sight of and forgotten.

Another more plausible and ingenious theory was suggested by the Père Buffier, and afterwards adopted and illustrated with great talent in the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds. According to this doctrine, beauty consists, as Aristotle held virtue to do, in mediocrity, or conformity to that which is most usual. Thus a beautiful nose, to make use of Dr. Smith's very apt, though homely, illustration of this doctrine, is one that is neither very long nor very short, — very straight nor very much bent, — but of an ordinary form and proportion, compared with all the extremes. It is the form, in short, which nature seems to have aimed at in all cases, though she has more frequently deviated from it than hit it; but deviating from it in all directions, all her deviations come nearer to it than they ever do to each other. Thus the most beautiful in every species of creatures bears the greatest resemblance to the whole species, while monsters are so denominated because they bear the least; and thus the beautiful, though in one sense the rarest, as the *exact* medium is but seldom hit; is invariably the most common, because it is the central point from which all

the deviations are the least remote. This view of the matter is adopted by Sir Joshua in its full extent, and is even carried so far by this great artist, that he does not scruple to conclude, "That if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea that is now annexed to it, and take that of beauty; — just as we approve and admire fashions in dress, for no other reason than that we are used to them."

Now, not to dwell upon the very startling conclusion to which these principles must lead, viz. that things are beautiful in proportion as they are ordinary, and that it is merely their familiarity which constitutes their beauty, we would observe, in the first place, that the whole theory seems to have been suggested by a consideration of animal forms, or perhaps of the human figure exclusively. In these forms, it is quite true that great and monstrous deviations from the usual proportions are extremely disagreeable. But this, we have no doubt, arises entirely from some idea of pain or disaster attached to their existence; or from their obvious unfitness for the functions they have to perform. In vegetable forms, accordingly, these irregularities excite no such disgust; it being, in fact, the great object of culture, in almost all the more beautiful kinds, to produce what may be called monstrosities. And, in mineral substances, where the idea of suffering is still more completely excluded, it is notorious that, so far from the more ordinary configurations being thought the most beautiful, this epithet is scarcely ever employed but to denote some rare and unusual combination of veins, colours, or dimensions. As to landscapes, again, and almost all the works of art, without exception, the theory is plainly altogether incapable of application. In what sense, for example, can it be said that the beauty of natural scenery consists in mediocrity; or that those landscapes are the most beautiful that are the most common? or what meaning can we attach to the proposition, that the most beautiful building or picture, or poem, is that which bears the nearest resemblance to all the individuals of its class, and is, upon the whole, the most ordinary and common?

To a doctrine which is liable to these obvious and radical objections, it is not perhaps necessary to make any other; but we must remark farther, first, that it necessarily supposes that our sense of beauty is, in all cases, preceded by such a large comparison between various individuals of the same species, as may enable us to ascertain that average or mean form in which beauty is supposed to consist; and, consequently, that we could never discover any object to be beautiful antecedent to such a comparison; and, secondly, that, even if we were to allow that this theory afforded some explanation of the superior beauty of any one object, compared with others of the same class, it plainly furnishes no explanation whatever of the superior beauty of one class of objects compared with another. We may believe, if we please, that one peacock is handsomer than another, because it approaches more nearly to the average or mean form of peacocks in general; but this reason will avail us nothing whatever in explaining why any peacock is handsomer than any pelican or penguin. We may say, without manifest absurdity, that the most beautiful pig is that which has least of the extreme qualities that sometimes occur in the tribe; but it would be palpably absurd to give this reason, or any thing like it, for the superior beauty of the tribe of antelopes or spaniels.

The notion, in short, seems to have been hastily adopted by the ingenious persons who have maintained it, partly upon the narrow ground of the disgust produced by monsters in the animal creation, which has been already sufficiently explained, — and partly in consequence of the fallacy which lurks in the vague and general proposition of those things being beautiful which are neither *too* big nor *too* little, *too* massive nor *too* slender, &c.; from which it was concluded, that beauty must consist in mediocrity: — not considering that the particle *too* merely denotes those degrees which are exclusive of beauty, without in any way fixing what those degrees are. For the plain meaning of these phrases is, that the rejected objects are too massive or too slender *to be beautiful;* and, therefore, to say that an object is beautiful which is neither too big nor too little, &c., is really saying nothing more than that beautiful objects are such as are not in any degree ugly or disagreeable. The illustration as to the effects of use or custom in the article of dress is singularly inaccurate and

delusive; the fact being, that we never admire the dress which we are most accustomed to see,—which is that of the common people,—but the dress of the few who are distinguished by rank or opulence; and, that we require no more custom or habit to make us admire this dress, whatever it may be, than is necessary to associate it in our thoughts with the wealth, and dignity, and graceful manners of those who wear it.

We need say nothing in this place of the opinions expressed on the subject of beauty by Dr. Gerard, Dr. Blair, and a whole herd of rhetoricians; because none of them pretend to have any new or original notions with regard to it, and, in general, have been at no pains to reconcile or render consistent the various accounts of the matter, which they have contented themselves with assembling and laying before their readers all together, as affording among them the best explanation that could be offered of the question. Thus they do not scruple to say, that the sense of beauty is sometimes produced by the mere organic affection of the senses of sight or hearing; at other times, by a perception of a kind of regular variety; and in other instances by the association of interesting conceptions; — thus abandoning altogether any attempt to answer the radical question, — how the feeling of beauty should be excited by such opposite causes, — and confounding together, without any attempt at discrimination, those theories which imply the existence of a separate sense or faculty, and those which resolve our sense of beauty into other more simple or familiar emotions.

Of late years, however, we have had three publications on the subject of a far higher character, — we mean, Mr. Alison's *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* — Mr. Payne Knight's *Analytical Inquiry* into the same subjects — and Mr. Dugald Stewart's *Dissertations* on the Beautiful and on Taste, in his volume of *Philosophical Essays*. All these works possess an infinite deal of merit, and have among them disclosed almost all the truth that is to be known on the subject; though, as it seems to us, with some little admixture of error, from which it will not, however, be difficult to separate it.

Mr. Alison maintains, that all beauty, or at least that all the beauty of material objects, depends on the associations that may have connected them with the ordinary affections or emotions of our nature; and in this, which is the fundamental point of his theory, we conceive him to be no less clearly right, than he is convincing and judicious in the copious and beautiful illustrations by which he has sought to establish its truth. When he proceeds, however, to assert, that our sense of beauty consists not merely in the suggestion of ideas of emotion, but in the contemplation of *a connected series or train* of such ideas, and indicates a state of mind in which the faculties, half active and half passive, are given up to a sort of reverie or musing, in which they may wander, though among kindred impressions, far enough from the immediate object of perception, we will confess that he not only seems to us to advance a very questionable proposition, but very essentially to endanger the evidence, as well as the consistency, of his general doctrine. We are far from denying, that, in minds of sensibility and of reflecting habits, the contemplation of beautiful objects will be apt, especially in moments of leisure, and when the mind is vacant, to give rise to such trains of thought, and to such protracted meditations; but we cannot possibly admit that their existence is necessary to the perception of beauty, or that it is in this state of mind exclusively that the sense of beauty exists. The perception of beauty, on the contrary, we hold to be, in most cases, quite instantaneous, and altogether as immediate as the perception of the external qualities of the object to which it is ascribed. Indeed, it seems only necessary to recollect, that it is to a present material object that we actually ascribe and refer this beauty, and that the only thing to be explained is, how *this object* comes to appear beautiful. In the long train of interesting meditations, however, to which Mr. Alison refers, — in the delightful reveries in which he would make the sense of beauty consist, — it is obvious that we must soon lose sight of the external object which gave the first impulse to our thoughts; and though we may *afterwards* reflect upon it, with increased interest and gratitude, as the parent of so many charming images, it is impossible, we conceive, that the perception of *its* beauty can ever depend upon a long series of various and shifting emotions.

It likewise occurs to us to observe, that if every thing was beautiful, which was the occasion of a train of ideas of emotion, it is not easy to see why objects that are called ugly should not be entitled to that appellation. If they are sufficiently ugly not to be viewed with indifference, they too will give rise to ideas of emotion, and those ideas are just as likely to run into trains and series, as those of a more agreeable description. Nay, as contrast itself is one of the principles of association, it is not at all unlikely, that, in the train of impressive ideas which the sight of ugly objects may excite, a transition may be ultimately made to such as are connected with pleasure; and, therefore, if the perception of the beauty of the object which first suggested them depended on its having produced a series of ideas of emotion, or even of agreeable emotions, there seems to be no good reason for doubting, that ugly objects may thus be as beautiful as any other, and that beauty and ugliness may be one and the same thing. Such is the danger, as it appears to us, of deserting the object itself, or going beyond its immediate effect and impression, in order to discover the sources of its beauty. Our view of the matter is safer, we think, and far more simple. We conceive the object to be associated either in our past experience, or by some universal analogy, with pleasures, or emotions that upon the whole are pleasant; and that these associated pleasures are instantaneously suggested, as soon as the object is presented, and by the first glimpse of its physical properties, with which, indeed, they are consubstantiated and confounded in our sensations.

The work of Mr. Knight is more lively, various, and discursive, than Mr. Alison's—but not so systematic or conclusive. It is the cleverer book of the two,—but not the most philosophical discussion of the subject. He agrees with Mr. Alison in holding the most important, and, indeed, the only considerable part of beauty, to depend upon association; and has illustrated this opinion with a great variety of just and original observations. But he maintains, and maintains stoutly, that there is a beauty independent of associations—prior to it, and more original and fundamental—the primitive and natural beauty of colours and sounds. Now, this we look upon to be a heresy; and a heresy inconsistent with the very first principles of Catholic philosophy. We shall not stop at present to give our reasons for this opinion, which we shall illustrate at large before we bring this article to a close;—but we beg leave merely to suggest at present, that if our sense of beauty be confessedly, *in most cases*, the mere image or reflection of pleasures or emotions that have been associated with objects in themselves indifferent, it cannot fail to appear strange that it should also *on some few occasions* be a mere organic or sensual gratification of these particular organs. Language, it is believed, affords no other example of so whimsical a combination of different objects under one appellation; or of the confounding of a direct physical sensation with the suggestion of a social or sympathetic moral feeling. We would observe also, that while Mr. Knight stickles so violently for this alloy of the senses in the constitution of beauty, he admits, unequivocally, that sublimity is, in every instance, and in all cases, the effect of association alone. Yet sublimity and beauty, in any just or large sense, and with a view to the philosophy of either, are manifestly one and the same; nor is it conceivable to us, that, if sublimity be *always* the result of an association with ideas of power or danger, beauty can possibly be, in any case, the result of a mere pleasurable impulse on the nerves of the eye or the ear. We shall return, however, to this discussion hereafter. Of Mr. Knight we have only further to observe, that we think he is not less heretical in maintaining, that we have no pleasure in sympathising with distress or suffering, but only with mental energy; and that, in contemplating the sublime, we are moved only with a sense of power and grandeur, and never with any feeling of terror or awe.—These errors, however, are less intimately connected with the subject of our present discussion.

With Mr. Stewart we have less occasion for quarrel: chiefly, perhaps, because he has made fewer positive assertions, and entered less into the matter of controversy. His *Essay* on the Beautiful is rather philological than metaphysical. The object of it is to show by what gradual and successive extensions of meaning the word, though at first appropriated to denote the pleasing effect of *colours* alone, might naturally come to signify all the other pleasing

things to which it is now applied. In this investigation he makes many admirable remarks, and touches, with the hand of a master, upon many of the disputable parts of the question; but he evades the particular point at issue between us and Mr. Knight, by stating, that it is quite immaterial to his purpose, whether the beauty of colours be supposed to depend on their organic effect on the eye, or on some association between them and other agreeable emotions, — it being enough for his purpose that this was probably the first sort of beauty that was observed, and that to which the name was at first exclusively applied. It is evident to us, however, that he leans to the opinion of Mr. Knight, as to this beauty being truly sensual or organic. In observing, too, that beauty is not now the name of any one thing or quality, but of very many different qualities, — and that it is applied to them all, merely because they are often united in the same object, or perceived at the same time and *by the same organs*, — it appears to us that he carries his philology a little too far, and disregards other principles of reasoning of far higher authority. To give the name of beauty, for example, to every thing that interests or pleases us through the channel of sight, including in this category the mere impulse of light that is pleasant to the organ, and the presentment of objects whose whole charm consists in awakening the memory of social emotions, seems to us to be confounding things together that must always be separate in our feelings, and giving a far greater importance to the mere identity of the organ by which they are perceived, than is warranted either by the ordinary language or ordinary experience of men. Upon the same principle we should give this name of beautiful, and no other, to all acts of kindness or magnanimity, and, indeed, to every interesting occurrence which took place in our sight, or came to our knowledge by means of the eye: nay, as the ear is also allowed to be a channel for impressions of beauty, the same name should be given to any interesting or pleasant thing that we hear, — and good news read to us from the gazette should be denominated beautiful, just as much as a fine composition of music. These things, however, are never called beautiful, and are felt, indeed, to afford a gratification of quite a different nature. It is no doubt true, as Mr. Stewart has observed, that beauty is not one thing, but many, — and does not produce one uniform emotion, but an infinite variety of emotions. But this, we conceive, is not merely because many pleasant things may be intimated to us by the same sense, but because the things that are called beautiful may be associated with an infinite variety of agreeable emotions of the specific character of which their beauty will consequently partake. Nor does it follow, from the fact of this great variety, that there can be no other principle of union among these agreeable emotions, but that of a *name*, extended to them all upon the very slight ground of their coming through the same organ; since, upon our theory, and indeed upon Mr. Stewart's, in a vast majority of instances, there is the remarkable circumstance of their being all *suggested* by association with some present sensation, and all modified and confounded, to our feelings, by an actual and direct perception.

It is unnecessary, however, to pursue these criticisms, or, indeed, this hasty review of the speculation of other writers, any farther. The few observations we have already made, will enable the intelligent reader, both to understand in a general way what has been already done on the subject, and in some degree prepare him to appreciate the merits of that theory, substantially the same with Mr. Alison's, which we shall now proceed to illustrate somewhat more in detail.

The basis of it is, that the beauty which we impute to outward objects, is nothing more than the reflection of our own inward emotions, and is made up entirely of certain little portions of love, pity, or other affections, which have been connected with these objects, and still adhere as it were to them, and move us anew whenever they are presented to our observation. Before proceeding to bring any proof of the truth of this proposition, there are two things that it may be proper to explain a little more distinctly. First, What are the primary affections, by the suggestion of which we think the sense of beauty is produced? And, secondly, What is the nature of the connection by which we suppose that the objects we call beautiful are enabled to suggest these affections?

With regard to the first of these points, it fortunately is not necessary either to enter into any tedious details, or to have recourse to any nice distinctions. All sensations that are not absolutely indifferent, and are, at the same time, either agreeable, when experienced by ourselves, or attractive when contemplated in others, may form the foundation of the emotions of sublimity or beauty. The love of *sensation* seems to be the ruling appetite of human nature; and many sensations, in which the painful may be thought to predominate, are consequently sought for with avidity, and recollected with interest, even in our own persons. In the persons of others, emotions still more painful are contemplated with eagerness and delight: and therefore we must not be surprised to find, that many of the pleasing sensations of beauty or sublimity resolve themselves ultimately into recollections of feelings that may appear to have a very opposite character. The sum of the whole is, that every feeling which it is agreeable to experience, to recal, or to witness, may become the source of beauty in external objects, when it is so connected with them as that their appearance reminds us of that feeling. Now, in real life, and from daily experience and observation, we know that it is agreeable, in the first place, to recollect our own pleasurable sensations, or to be enabled to form a lively conception of the pleasures of other men, or even of sentient beings of any description. We know likewise, from the same sure authority, that there is a certain delight in the remembrance of our past, or the conception of our future emotions, even though attended with great pain, provided the pain be not forced too rudely on the mind, and be softened by the accompaniment of any milder feeling. And finally, we know, in the same manner, that the spectacle or conception of the emotions of others, even when in a high degree painful, is extremely interesting and attractive, and draws us away, not only from the consideration of indifferent objects, but even from the pursuit of light or frivolous enjoyments. All these are plain and familiar facts; of the existence of which, however they may be explained, no one can entertain the slightest doubt, — and into which, therefore, we shall have made no inconsiderable progress, if we can resolve the more mysterious fact, of the emotions we receive from the contemplation of sublimity or beauty.

Our proposition then is, that these emotions are not original emotions, nor produced directly by any material qualities in the objects which excite them; but are reflections, or images, of the more radical and familiar emotions to which we have already alluded; and are occasioned, not by any inherent virtue in the object before us, but by the accidents, if we may so express ourselves, by which these may have been enabled to suggest or recal to us our own past sensations or sympathies. We might almost venture, indeed, to lay it down as an axiom, that, except in the plain and palpable case of bodily pain or pleasure, we can never be *interested* in any thing but the fortunes of sentient beings; — and that every thing partaking of the nature of mental emotion, must have for its object *the feelings*, past, present or possible, of something capable of sensation. Independent, therefore, of all evidence, and without the help of any explanation, we should have been apt to conclude, that the emotions of beauty and sublimity must have for their objects the sufferings or enjoyments of sentient beings; — and to reject, as intrinsically absurd and incredible, the supposition, that material objects, which obviously do neither hurt nor delight the body, should yet excite, by their mere physical qualities, the very powerful emotions which are sometimes excited by the spectacle of beauty.

Of the feelings, by their connection with which external objects become beautiful, we do not think it necessary to speak more minutely;—and, therefore, it only remains, under this preliminary view of the subject, to explain the nature of that connection by which we conceive this effect to be produced. Here, also, there is but little need for minuteness, or fulness of enumeration. Almost every tie, by which two objects can be bound together in the imagination, in such a manner as that the presentment of the one shall recal the memory of the other; — or, in other words, almost every possible relation which can subsist between such objects, may serve to connect the things we call sublime and beautiful, with feelings that are interesting or delightful. It may be useful, however, to class these bonds of as-

sociation between mind and matter in a rude and general way.

It appears to us, then, that objects are sublime or beautiful, *first*, when they are the natural signs, and perpetual concomitants of pleasurable sensations, or, at any rate, of some lively feeling or emotion in ourselves or in some other sentient beings; or, *secondly*, when they are the arbitrary or accidental concomitants of such feelings; or, *thirdly*, when they bear some analogy or fanciful resemblance to things with which these emotions are necessarily connected. In endeavouring to illustrate the nature of these several relations, we shall be led to lay before our readers some proofs that appear to us satisfactory of the truth of the general theory.

The most obvious, and the strongest association that can be established between inward feelings and external objects is, where the object is necessarily and universally connected with the feeling by the law of nature, so that it is always presented to the senses when the feeling is impressed upon the mind,—as the sight or the sound of laughter, with the feeling of gaiety,—of weeping, with distress,—of the sound of thunder, with ideas of danger and power. Let us dwell for a moment on the last instance.—Nothing, perhaps, in the whole range of nature, is more strikingly and universally sublime than the sound we have just mentioned; yet it seems obvious, that the sense of sublimity is produced, not by any quality that is perceived by the ear, but altogether by the impression of power and of danger that is necessarily made upon the mind, whenever that sound is heard. That it is not produced by any peculiarity in the sound itself, is certain, from the mistakes that are frequently made with regard to it. The noise of a cart rattling over the stones, is often mistaken for thunder; and as long as the mistake lasts, this very vulgar and insignificant noise is actually felt to be prodigiously sublime. It is so felt, however, it is perfectly plain, merely because it is then associated with ideas of prodigious power and undefined danger;—and the sublimity is accordingly destroyed, the moment the association is dissolved, though the sound itself, and its effect on the organ, continue exactly the same. This, therefore, is an instance in which sublimity is distinctly proved to consist, not in any physical quality of the object to which it is ascribed, but in its necessary connection with that vast and uncontrolled Power which is the natural object of awe and veneration.

We may now take an example a little less plain and elementary. The most beautiful object in nature, perhaps, is the countenance of a young and beautiful woman;—and we are apt at first to imagine, that, independent of all associations, the form and colours which it displays are, in themselves, lovely and engaging; and would appear charming to all beholders, with whatever other qualities or impressions they might happen to be connected. A very little reflection, however, will probably be sufficient to convince us of the fallacy of this impression; and to satisfy us, that what we admire is not a combination of forms and colours, (which could never excite any mental emotion,) but a collection of signs and tokens of certain mental feelings and affections, which are universally recognised as the proper objects of love and sympathy. Laying aside the emotions arising from difference of sex, and supposing female beauty to be contemplated by the pure and unenvying eye of a female, it seems quite obvious, that, among its ingredients, we should trace the signs of two different sets of qualities, that are neither of them the object of sight, but of a far higher faculty;—in the first place, of youth and health; and in the second place, of innocence, gaiety, sensibility, intelligence, delicacy or vivacity. Now, without enlarging upon the natural effect of these suggestions, we shall just suppose that the appearances, which must be admitted at all events to be actually significant of the qualities we have enumerated, had been by the law of nature attached to the very opposite qualities;—that the smooth forehead, the firm cheek, and the full lip, which are now so distinctly expressive to us of the gay and vigorous periods of youth,—and the clear and blooming complexion, which indicates health and activity, had been in fact the forms and colours by which old age and sickness where characterised; and that instead of being found united to those sources and seasons of enjoyment, they had been the badges by which nature pointed out that state of suffering and decay which is now signified to us by the livid and emaciated face of sickness, or the wrinkled front, the quivering lip,

and hollow cheek of age;—If this were the familiar law of our nature, can it be doubted that we should look upon these appearances, not with rapture, but with aversion,—and consider it as absolutely ludicrous or disgusting, to speak of the beauty of what was interpreted by every one as the lamented sign of pain and decrepitude? Mr. Knight himself, though a firm believer in the intrinsic beauty of colours, is so much of this opinion, that he thinks it entirely owing to those associations that we prefer the tame smoothness, and comparatively poor colours of a youthful face, to the richly fretted and variegated countenance of a pimpled drunkard!

Such, we conceive, would be the inevitable effect of dissolving the subsisting connection between the animating ideas of hope and enjoyment, and those visible appearances which are now significant of those emotions, and derive their whole beauty from that signification. But the effect would be still stronger, if we could suppose the *moral* expression of those appearances to be reversed in the same manner. If the smile, which now enchants us, as the expression of innocence and affection, were the sign attached by nature to guilt and malignity, —if the blush which expresses delicacy, and the glance that speaks intelligence, vivacity, and softness, had always been found united with brutal passion or idiot moodiness; is it not certain that the whole of their beauty would be extinguished, and that our emotions from the sight of them would be exactly the reverse of what they now are?

That the beauty of a living and sentient creature should depend, in a great degree, upon qualities peculiar to such a creature, rather than upon the mere physical attributes which it may possess in common with the inert matter around it, cannot indeed appear a very improbable supposition to any one. But it may be more difficult for some persons to understand how the beauty of mere dead matter should be derived from the feelings and sympathies of sentient beings. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that we should give an instance or two of this derivation also.

It is easy enough to understand how the sight of a picture or statue should affect us nearly in the same way as the sight of the original: nor is it much more difficult to conceive, how the sight of a cottage should give us something of the same feeling as the sight of a peasant's family; and the aspect of a town raise many of the same ideas as the appearance of a multitude of persons. We may begin, therefore, with an example a little more complicated. Take, for instance, the case of a common English landscape—green meadows with grazing and ruminating cattle—canals or navigable rivers—well fenced, well cultivated fields—neat, clean, scattered cottages,—humble antique churches, with church-yard elms, and crossing hedgerows—all seen under bright skies, and in good weather:—There is much beauty, as every one will acknowledge, in such a scene. But in what does the beauty consist? Not certainly in the mere mixture of colours and forms; for colours more pleasing, and lines more graceful (according to any theory of grace that may be preferred), might be spread upon a board, or a painter's pallet, without engaging the eye to a second glance, or raising the least emotion in the mind;—but in the picture of human happiness that is presented to our imaginations and affections, —in the visible and unequivocal signs of comfort, and cheerful and peaceful enjoyment,—and of that secure and successful industry that insures its continuance,—and of the piety by which it is exalted,—and of the simplicity by which it is contrasted with the guilt and the fever of a city life; in the images of health and temperance and plenty which it exhibits to every eye—and in the glimpses which it affords to warmer imaginations, of those primitive or fabulous times, when man was uncorrupted by luxury and ambition, and of those humble retreats in which we still delight to imagine that love and philosophy may find an unpolluted asylum. At all events, however, it is human feeling that excites our sympathy, and forms the true object of our emotions. It is man, and man alone, that we see in the beauties of the earth which he inhabits;—or, if a more sensitive and extended sympathy connect us with the lower families of animated nature, and make us rejoice with the lambs that bleat on the uplands, or the cattle that repose in the valley, or even with the *living* plants that drink the bright sun and the balmy air beside them, it is still the idea of enjoyment—of feelings that animate the ex-

istence of sentient beings — that calls forth all our emotions, and is the parent of all the beauty with which we proceed to invest the inanimate creation around us.

Instead of this quiet and tame *English* landscape, let us now take a Welsh or a Highland scene; and see whether its beauties will admit of being explained on the same principle. Here, we shall have lofty mountains, and rocky and lonely recesses, — tufted woods hung over precipices, — lakes intersected with castled promontories, — ample solitudes of unploughed and untrodden valleys, — nameless and gigantic ruins, — and mountain echoes repeating the scream of the eagle and the roar of the cataract. This, too, is beautiful; — and, to those who can interpret the language it speaks, far more beautiful than the prosperous scene with which we have contrasted it. Yet, lonely as it is, it is to the recollection of man and the suggestion of human feelings that its beauty also is owing. The mere forms and colours that compose its visible appearance, are no more capable of exciting any emotion in the mind, than the forms and colours of a Turkey carpet. It is sympathy with the present or the past, or the imaginary *inhabitants* of such a region, that alone gives it either interest or beauty; and the delight of those who behold it will always be found to be in exact proportion to the force of their imaginations, and the warmth of their social affections. The leading impressions, here, are those of romantic seclusion, and primeval simplicity; lovers sequestered in these blissful solitudes, "from towns and toils remote," — and rustic poets and philosophers communing with nature, and at a distance from the low pursuits and selfish malignity of ordinary mortals; then there is the sublime impression of the Mighty Power which piled the massive cliffs upon each other, and rent the mountains asunder, and scattered their giant fragments at their base; — and all the images connected with the monuments of ancient magnificence and extinguished hostility, — the feuds, and the combats, and the triumphs of its wild and primitive inhabitants, contrasted with the stillness and desolation of the scenes where they lie interred; — and the romantic ideas attached to their ancient traditions, and the peculiarities of the actual life of their descendants, — their wild and enthusiastic poetry, — their gloomy superstitions, — their attachment to their chiefs, — the dangers, and the hardships and enjoyments of their lonely huntings and fishings, — their pastoral shielings on the mountains in summer, — and the tales and the sports that amuse the little groups that are frozen into their vast and trackless valleys in the winter. Add to all this, the traces of vast and obscure antiquity that are impressed on the language and the habits of the people, and on the cliffs, and caves, and gulfy torrents of the land; and the solemn and touching reflection, perpetually recurring, of the weakness and insignificance of perishable man, whose generations thus pass away into oblivion, with all their toils and ambition; while nature holds on her unvarying course, and pours out her streams, and renews her forests, with undecaying activity, regardless of the fate of her proud and perishable sovereign.

We have said enough, we believe, to let our readers understand what we mean by external objects being the natural signs or concomitants of human sympathies or emotions. Yet we cannot refrain from adding one other illustration, and asking on what other principle we can account for the beauty of Spring? Winter has shades as deep, and colours as brilliant; and the great forms of nature are substantially the same through all the revolutions of the year. We shall seek in vain, therefore, in the accidents of mere organic matter, for the sources of that "vernal delight and joy," which subject all finer spirits to an annual intoxication, and strike home the sense of beauty even to hearts that seem proof against it under all other aspects. And it is not among the Dead but among the Living, that this beauty originates. It is the renovation of life and of joy to all animated beings, that constitutes this great jubilee of nature; — the young of animals bursting into existence, — the simple and universal pleasures which are diffused by the mere temperature of the air, and the profusion of sustenance, — the pairing of birds, — the cheerful resumption of rustic toils, — the great alleviation of all the miseries of poverty and sickness, — our sympathy with the young life, and the promise and the hazards of the vegetable creation, — the solemn, yet cheering, impression of the constancy of nature to her great periods of renovation, — and the

hopes that dart spontaneously forward into the new circle of exertions and enjoyments that is opened up by her hand and her example. Such are some of the conceptions that are forced upon us by the appearances of returning spring; and that seem to account for the emotions of delight with which these appearances are hailed, by every mind endowed with any degree of sensibility, somewhat better than the brightness of the colours, or the agreeableness of the smells that are then presented to our senses.

They are kindred conceptions that constitute all the beauty of childhood. The forms and colours that are peculiar to that age, are not necessarily or absolutely beautiful in themselves; for, in a grown person, the same forms and colours would be either ludicrous or disgusting. It is their indestructible connection with the engaging ideas of innocence, — of careless gaiety, — of unsuspecting confidence; — made still more tender and attractive by the recollection of helplessness, and blameless and happy ignorance, — of the anxious affection that watches over all their ways, — and of the hopes and fears that seek to pierce futurity, for those who have neither fears nor cares nor anxieties for themselves.

These few illustrations will probably be sufficient to give our readers a general conception of the character and the grounds of that theory of beauty which we think affords the only true or consistent account of its nature. They are all examples, it will be observed, of the *First* and most important connection which we think may be shown to exist between external objects and the sentiments or emotions of the mind; or cases, in which the visible phenomena are the natural and universal accompaniments of the emotion, and are consequently capable of reviving that emotion, in some degree, in the breast of every beholder. If the tenor of those illustrations has been such as to make any impression in favour of the general theory, we conceive that it must be very greatly confirmed by the slightest consideration of the *Second* class of cases, or those in which the external object is not the natural and necessary, but only the occasional or accidental concomitant of the emotion which it recalls. In the former instances, some conception of beauty seems to be inseparable from the appearance of the objects; and being impressed, in some degree, upon all persons to whom they are presented, there is evidently room for insinuating that it is an independent and intrinsic quality of their nature, and does not arise from association with any thing else. In the instances, however, to which we are now to allude, this perception of beauty is not universal, but entirely dependent upon the opportunities which each individual has had to associate ideas of emotion with the object to which it is ascribed: — the same thing appearing beautiful to those who have been exposed to the influence of such associations, and indifferent to those who have not. Such instances, therefore, really afford an *experimentum crucis* as to the truth of the theory in question; nor is it easy to conceive any more complete evidence, both that there is no such thing as absolute or intrinsic beauty, and that it depends altogether on those associations with which it is thus found to come and to disappear.

The accidental or arbitrary relations that may thus be established between natural sympathies or emotions, and external objects, may be either such as occur to whole classes of men, or are confined to particular individuals. Among the former, those that apply to different nations or races of men, are the most important and remarkable; and constitute the basis of those peculiarities by which *national* tastes are distinguished. Take, again, for example, the instance of female beauty, — and think what different and inconsistent standards would be fixed for it in the different regions of the world; — in Africa, in Asia, and in Europe; — in Tartary and in Greece; — in Lapland, Patagonia, and Circassia. If there was any thing absolutely or intrinsically beautiful, in any of the forms thus distinguished, it is inconceivable that men should differ so outrageously in their conceptions of it: if beauty were a real and independent quality, it seems impossible that it should be distinctly and clearly felt by one set of persons, where another set, altogether as sensitive, could see nothing but its opposite; and if it were actually and inseparably attached to certain forms, colours, or proportions, it must appear utterly inexplicable that it should be felt and perceived in the most opposite forms and proportion, in objects of the same description. On the other

hand, if all beauty consist in reminding us of certain natural sympathies and objects of emotion, with which they have been habitually connected, it is easy to perceive how the most different forms should be felt to be equally beautiful. If female beauty, for instance, consist in the visible signs and expressions of youth and health, and of gentleness, vivacity, and kindness; then it will necessarily happen, that the forms, and colours and proportions which nature may have connected with those qualities, in the different climates or regions of the world, will all appear equally beautiful to those who have been accustomed to recognise them as the signs of such qualities; while they will be respectively indifferent to those who have not learned to interpret them in this sense, and displeasing to those whom experience has led to consider them as the signs of opposite qualities.

The case is the same, though perhaps to a smaller degree, as to the peculiarity of national taste in other particulars. The style of dress and architecture in every nation, if not adopted from mere want of skill, or penury of materials, always appears beautiful to the natives, and somewhat monstrous and absurd to foreigners; — and the general character and aspect of their landscape, in like manner, if not associated with substantial evils and inconveniences, always appears more beautiful and enchanting than the scenery of any other region. The fact is still more striking, perhaps, in the case of music; — in the effects of those national airs, with which even the most uncultivated imaginations have connected so many interesting recollections; and in the delight with which all persons of sensibility catch the strains of their native melodies in strange or in distant lands. It is owing chiefly to the same sort of arbitrary and national association, that white is thought a gay colour in Europe, where it is used at weddings, — and a dismal colour in China, where it is used for mourning; — that we think yew-trees gloomy, because they are planted in churchyards, — and large masses of powdered horsehair majestic, because we see them on the heads of judges and bishops.

Next to those curious instances of arbitrary or limited associations that are exemplified in the diversities of national taste, are those that are produced by the differences of instruction or education. If external objects were sublime and beautiful in themselves, it is plain, that they would appear equally so to those who were acquainted with their origin, and to those to whom it was unknown. Yet it is not easy, perhaps, to calculate the degree to which our notions of beauty and sublimity are now influenced, over all Europe, by the study of classical literature; or the number of impressions of this sort which the well-educated consequently receive, from objects that are utterly indifferent to uninstructed persons of the same natural sensibility. We gladly avail ourselves, upon this subject, of the beautiful expressions of Mr. Alison.

"The delight which most men of education receive from the consideration of antiquity, and the beauty that they discover in every object which is connected with ancient times, is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to the same cause. The antiquarian, in his cabinet, surrounded by the relics of former ages, seems to himself to be removed to periods that are long since past, and indulges in the imagination of living in a world, which, by a very natural kind of prejudice, we are always willing to believe was both wiser and better than the present. All that is venerable or laudable in the history of these times, present themselves to his memory. The gallantry, the heroism, the patriotism of antiquity, rise again before his view, softened by the obscurity in which they are involved, and rendered more seducing to the imagination by that obscurity itself, which, while it mingles a sentiment of regret amid his pursuits, serves at the same time to stimulate his fancy to fill up, by its own creation, those long intervals of time of which history has preserved no record.

"And what is it that constitutes that emotion of sublime delight, which every man of common sensibility feels upon the first prospect of Rome? It is not the scene of destruction which is before him. It is not the Tiber, diminished in his imagination to a paltry stream, flowing amid the ruins of that magnificence which it once adorned. It is not the triumph of superstition over the wreck of human greatness, and its monuments erected upon the very spot where the first honours of humanity have been gained. It is *ancient* Rome which fills his imagination. It is the country of Cæsar,

and Cicero, and Virgil, which is before him. It is the Mistress of the world which he sees, and who seems to him to rise again from her tomb, to give laws to the universe. All that the labours of his youth, or the studies of his maturer age have acquired, with regard to the history of this great people, open at once before his imagination, and present him with a field of high and solemn imagery, which can never be exhausted. Take from him these associations, —conceal from him that it is Rome that he sees, and how different would be his emotion!"

The influences of the same studies may be traced, indeed, through almost all our impressions of beauty,—and especially in the feelings which we receive from the contemplation of rural scenery; where the images and recollections which have been associated with such objects, in the enchanting strains of the poets, are perpetually recalled by their appearance, and give an interest and a beauty to the prospect, of which the uninstructed cannot have the slightest perception. Upon this subject, also, Mr. Alison has expressed himself with his usual warmth and elegance. After observing, that, in childhood, the beauties of nature have scarcely any existence for those who have as yet but little general sympathy with mankind, he proceeds to state, that they are usually first recommended to notice by the poets, to whom we are introduced in the course of education; and who, in a manner, create them for us, by the associations which they enable us to form with their visible appearance.

"How different, from this period, become the sentiments with which the scenery of nature is contemplated, by those who have any imagination! The beautiful forms of ancient mythology, with which the fancy of poets peopled every element, are now ready to appear to their minds, upon the prospect of every scene. The descriptions of ancient authors, so long admired, and so deserving of admiration, occur to them at every moment, and with them, all those enthusiastic ideas of ancient genius and glory, which the study of so many years of youth so naturally leads them to form. Or, if the study of modern poetry has succeeded to that of the ancient, a thousand other beautiful associations are acquired, which, instead of destroying, serve easily to unite with the former, and to afford a new source of delight. The awful forms of Gothic superstition, the wild and romantic imagery, which the turbulence of the middle ages, the Crusades, and the institution of chivalry have spread over every country of Europe, arise to the imagination in every scene; accompanied with all those pleasing recollections of prowess, and adventure, and courteous manners, which distinguished those memorable times. With such images in their minds, it is not common nature that appears to surround them. It is nature embellished and made sacred by the memory of Theocritus and Virgil, and Milton and Tasso; their genius seems still to linger among the scenes which inspired it, and to irradiate every object where it dwells; and the creations of their fancy seem the fit inhabitants of that nature, which their descriptions have clothed with beauty."

It is needless, for the purpose of mere illustration, to pursue this subject of arbitrary or accidental association through all the divisions of which it is susceptible; and, indeed, the task would be endless; since there is scarcely any class in society which may not be shown to have peculiar associations of interest and emotion with objects which are not so connected in the minds of any other class. The young and the old—the rich and the poor—the artist and the man of science—the inhabitant of the city and the inhabitant of the country—the man of business and the man of pleasure—the domestic and the dissipated,—nay, even the followers of almost every different study or profession, have perceptions of beauty, because they have associations with external objects, which are peculiar to themselves, and have no existence for any other persons. But, though the detail of such instances could not fail to show, in the clearest and most convincing manner, how directly the notion of beauty is derived from some more radical and familiar emotion, and how many and various are the channels by which such emotions are transmitted, enough, perhaps, has been already said, to put our readers in possession of the principles and general bearings of an argument which we must not think of exhausting.

Before entirely leaving this branch of the subject, however, let us pause for a moment on the familiar but very striking and decisive instance of our varying and contradictory

judgments, as to the beauty of the successive fashions of dress that have existed within our own remembrance. All persons who still continue to find amusement in society, and are not old enough to enjoy only the recollections of their youth, think the prevailing fashions becoming and graceful, and the fashions of twenty or twenty-five years old intolerably ugly and ridiculous. The younger they are, and the more they mix in society, this impression is the stronger; and the fact is worth noticing; because there is really no one thing as to which persons judging merely from their feelings, and therefore less likely to be misled by any systems or theories, are so very positive and decided, as that established fashions are beautiful in themselves; and that exploded fashions are intrinsically and beyond all question preposterous and ugly. We have never yet met a young lady or gentleman, who spoke from their hearts and without reserve, who had the least doubt on the subject; or could conceive how any person could be so stupid as not to see the intrinsic elegance of the reigning mode, or not to be struck with the ludicrous awkwardness of the habits in which their mothers were disguised. Yet there can be no doubt, that if these ingenuous critics had been born, with the same natural sensibility to beauty, but twenty years earlier, they would have joined in admiring what they now laugh at; as certainly as those who succeed them twenty years hereafter will laugh at *them*. It is plain, then, and we think scarcely disputed, out of the circles to which we have alluded, that there is, in the general case, no intrinsic beauty or deformity in any of those fashions; and that the forms, and colours, and materials, that are, we may say, universally and very strongly felt to be beautiful while they are in fashion, are sure to lose all their beauty as soon as the fashion has passed away. Now the forms, and colours and combinations remain exactly as they were; and, therefore, it seems indisputable, that the source of their successive beauty and ugliness must be sought in something extrinsic, and can only be found in the associations which once exalted and ultimately degraded them in our estimation. While they were in fashion, they were the forms and colours which distinguished the rich and the noble,—the eminent, the envied, the observed in society. They were the forms and the colours in which all that was beautiful, and admired, and exalted, were habitually arrayed. They were associated, therefore, with ideas of opulence, and elegance, and gaiety, and all that is captivating and bewitching, in manners, fortune, and situation,—and derived the whole of their beauty from those associations. By and by, however, they were deserted by the beautiful, the rich, and the elegant, and descended to the vulgar and dependent, or were only seen in combination with the antiquated airs of faded beauties or obsolete beaux. They thus came to be associated with ideas of vulgarity and derision, and with the images of old and decayed persons, whom it is difficult for their juniors to believe ever to have been young or attractive;—and the associations being thus reversed, in which all their beauty consisted, the beauty itself naturally disappeared.

The operation of the same causes is distinctly visible, in all the other apparent irregularities of our judgments as to this description of beauty. Old people have in general but little toleration for the obsolete fashions of their later or middle years; but will generally stickle for the intrinsic elegance of those which were prevalent in the bright days of their early youth,—as being still associated in their recollections, with the beauty with which they were first enchanted, and the gay spirits with which they were then inspired. In the same way, while we laugh at the fashions of which fine ladies and gentlemen were proud in the days of our childhood, because they are now associated only with images of decrepitude and decay, we look with some feelings of veneration on the habits of more remote generations, the individuals of which are only known to us as historical persons; and with unmingled respect and admiration on those still more ancient habiliments which remind us either of the heroism of the feudal chivalry, or the virtue and nobleness of classical antiquity. The iron mail of the Gothic knight, or the clumsy shield and naked arms of the Roman warrior, strike us as majestic and graceful, merely because they are associated with nothing but tales of romantic daring or patriotic prowess,—while the full-bottomed periwigs that were added to the soldier's equipment in the days

of Louis XIV. and King William,—and no doubt had a noble effect in the eyes of that generation,—now appear to us equally ridiculous and unbecoming; merely because such appendages are no longer to be seen, but upon the heads of sober and sedentary lawyers, or in the pictures of antiquated esquires.

We cannot afford, however, to enlarge any farther upon these considerations, and are inclined indeed to think, that what has been already said on the subject of associations, which, though not universal, are common to whole classes of persons, will make it unnecessary to enlarge on those that are peculiar to each individual. It is almost enough, indeed, to transcribe the following short passage from Mr. Alison.

"There is no man, who has not some interesting associations with particular scenes, or airs, or books; and who does not feel their beauty or sublimity enhanced to him by such connections. The view of the house where one was born, of the school where one was educated, and where the gay years of infancy were passed, is indifferent to no man. There are songs also, which we have heard in our infancy, which, when brought to our remembrance in after years, raise emotions for which we cannot well account; and which, though perhaps very indifferent in themselves, still continue from this association, and from the variety of conceptions which they kindle in our minds, to be our favourites through life. The scenes which have been distinguished by the residence of any person, whose memory we admire, produce a similar effect. *Movemur enim, nescio quo pacto, locis ipsis, in quibus eorum, quos diligimus, aut admiramur adsunt vestigia.* The scenes themselves may be little beautiful; but the delight with which we recollect the traces of their lives, blends itself insensibly with the emotions which the scenery excites; and the admiration which these recollections afford, seems to give a kind of sanctity to the place where they dwelt, and converts every thing into beauty which appears to have been connected with them."

There are similar impressions,—as to the sort of scenery to which we have been long accustomed,—as to the style of personal beauty by which we were first enchanted,—and even as to the dialect, or the form of versification which we first began to admire, that bestow a secret and adventitious charm upon all these objects, and enable us to discover in them a beauty which is invisible, because it is non-existent to every other eye.

In all the cases we have hitherto considered, the external object is supposed to have acquired its beauty by being actually connected with the causes of our natural emotions, either as a constant sign of their existence, or as being casually present on the ordinary occasions of their excitement. There is a relation, however, of another kind, to which also it is necessary to attend, both to elucidate the general grounds of the theory, and to explain several appearances that might otherwise expose it to objections. This is the relation which external objects may bear to our internal feelings, and the power they may consequently acquire of suggesting them, in consequence of a sort of resemblance or analogy which they seem to have to their natural and appropriate objects. The language of Poetry is founded, in a great degree, upon this analogy; and *all language*, indeed, is full of it; and attests, by its structure, both the extent to which it is spontaneously pursued, and the effects that are produced by its suggestion. We take a familiar instance from the elegant writer to whom we have already referred.

"What, for instance, is the leading impression we receive from the scenery of spring? The soft and gentle green with which the earth is spread, the feeble texture of the plants and flowers, and the remains of winter yet lingering among the woods and hills,—all conspire to infuse into our minds somewhat of that fearful tenderness with which *infancy* is usually beheld. With such a sentiment, how innumerable are the ideas which present themselves to our imagination! ideas, it is apparent, by no means confined to the scene before our eyes, or to the possible desolation which may yet await its infant beauty, but which almost involuntarily extend themselves *to analogies with the life of man!* and bring before us all those images of hope or fear, which, according to our peculiar situations, have the dominion of our hearts! The beauty of autumn is accompanied with a similar exercise of thought: the leaves begin then to drop from the trees; the flowers and shrubs, with which the fields were adorned

in the summer months, decay; the woods and groves are silent; the sun himself seems gradually to withdraw his light, or to become enfeebled in his power. Who is there, who, at this season, does not feel his mind impressed with a sentiment of melancholy? or who is able to resist that current of thought, which, from such appearances of decay, so naturally leads him to the solemn imagination of that inevitable fate, which is to bring on *alike the decay of life, of empire, and of nature itself?*"

A thousand such analogies, indeed, are suggested to us by the most familiar aspects of nature. The morning and the evening present the same ready picture of youth and of closing life, as the various vicissitudes of the year. The withering of flowers images out to us the languor of beauty, or the sickness of childhood. The loud roar of troubled waters seems to bear some resemblance to the voice of lamentation or violence; and the softer murmur of brighter streams, to be expressive of cheerfulness and innocence. The purity and transparency of water or of air, indeed, is universally itself felt to be expressive of mental purity and gaiety; and their darkness or turbulence, of mental gloom and dejection. The genial warmth of autumn suggests to us the feeling of mild benevolence;—the sunny gleams and fitful showers of early spring, remind us of the waywardness of infancy;—flowers waving on their slender stems, impress us with the notion of flexibility and lightness of temper. All fine and delicate forms are typical of delicacy and gentleness of character; and almost all forms, bounded by waving or flowing lines, suggest ideas of easy movement, social pliability, and elegance. Rapid and impetuous motion seems to be emblematical of violence and passion;—slow and steady motion, of deliberation, dignity, and resolution;—fluttering motion, of inconstancy or terror;—and waving motion, according as it is slow or swift, of sadness or playfulness. A lofty tower, or a massive building, gives us at once the idea of firmness and elevation of character;—a rock battered by the waves, of fortitude in adversity. Stillness and calmness, in the water or the air, seem to shadow out tenderness, indolence, and placidity;—moonlight we call pensive and gentle;—and the unclouded sun gives us an impression of exulting vigour, and domineering ambition and glory.

It is not difficult, with the assistance which language affords us, to trace the origin of all these, and a thousand other associations. In many instances, the qualities which thus suggest mental emotions, do actually resemble their constant concomitants in human nature; as is obviously the case with the forms and motions which are sublime and beautiful: and, in some, their effects and relations bear so obvious an analogy to those of human conduct or feeling, as to force itself upon the notice of the most careless beholder. But, whatever may have been their original, the very structure of language attests the vast extent to which they have been carried, and the nature of the suggestions to which they are indebted for their interest or beauty. Since we all speak familiarly of the sparkling of wit—and the darkness of melancholy—can it be any way difficult to conceive that bright light may be agreeable, because it reminds us of gaiety,—and darkness oppressive, because it is felt to be emblematical of sorrow? It is very remarkable, indeed, that while almost all the words by which the affections of the mind are expressed, seem to have been borrowed originally from the qualities of matter, the epithets by which we learn afterwards to distinguish such material objects as are felt to be sublime or beautiful, are all of them epithets that had been previously appropriated to express some quality or emotion of mind. Colours are thus familiarly said to be gay or grave—motions to be lively, or deliberate, or capricious—forms to be delicate or modest—sounds to be animated or mournful—prospects to be cheerful or melancholy—rocks to be bold—waters to be tranquil—and a thousand other phrases of the same import; all indicating, most unequivocally, the sources from which our interest in matter is derived, and proving, that it is necessary, in all cases, to confer mind and feeling upon it, before it can be conceived as either sublime or beautiful. The great charm, indeed, and the great secret of poetical diction, consists in thus lending life and emotion to all the objects it embraces; and the enchanting beauty which we sometimes recognise in descriptions of very ordinary phenomena, will be found to arise from the force of imagination

by which the poet has connected with human emotions, a variety of objects, to which common minds could not discover such a relation What the poet does for his readers, however by his original similes and metaphors, in these higher cases, even the dullest of those readers do, in some degree, every day, for themselves; and the beauty which is perceived, when natural objects are unexpectedly vivified by the glowing fancy of the former, is precisely of the same kind that is felt when the closeness of the analogy enables them to force human feelings upon the recollection of all mankind. As the poet sees more of beauty in nature than ordinary mortals, just because he perceives more of these analogies and relations to social emotion, in which all beauty consists; so other men see more or less of this beauty, exactly as they happen to possess that fancy, or those habits, which enable them readily to trace out these relations.

From all these sources of evidence, then, we think it is pretty well made out, that the beauty or sublimity of external objects is nothing but the reflection of emotions excited by the feelings or condition of sentient beings; and is produced altogether by certain little portions, as it were, of love, joy, pity, veneration, or terror, that adhere to the objects that were present on the occasions of such emotions.—Nor, after what we have already said, does it seem necessary to reply to more than one of the objections to which we are aware that this theory is liable.—If beauty be nothing more than a reflection of love, pity, or veneration, how comes it, it may be asked, to be distinguished from these sentiments? They are never confounded with each other, either in our feelings or our language:—Why, then, should they all be confounded under the common name of beauty? and why should beauty, in all cases, affect us in a way so different from the love or compassion of which it is said to be merely the reflection?

Now, to these questions, we are somewhat tempted to answer, after the manner of our country, by asking, in our turn, whether it be really true, that beauty always affects us in one and the same manner, and always in a different manner from the simple and elementary affections which it is its office to recal to us? In very many cases, it appears to us, that the sensations which we receive from objects that are felt to be beautiful, and that in the highest degree, do not differ at all from the direct movements of tenderness or pity towards sentient beings. If the epithet of beauty be correctly (as it is universally) applied to many of the most admired and enchanting passages in poetry, which consist entirely in the expression of affecting sentiments, the question would be speedily decided; and it is a fact, at all events, too remarkable to be omitted, that some of the most powerful and delightful emotions that are uniformly classed under this name, arise altogether from the direct influence of such pathetic emotions, without the intervention of any material imagery. We do not wish, however, to dwell upon an argument, which certainly is not applicable to all parts of the question; and, admitting that, on many occasions, the feelings which we experience from beauty, are sensibly different from the primary emotions in which we think they originate, we shall endeavour, in a very few words, to give an explanation of this difference, which seems to be perfectly consistent with the theory we have undertaken to illustrate.

In the first place, it should make some difference on the primary affections to which we have alluded, that, in the cases alluded to, they are *reflected* from material objects, and not directly excited by their natural causes. The light of the moon has a very different complexion from that of the sun;—though it is in substance the sun's light: and glimpses of interesting, or even of familiar objects, caught unexpectedly from a mirror placed at a distance from these objects, will affect us, like sudden allusions in poetry, very differently from the natural perception of those objects in their ordinary relations. In the next place, the emotion, when suggested in the shape of beauty, comes upon us, for the most part, disencumbered of all those accompaniments which frequently give it a peculiar and less satisfactory character, when it arises from direct intercourse with its living objects. The compassion, for example, that is suggested by beauty of a gentle and winning description, is not attended with any of that disgust and uneasiness which frequently accompany the spectacle of real distress; nor with that importunate suggestion of the duty of relieving

it, from which it is almost inseparable. Nor does the temporary delight which we receive from beauty of a gay and animating character, call upon us for any such expenditure of spirits, or active demonstrations of sympathy, as are sometimes demanded by the turbulence of real joy. In the third place, the emotion of beauty, being partly founded upon illusion, is far more transitory in its own nature; and is both more apt to fluctuate and vary in its character, and more capable of being dismissed at pleasure, than any of the primary affections, whose shadow and representative it is. In the fourth place, the perception of beauty implies a certain exercise of the imagination that is not required in the case of direct emotion, and is sufficient, of itself, both to give a new character to every emotion that is suggested by the intervention of such an exercise, and to account for our classing all the various emotions that are so suggested under the same denomination of beauty. When we are injured, we feel indignation,—when we are wounded, we feel pain,—when we see suffering, we feel compassion,—and when we witness any splendid act of heroism or generosity, we feel admiration—without any effort of the imagination, or the intervention of any picture or vision in the mind. But when we feel indignation or pity, or admiration, in consequence of seeing some piece of inanimate matter that merely suggests or recals to us the ordinary causes or proper objects of these emotions, it is evident that our fancy is kindled by a sudden flash of recollection; and that the effect is produced by means of a certain poetical creation that is instantly conjured up in the mind. It is this active and heated state of the imagination, and this divided and busy occupation of the mind, that constitute the great peculiarity of the emotions we experience from the perception of beauty.

Finally, and this is perhaps the most important consideration of the whole, it should be recollected, that along with the shadow or suggestion of associated emotions, there is always present a real and direct perception, which not only gives a force and liveliness to all the images which it suggests, but seems to impart to them some share of its own reality. That there is an illusion of this kind in the case, is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact, that we invariably ascribe the interest, which we think has been proved to arise wholly from these associations, to the object itself, as one of its actual and inherent qualities; and consider *its* beauty as no less a property belonging to it, than any of its physical attributes. The associated interest, therefore, is beyond all doubt confounded with the present perception of the object itself; and a livelier and more instant impression is accordingly made upon the mind, than if the interesting conceptions had been merely excited in the memory by the usual operation of reflection or voluntary meditation. Something analogous to this is familiarly known to occur in other cases. When we merely think of an absent friend, our emotions are incomparably less lively than when the recollection of him is suddenly suggested by the unexpected sight of his picture, of the house where he dwelt, or the spot on which we last parted from him,—and all these objects seem for the moment to wear the colours of our own associated affections. When Captain Cook's companions found, in the remotest corner of the habitable globe, a broken spoon with the word *London* stamped upon it—and burst into tears at the sight!—they proved how differently we may be moved by emotions thus connected with the real presence of an actual perception, than by the mere recollection of the objects on which those emotions depend. Every one of them had probably thought of London every day since he left it; and many of them might have been talking of it with tranquillity, but a moment before this more effectual appeal was made to their sensibility.

If we add to all this, that there is necessarily something of vagueness and variableness in the emotions most generally excited by the perception of beauty, and that the mind wanders with the eye, over the different objects which may supply these emotions, with a degree of unsteadiness, and half voluntary half involuntary fluctuation, we may come to understand how the effect not only should be essentially different from that of the simple presentment of any one interesting conception, but should acquire a peculiarity which entitles it to a different denomination. Most of the associations of which we have been last speaking, as being founded on the analogies or fanciful resemblances that are felt to exist between physical

objects and qualities, and the interesting affections of mind, are intrinsically of this vague and wavering description, — and when we look at a fine landscape, or any other scene of complicated beauty, a great variety of such images are suddenly presented to the fancy, and as suddenly succeeded by others, as the eye ranges over the different features of which it is composed, and feeds upon the charms which it discloses. Now, the direct perception, in all such cases, not only perpetually accompanies the associated emotions, but is inextricably confounded with them in our feelings, and is even recognised upon reflection as the cause, not merely of their unusual strength, but of the several peculiarities by which we have shown that they are distinguished. It is not wonderful, therefore, either that emotions so circumstanced should not be classed along with similar affections, excited under different circumstances, or that the perception of present existence, thus mixed up, and indissolubly confounded with interesting conceptions, should between them produce a sensation of so distinct a nature as naturally to be distinguished by a peculiar name, — or that the *beauty* which results from this combination should, in ordinary language, be ascribed to the objects themselves, — the presence and perception of which is a necessary condition of its existence.

What we have now said is enough, we believe, to give an attentive reader that general conception of the theory before us, which is all that we can hope to give in the narrow limits to which we are confined. It may be observed, however, that we have spoken only of those sorts of beauty which we think capable of being resolved into some passion, or emotion, or pretty lively sentiment of our nature; and though these are undoubtedly the highest and most decided kinds of beauty, it is certain that there are many things called beautiful which cannot claim so lofty a connection. It is necessary, therefore, to observe, that, though every thing that excites any feeling worthy to be called an *emotion*, by its beauty or sublimity, will be found to be related to the natural objects of human passions or affections, there are many things which are pleasing or agreeable enough to be called beautiful, in consequence of their relation merely to human convenience and comfort; — many others that please by suggesting ideas of human skill and ingenuity; — and many that obtain the name of beautiful, by being associated with human fortune, vanity, or splendour. After what has been already said, it will not be necessary either to exemplify or explain these subordinate phenomena. It is enough merely to suggest, that they all please upon the same great principle of *sympathy with human feelings;* and are explained by the simple and indisputable fact, that we are pleased with the direct contemplation of human comfort, ingenuity, and fortune. All these, indeed, obviously resolve themselves into the great object of sympathy — human enjoyment. Convenience and comfort is but another name for a lower, but very indispensable ingredient of that emotion. Skill and ingenuity readily present themselves as means by which enjoyment may be promoted: and high fortune, and opulence, and splendour, pass, at least at a distance, for its certain causes and attendants. The beauty of fitness and adaptation of parts, even in the works of nature, is derived from the same fountain, — partly by means of its obvious analogy to works of human skill, and partly by suggestions of that Creative power and wisdom, to which all human destiny is subjected. The feelings, therefore, associated with all those qualities, though scarcely rising to the height of emotion, are obviously in a certain degree pleasing or interesting; and when several of them happen to be united in one object, may accumulate to a very great degree of beauty. It is needless, we think, to pursue these general propositions through all the details to which they so obviously lead. We shall confine ourselves, therefore, to a very few remarks upon the beauty of architecture, — and chiefly as an illustration of our general position.

There are few things, about which men of *virtu* are more apt to rave, than the merits of the Grecian architecture; and most of those who affect an uncommon purity and delicacy of taste, talk of the intrinsic beauty of its proportions as a thing not to be disputed, except by barbarian ignorance and stupidity. Mr. Alison, we think, was the first who gave a full and convincing refutation of this mysterious dogma; and, while he admits, in the most ample terms, the actual beauty of the objects in

question, has shown, we think, in the clearest manner, that it arises entirely from the combination of the following associations: — 1st, The association of utility, convenience, or fitness for the purposes of the building; 2d, Of security and stability, with a view to the nature of the materials; 3d, Of the skill and power requisite to mould such materials into forms so commodious; 4th, Of magnificence, and splendour, and expense; 5th, Of antiquity; and, 6thly, Of Roman and Grecian greatness. His observations are summed up in the following short sentence.

"The proportions," he observes, "of these orders, it is to be remembered, are distinct subjects of beauty, from the ornaments with which they are embellished, from the magnificence with which they are executed, from the purposes of elegance they are intended to serve, or the scenes of grandeur they are destined to adorn. It is in such scenes, however, and with such additions, that we are accustomed to observe them; and, while we feel the effect of all these accidental associations, we are seldom willing to examine what are the causes of the complex emotion we feel, and readily attribute to the nature of the architecture itself, the whole pleasure which we enjoy. But, besides these, there are other associations we have with these forms, that still more powerfully serve to command our admiration; for they are the GRECIAN orders; they derive their origin from those times, and were the ornament of those countries which are most hallowed in our imaginations; and it is difficult for us to see them, even in their modern copies, without feeling them operate upon our minds as relics of those polished nations where they first arose, and of that greater people by whom they were afterwards borrowed."

This analysis is to us perfectly satisfactory. But, indeed, we cannot conceive any more complete refutation of the notion of an intrinsic and inherent beauty in the proportions of the Grecian architecture, than the fact of the admitted beauty of such very opposite proportions in the Gothic. Opposite as they are, however, the great elements of beauty are the same in this style as in the other, — the impressions of religious awe and of chivalrous recollections, coming here in place of the classical associations which constitute so great a share of the interest of the former. It is well observed too, by Mr. Alison, that the great durability and costliness of the productions of this art, have had the effect, in almost all regions of the world, of rendering their *Fashion* permanent, after it had once attained such a degree of perfection as to fulfil its substantial purposes.

"Buildings," he observes, "may last, and are intended to last for centuries. The life of man is very inadequate to the duration of such productions; and the present period of the world, though old with respect to those arts which are employed upon perishable subjects, is yet young in relation to an art, which is employed upon so durable materials as those of architecture. Instead of a few years, therefore, centuries must probably pass before such productions demand to be renewed; and long before that period is elapsed, the sacredness of antiquity is acquired by the subject itself, and a new motive given for the preservation of similar forms. In every country, accordingly, the same effect has taken place: and the same causes which have thus served to produce among us, for so many years, an uniformity of taste with regard to the style of Grecian architecture, have produced also, among the nations of the East, for a much longer course of time, a similar uniformity of taste with regard to their ornamental style of architecture: and have perpetuated among them the same forms which were in use among their forefathers, before the Grecian orders were invented."

It is not necessary, we think, to carry these illustrations any farther: as the theory they are intended to explain, is now, we believe, universally adopted, though with some limitations, which we see no reason to retain. Those suggested by Mr. Alison, we have already endeavoured to dispose of in the few remarks we have made upon his publication; and it only remains to say a word or two more upon Mr. Knight's doctrine as to the primitive and independent beauty of colours, upon which we have already hazarded some remarks.

Agreeing as he does with Mr. Alison, and all modern inquirers, that the whole beauty of objects consists, in the far greater number of instances, in the associations to which we have alluded, he still maintains, that some few

visible objects affect us with a sense of beauty in consequence of the pleasurable impression they make upon the sense — and that our perception of beauty is, in these instances, a mere organic sensation. Now, we have already stated, that it would be something quite unexampled in the history either of mind or of language, if certain physical and bodily sensations should thus be confounded with moral and social feelings with which they had no connection, and pass familiarly under one and the same name. Beauty consists confessedly, in almost all cases, in *the suggestion* of moral or social emotions, mixed up and modified by a present sensation or perception; and it is this suggestion, and this identification with a present object, that constitutes its essence, and gives a common character to the whole class of feelings it produces, sufficient to justify their being designated by a common appellation. If the word beauty, in short, must mean something, and if *this* be very clearly what it means, in all the remarkable instances of its occurrence, it is difficult to conceive, that it should occasionally mean something quite different, and denote a mere sensual or physical gratification, unaccompanied by the suggestion of any moral emotion whatever. According to Mr. Knight, however, and, indeed, to many other writers, this is the case with regard to the beauty of colours; which depends altogether, they say, upon the delight which the eye naturally takes in their contemplation — this delight being just as primitive and sensual as that which the palate receives from the contact of agreeable flavours.

It must be admitted, we think, in the first place, that such an allegation is in itself extremely improbable, and contrary to all analogy, and all experience of the structure of language, or of the laws of thought. It is farther to be considered, too, that if the pleasures of the senses are ever to be considered as beautiful, those pleasures which are the most lively and important would be the most likely to usurp this denomination, and to take rank with the higher gratifications that result from the perception of beauty. Now, it admits of no dispute, that the mere organic pleasures of the eye (if indeed they have any existence) are far inferior to those of the palate, the touch, and indeed almost all the other senses, — none of which, however, are in any case confounded with the sense of beauty. In the next place, it should follow, that if what affords organic pleasure to the eye be properly called beautiful, what offends or gives pain to it, should be called ugly. Now, excessive or dazzling light is offensive to the eye — but, considered by itself, it is never called ugly, but only painful or disagreeable. The moderate excitement of light, on the other hand, or the soothing of certain bright but temperate colours, when considered in this primary aspect, are not called beautiful, but only agreeable or refreshing. So far as the direct offence or comfort of the organ, in short, is referred to, the language which we use relates strictly to physical or bodily sensation, and is not confounded with that which relates to mental emotion; and we really see no ground for supposing that there is any exception to this rule.

It is very remarkable, indeed, that the sense whose organic gratification is here supposed to constitute the primary feeling of beauty, should be one, in the first place, whose direct organic gratifications are of very little force or intensity; — and, in the next place, one whose office it is, almost exclusively, to make us acquainted with the existence and properties of those external objects which are naturally interesting to our inward feelings and affections. This peculiarity makes it (at the very least) extremely probable, that ideas of emotion should be *associated* with the perceptions of this sense; but extremely improbable, that its naked and *unassociated* sensations should in any case be classed with such emotions. If the name of beauty were given to what directly gratifies any sense, such as that of tasting or smelling, which does *not* make us acquainted with the nature or relations of outward objects, there would be less room for such an explanation. But when it is the business of a particular sense or organ to introduce to our knowledge those objects which are naturally connected with ideas of emotion, it is easy to understand how *its* perceptions should be associated with these emotions, and an interest and importance thus extended to them, that belong to the intimations of no other bodily organ. But, for those very reasons, we should be prepared to suspect, that all the interest they possess is derived from

this association; and to distrust the accuracy of any observations that might lead us to conclude that its mere organic impulses ever produced any thing akin to those associated emotions, or entitled to pass under their name. This caution will appear still more reasonable, when it is considered, that all the other qualities of visible objects, except only their colours, are now admitted to be perfectly indifferent in themselves, and to possess no other beauty than they may derive from their associations with our ordinary affections. There are no *forms*, for example, even in Mr. Knight's opinion, that have any intrinsic beauty, or any power of pleasing or affecting us, except through their associations, or affinities to mental affections, either as expressive of fitness and utility, or as types and symbols of certain moral or intellectual qualities in which the sources of our interest are obvious. Yet the form of an object is as conspicuous an ingredient of its beauty as its colour; and a property, too, which seems at first view to be as intrinsically and independently pleasing. Why, then, should we persist in holding that colours, or combinations of colours, please from being *naturally* agreeable to the organ of sight, when it is admitted that other visible qualities, which *seem* to possess the same power of pleasing, are found, upon examination, to owe it entirely to the principle of association?

The only reason that can be assigned, or that actually exists for this distinction, is, that it has been supposed more difficult to account for the beauty of colours, upon the principles which have accounted for other beauties, or to specify the particular associations by virtue of which they could acquire this quality. Now, it appears to us that there is no such difficulty; and that there is no reason whatever for holding that one colour, or combination of colours, is more pleasing than another, except upon the same grounds of association which recommend particular forms, motions, or proportions. It appears to us, that the organic pleasures of the eye are extremely few and insignificant. It is hurt, no doubt, by an excessive glare of light; and it is in some degree gratified, perhaps, by a moderate degree of it. But it is only by the quantity or intensity of the light, we think, that it is so affected. The colour of it, we take it, is, in all cases, absolutely indifferent. But it is the colour only that is called beautiful or otherwise; and these qualities we think it very plainly derives from the common fountain of association. In the first place, we would ask, whether there is any colour that is beautiful in all situations? and, in the next place, whether there is any colour that is not beautiful in some situation? With regard to the first, take the colours that are most commonly referred to as intrinsically beautiful — bright and soft green — clear blue — bright pink, or vermilion. The first is unquestionably beautiful in vernal woods and summer meadows; and, we humbly conceive, is beautiful, because it is the natural sign and concomitant of those scenes and seasons of enjoyment. Blue, again, is beautiful in the vernal sky; — and, as we believe, for the sake of the pleasures of which such skies are prolific; and pink is beautiful on the cheeks of a young woman or the leaves of a rose, for reasons too obvious to be stated. We have associations enough, therefore, to recommend all those colours in the situations in which they are beautiful: But strong as these associations are, they are unable to make them universally beautiful, — or beautiful, indeed, in any other situations. Green would not be beautiful in the sky — nor blue on the cheek — nor vermilion on the grass. It may be said, indeed, that, though they are always recognised as beautiful in themselves, their obvious unfitness in such situations counteracts the effect of their beauty, and makes an opposite impression, as of something monstrous and unnatural; and that, accordingly, they are all beautiful in indifferent situations, where there is no such antagonist principle — in furniture, dress, and ornaments. Now the fact, in the first place, is not so; — these bright colours being but seldom and sparingly admitted in ornaments or works of art; and no man, for example, choosing to have a blue house, or a green ceiling, or a pink coat. But, in the second place, if the facts were admitted, we think it obvious, that the *general* beauty of those colours would be sufficiently accounted for by the very interesting and powerful associations under which all of them are so frequently presented by the hand of Nature. The interest we take in female beauty, — in vernal delights, — in unclouded skies, — is far

too lively and too constantly recurring, not to stamp a kindred interest upon the colours that are naturally associated with such objects; and to make us regard with some affection and delight those hues that remind us of them, although we should only meet them upon a fan, or a dressing-box, the lining of a curtain, or the back of a screen. Finally, we beg leave to observe, that all bright and clear colours are naturally typical of cheerfulness and purity of mind, and are hailed as emblems of moral qualities, to which no one can be indifferent.

With regard to ugly colours again, we really are not aware of any to which that epithet can be safely applied. Dull and dingy hues are usually mentioned as in themselves the least pleasing. Yet these are the prevailing tints in many beautiful landscapes, and many admired pictures. They are also the most common colours that are chosen for dress (male dress at least), — for building — for furniture, where the consideration of beauty is the only motive for the choice. In fact, the *shaded* parts of all coloured objects pass into tints of this description: — nor can we at present recollect any one colour, which we could specify as in itself disagreeable, without running counter to the feelings and the practice of the great mass of mankind. If the fact, however, were otherwise, and if certain muddy and dull colours were universally allowed to be disagreeable, we should think there could be no difficulty in referring these, too, to natural associations. Darkness, and all that approaches it, is naturally associated with ideas of melancholy, — of helplessness, and danger; — and the gloomy hues that remind us of it, or seem to draw upon it, must share in the same associations. Lurid skies, too, it should be observed, and turbid waters, and unfruitful swamps, and dreary morasses, are the natural and most common wearers of these dismal liveries. It is from these that we first become acquainted with them; and it is needless, therefore, to say, that such objects are necessarily associated with ideas of discomfort, and sadness, and danger; and that the colours that remind us of them, can scarcely fail to recal some of the same disagreeable sensations.

Enough, however, and more than enough, has been said about the supposed primitive and independent beauty of separate colours. It is chiefly upon the intrinsic beauty of their mixture or combinations that Mr. Knight and his adherents have insisted; — and it is no doubt quite true, that, among painters and connoisseurs, we hear a great deal about the harmony and composition of tints, and the charms and difficulties of a judicious colouring. In all this, however, we cannot help suspecting that there is no little pedantry, and no little jargon; and that these phrases, when used without reference to the practical difficulties of the art, which must go for nothing in the present question, really mean little more than the true and natural appearance of coloured objects, seen through the same tinted or partially obscure medium that commonly constitutes the atmosphere: and for the actual optical effects of which but few artists know how to make the proper allowance. In nature we know of no discordant or offensive colouring, except what may be referred to some accident or disaster that spoils the moral or sentimental expression of the scene, and disturbs the associations upon which all its beauty, whether of forms or of hues, seems to us very plainly dependent. We are perfectly aware, that ingenious persons have been disposed to dogmatize and to speculate very confidently upon these subjects; and have had the benefit of seeing various learned treatises upon the natural *gamut* of colours, and the inherent congruity of those that are called complementary, with reference to the prismatic *spectrum.* But we confess we have no faith in any of those fancies; and believe, that, if all these colours were fairly arranged on a plain board, according to the most rigid rules of this supposed harmony, nobody, but the author of the theory, would perceive the smallest beauty in the exhibition, or be the least offended by reversing their collocation.

We do not mean, however, to dispute, that the laws of colouring, insisted on by learned artists, will produce a more pleasing effect *upon trained judges of the art*, than a neglect of these laws; because we have little doubt that these combinations of colour are recommended by certain associations, which render them generally pleasing to persons so trained and educated; — all that we maintain is, that there are no combinations that are originally and universally pleasing or displeasing to the

eye, independent of such associations; and it seems to us an irresistible proof of this, that these laws of harmonious colouring are perpetually and deliberately violated by great multitudes of persons, who not only have the perfect use of their sight, but are actually bestowing great pains and expense in providing for its gratification, in the very act of this violation. The Dutch trader, who paints over the outside of his country-house with as many bright colours as are to be found in his tulip-bed, and garnishes his green shutters with blue facings, and his purple roof with lilac ridges, not only *sees* as well as the studied colourist, who shudders at the exhibition, but actually receives as much pleasure, and as strong an impression of beauty, from the finished *lust-haus*, as the artist does from one of his best pictures. It is impossible, then, that these combinations of colours can be *naturally* or intrinsically offensive to the organ of sight; and their beauty or ugliness *must* depend upon the associations which different individuals may have happened to form with regard to them. We contend, however, for nothing more; and are quite willing to allow that the associations which recommend his staring tawdriness to the burgomaster, are such as could not easily have been formed in the mind of a diligent and extensive observer of nature, and that they would probably be reversed by habits of reflection and study. But the same thing, it is obvious, may be said of the notions of beauty of any other description that prevail among the rude, the inexperienced, and uninstructed; — though, in all other instances, we take it for granted, that the beauty which *is* perceived depends altogether upon association, and in no degree on its power of giving a pleasurable impulse to the organ to which it addresses itself. If any considerable number of persons, with the perfect use of sight, actually take pleasure in certain combinations of colours, — *that* is complete proof that such combinations are not naturally offensive to the organ of sight, and that the pleasure of such persons, exactly like that of those who disagree with them, is derived not from the sense, but from associations with its perceptions.

With regard, again, to the effect of broken masses of light and shadow, it is proper, in the first place, to remember, that by the eye we see *colour only*; and that lights and shadows, as far as the mere organ is concerned, mean nothing but variations of tint. It is very true, no doubt, that we soon learn to refer many of those variations to light and shade, and that they thus become *signs* to us of depth, and distance, and relief. But, is not this, of itself, sufficient to refute the idea of their affording any primitive or organic pleasure? In so far as they are mere variations of tints, they may be imitated by unmeaning daubs of paint on a pallet; — in so far as they are *signs*, it is to the mind that they address themselves, and not to the organ. They are signs, too, it should be recollected, and the only signs we have, by which we can receive any correct knowledge of the existence and condition of all external objects at a distance from us, whether interesting or not interesting. Without the assistance of variety of tint, and of lights and shadows, we could never distinguish one object from another, except by the touch. These appearances, therefore, are the perpetual vehicles of almost all our interesting perceptions; and are consequently associated with all the emotions we receive from visible objects. It is pleasant to see *many* things in one prospect, because some of them are probably agreeable; and it is pleasant to know the relations of those things, because the qualities or associations, by means of which they interest us, generally depend upon that knowledge. The mixture of colours and shades, however, is necessary to this enjoyment, and consequently is a sign of it, and a source of associated interest or beauty.

Mr. Knight, however, goes much farther than this; and maintains that the beauty which is so distinctly felt in many pictures of objects in themselves disagreeable, is to be ascribed entirely to the effect of the brilliant and harmonious tints, and the masses of light and shadow that may be employed in the representation. The filthy and tattered rags of a beggar, he observes, and the putrifying contents of a dunghill, may form beautiful objects in a picture; because, considered as mere objects of sight, they may often present beautiful effects of colouring and shadow; and these are preserved or heightened in the imitation, disjoined from all their offensive accompaniments. Now, if the tints and shades were the exclusive

sources of our gratification, and if this gratification was diminished, instead of being heightened, by the suggestion which, however transiently, *must* still intrude itself, that they appeared in an imitation of disgusting objects, it must certainly follow, that the pleasure and the beauty would be much enhanced if there was *no imitation of any thing whatever*, and if the canvas merely presented the tints and shades, unaccompanied with the representation of any particular object. It is perfectly obvious, however, that it would be absurd to call such a collection of coloured spots a beautiful picture; and that a man would be laughed at who should hang up such a piece of stained canvas among the works of the great artists. Again, if it were really possible for any one, but a student of art, to confine the attention to the mere colouring and shadowing of any picture, there is nothing so disgusting but what might form the subject of a beautiful imitation. A piece of putrid veal, or a cancerous ulcer, or the rags that are taken from it, may display the most brilliant tints, and the finest distribution of light and shadow. Does Mr. Knight, however, seriously think, that either of these experiments would succeed? Or are there, in reality, no other qualities in the pictures in question, to which their beauty can be ascribed, but the organic effects of their colours? We humbly conceive that there are; and that far less ingenuity than his might have been able to detect them.

There is, in the first place, the pleasing association of the skill and power of the artist,— a skill and power which we know *may* be employed to produce unmingled delight; whatever may be the character of the particular effort before us: and with the pride of whose possessors we sympathise. But, in the second place, we do humbly conceive that there are many interesting associations connected with the subjects which have been represented as purely disgusting. The aspect of human wretchedness and decay is not, at all events, an *indifferent* spectacle; and, if presented to us without actual offence to our senses, or any call on our active beneficence, may excite a sympathetic emotion, which is known to be far from undelightful. Many an attractive poem has been written on the miseries of beggars; and why should painting be supposed more fastidious? Besides, it will be observed, that the beggars of the painter are generally among the most interesting of that interesting order; — either young and lovely children, whose health and gaiety, and sweet expression, form an affecting contrast with their squalid garments, and the neglect and misery to which they seem to be destined,—or old and venerable persons, mingling something of the dignity and reverence of age with the broken spirit of their condition, and seeming to reproach mankind for exposing heads so old and white to the pelting of the pitiless storm. While such pictures suggest images so pathetic, it looks almost like a wilful perversity, to ascribe their beauty entirely to the mixture of colours which they display, and to the forgetfulness of these images. Even for the dunghill, we think it is possible to say something, — though, we confess, we have never happened to see any picture, of which that useful compound formed the peculiar subject. There is the display of the painter's art and power here also; and the dunghill is not only useful, but is associated with many pleasing images of rustic toil and occupation, and of the simplicity, and comfort, and innocence of agricultural life. We do not know that a dunghill is at all a disagreeable object to look at, even in plain reality — provided it be so far off as not to annoy us with its odour, or to soil us with its effusions. In a picture, however, we are safe from any of these disasters; and, considering that it is usually combined, in such delineations, with other more pleasing and touching remembrancers of humble happiness and contentment, we really do not see that it was at all necessary to impute any mysterious or intrinsic beauty to its complexion, in order to account for the satisfaction with which we can then bear to behold it.

Having said so much with a view to reduce to its just value, as an ingredient of beauty, the mere organical delight which the eye is supposed to derive from colours, we really have not patience to apply the same considerations to the alleged beauty of *Sounds* that are supposed to be insignificant. Beautiful sounds, in general, we think, are beautiful from association only,—from their resembling the natural tones of various passions and affections, — or from their being originally and most frequently

presented to us in scenes or on occasions of natural interest or emotion. With regard, again, to successive or co-existent sounds, we do not, of course, mean to dispute, that there are such things as melody and harmony; and that most men are offended or gratified by the violation or observance of those laws upon which they depend. This, however, it should be observed, is a faculty quite *unique*, and unlike any thing else in our constitution; by no means universal, as the sense of beauty is, even in cultivated societies; and apparently withheld from whole communities of quick-eared savages and barbarians. Whether the kind of gratification, which results from the mere musical arrangement of sounds, would be felt to be beautiful, or would pass under that name, if it could be presented entirely detached from any associated emotions, appears to us to be exceedingly doubtful. Even with the benefit of such combinations, we do not find, that every arrangement which merely preserves inviolate the rules of composition, is considered as beautiful; and we do not think that it would be consonant, either with the common feeling or common language of mankind, to bestow this epithet upon pieces that had no other merit. At all events, and whatever may be thought of the proper name of this singular gratification, of a musical ear, it seems to be quite certain, that all that rises to the dignity of an *emotion* in the pleasure we receive from sounds, is as clearly the gift of association, as in the case of visible beauty, — of association with the passionate tones and modulations of the human voice, — with the scenes to which the interesting sounds are native, — with the poetry to which they have been married, — or even with the skill and genius of the artist by whom they have been arranged.

Hitherto we have spoken of the beauty of external objects only. But the whole difficulty of the theory consists in its application to them. If that be once adjusted, the beauty of immaterial objects can occasion no perplexity. Poems and other compositions in words, are beautiful in proportion as they are conversant with beautiful objects — or as they suggest to us, in a more direct way, the moral and social emotions on which the beauty of all objects depends. Theorems and demonstrations again are beautiful, according as they excite in us emotions of admiration for the genius and intellectual power of their inventors, and images of the magnificent and beneficial ends to which such discoveries may be applied; — and mechanical contrivances are beautiful when they remind us of similar talents and ingenuity, and at the same time impress us with a more direct sense of their vast utility to mankind, and of the great additional conveniences with which life is consequently adorned. In all cases, therefore, there is the suggestion of some interesting conception or emotion associated with a present perception, in which it is apparently confounded and embodied — and this, according to the whole of the preceding deduction, is the distinguishing characteristic of beauty.

Having now explained, as fully as we think necessary, the grounds of that opinion as to the nature of beauty which appears to be most conformable to the truth — we have only to add a word or two as to the necessary consequences of its adoption upon several other controversies of a kindred description.

In the first place, then, we conceive that it establishes the substantial identity of the Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque; and, consequently, puts an end to all controversy that is not purely verbal, as to the difference of those several qualities. Every material object that interests us, without actually hurting or gratifying our bodily feelings, must do so, according to this theory, in one and the same manner, — that is, by suggesting or recalling some emotion or affection of ourselves, or some other sentient being, and presenting, to our imagination at least, some natural object of love, pity, admiration, or awe. The interest of material objects, therefore, is always *the same;* and arises, in every case, not from any physical qualities they may possess, but from their association with some idea of emotion. But, though material objects have but one means of exciting emotion, the emotions they do excite are infinite. They are mirrors that may reflect all shades and all colours; and, in point of fact, do seldom reflect the same hues twice. No two interesting objects, perhaps, whether known by the name of Beautiful, Sublime, or Picturesque, ever produced exactly the same emotion in the beholder; and no one object, it is most probable, ever moved any two persons to the very same conceptions. As

they may be associated with all the feelings and affections of which the human mind is susceptible, so they may suggest those feelings in all their variety, and, in fact, do daily excite all sorts of emotions — running through every gradation, from extreme gaiety and elevation, to the borders of horror and disgust.

Now, it is certainly true, that all the variety of emotions raised in this way, on the single basis of association, may be classed, in a rude way, under the denominations of sublime, beautiful, and picturesque, according as they partake of awe, tenderness, or admiration: and we have no other objection to this nomenclature, except its extreme imperfection, and the delusions to which we know that it has given occasion. If objects that interest by their association with ideas of power, and danger, and terror, are to be distinguished by the peculiar name of sublime, why should there not be a separate name also for objects that interest by associations of mirth and gaiety — another for those that please by suggestions of softness and melancholy,—another for such as are connected with impressions of comfort and tranquillity,—and another and another for those that are related to pity, and admiration, and love, and regret, and all the other distinct emotions and affections of our nature? These are not in reality less distinguishable from each other, than from the emotions of awe and veneration that confer the title of sublime on *their* representatives; and while all the former are confounded under the comprehensive appellation of beauty, this partial attempt at distinction is only apt to mislead us into an erroneous opinion of our accuracy, and to make us believe, both that there is a greater conformity among the things that pass under the same name, and a greater difference between those that pass under different names, than is really the case. We have seen already, that the radical error of almost all preceding inquirers, has lain in supposing that every thing that passed under the name of beautiful, must have some real and inherent quality in common with every thing else that obtained that name: And it is scarcely necessary for us to observe, that it has been almost as general an opinion, that sublimity was not only something radically different from beauty, but actually opposite to it; whereas the fact is, that it is far more nearly related to some sorts of beauty, than many sorts of beauty are to each other; and that both are founded exactly upon the same principle of suggesting some past or possible emotion of some sentient being.

Upon this important point, we are happy to find our opinions confirmed by the authority of Mr. Stewart, who, in his Essay on the Beautiful, already referred to, has observed not only that there appears to him to be no inconsistency or impropriety in such expressions as the *sublime beauties* of nature or of the sacred Scriptures; — but has added, in express terms, that, "to oppose the beautiful to the sublime, or to the picturesque, strikes him as something analogous to a contrast between the beautiful and the comic — the beautiful and the tragic — the beautiful and the pathetic — or the beautiful and the romantic."

The only other advantage which we shall specify as likely to result from the general adoption of the theory we have been endeavouring to illustrate is, that it seems calculated to put an end to all these perplexing and vexatious questions about the standard of taste, which have given occasion to so much impertinent and so much elaborate discussion. If things are not beautiful in themselves, but only as they serve to suggest interesting conceptions to the mind, then every thing which does in point of fact suggest such a conception to any individual, *is beautiful* to that individual; and it is not only quite true that there is no room for disputing about tastes, but that all tastes are equally just and correct, in so far as each individual speaks only of his own emotions. When a man calls a thing beautiful, however, he may indeed mean to make two very different assertions; — he may mean that it gives *him* pleasure by suggesting to him some interesting emotion; and, in this sense, there can be no doubt that, if he merely speak truth, the thing is beautiful; and that it pleases him precisely in the same way that all other things please those to whom they appear beautiful. But if he mean farther to say that the thing possesses some quality which should make it appear beautiful to every other person, and that it is owing to some prejudice or defect in them if it appear otherwise, then he is as unreasonable and absurd as he would think those

who should attempt to convince him that he felt no emotion of beauty.

All tastes, then, are equally just and true, in so far as concerns the individual whose taste is in question; and what a man feels distinctly to be beautiful, *is beautiful* to him, whatever other people may think of it. All this follows clearly from the theory now in question: but it does not follow, from it, that all tastes are equally good or desirable, or that there is any difficulty in describing that which is really the best, and the most to be envied. The only use of the faculty of taste, is to afford an innocent delight, and to assist in the cultivation of a finer morality; and that man certainly will have the most delight from this faculty, who has the most numerous and the most powerful perceptions of beauty. But, if beauty consist in the reflection of our affections and sympathies, it is plain that *he* will always see the most beauty whose affections are the warmest and most exercised,—whose imagination is the most powerful, and who has most accustomed himself to attend to the objects by which he is surrounded. In so far as mere feeling and enjoyment are concerned, therefore, it seems evident that the taste must be that which belongs to the best affections, the most active fancy, and the most attentive habits of observation. It will follow pretty exactly too, that all men's perceptions of beauty will be nearly in proportion to the degree of their sensibility and social sympathies; and that those who have no affections towards sentient beings, will be as certainly insensible to beauty in external objects, as he, who cannot hear the sound of his friend's voice, must be deaf to its echo.

In so far as the sense of beauty is regarded as a mere source of enjoyment, this seems to be the only distinction that deserves to be attended to; and the only cultivation that taste should ever receive, with a view to the gratification of the individual, should be through the indirect channel of cultivating the affections and powers of observation. If we aspire, however, to be *creators*, as well as observers of beauty, and place any part of our happiness in ministering to the gratification of others — as artists, or poets, or authors of any sort — then, indeed, a new distinction of tastes, and a far more laborious system of cultivation, will be necessary. A man who pursues only his own delight, will be as much charmed with objects that suggest powerful emotions in consequence of personal and accidental associations, as with those that introduce similar emotions by means of associations that are universal and indestructible. To him, all objects of the former class are really as beautiful as those of the latter — and for his own gratification, the creation of that sort of beauty is just as important an occupation: but if he conceive the ambition of creating beauties for the admiration of others, he must be cautious to employ only such objects as are the *natural* signs, or the *inseparable* concomitants of emotions of which the greater part of mankind are susceptible; and his taste will *then* deserve to be called bad and false, if he obtrude upon the public, as beautiful, objects that are not likely to be associated in common minds with any interesting impressions.

For a man himself, then, there is no taste that is either bad or false; and the only difference worthy of being attended to, is that between a great deal and a very little. Some who have cold affections, sluggish imaginations, and no habits of observation, can with difficulty discern beauty in any thing; while others, who are full of kindness and sensibility, and who have been accustomed to attend to all the objects around them, feel it almost in every thing. It is no matter what other people may think of the objects of their admiration; nor ought it to be any concern of theirs that the public would be astonished or offended, if they were called upon to join in that admiration. So long as no such call is made, this anticipated discrepancy of feeling need give *them* no uneasiness; and the suspicion of it should produce no contempt in any other persons. It is a strange aberration indeed of vanity that makes us despise persons for being happy — for having sources of enjoyment in which we cannot share: — and yet this is the true source of the ridicule, which is so generally poured upon individuals who seek only to enjoy their peculiar tastes unmolested: for, if there be any truth in the theory we have been expounding, no taste is bad for any other reason than because it is peculiar — as the objects in which it delights must actually serve to suggest to the individual those com-

mon emotions and universal affections upon which the sense of beauty is every where founded. The misfortune is, however, that we are apt to consider all persons who make known their peculiar relishes, and especially all who create any objects for their gratification, as in some measure dictating to the public, and setting up an idol for general adoration; and hence this intolerant interference with almost all peculiar perceptions of beauty, and the unsparing derision that pursues all deviations from acknowledged standards. This intolerance, we admit, is often provoked by something of a spirit of *proselytism* and arrogance, in those who mistake their own casual associations for natural or universal relations; and the consequence is, that mortified vanity ultimately dries up, even for them, the fountain of their peculiar enjoyment; and disenchants, by a new association of general contempt or ridicule, the scenes that had been consecrated by some innocent but accidental emotion.

As all men must have some peculiar associations, all men must have some peculiar notions of beauty, and, of course, to a certain extent, a taste that the public would be entitled to consider as false or vitiated. For those who make no demands on public admiration, however, it is hard to be obliged to sacrifice this source of enjoyment; and, even for those who labour for applause, the wisest course, perhaps, if it were only practicable, would be, to have *two* tastes, — one to enjoy, and one to work by — one founded upon universal associations, according to which they finished those performances for which they challenged universal praise — and another guided by all casual and individual associations, through which they might still look fondly upon nature, and upon the objects of their secret admiration.

MADAME DE STAËL.

(NOVEMBER, 1812.)

De la Littérature considérée dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales. Par MAD. DE STAEL-HOLSTEIN. Avec un Précis de la Vie et les Ecrits de l'Auteur. 2 tomes, 12mo. pp. 600. London, 1812.*

WHEN we say that Madame de Staël is decidedly the most eminent literary female of her age, we do not mean to deny that there may be others whose writings are of more direct and indisputable utility — who are distinguished by greater justness and sobriety of thinking, and may pretend to have conferred more practical benefits on the existing generation. But it is impossible, we think, to deny, that she has pursued a more lofty as well as a more dangerous career; — that she has treated of subjects of far greater difficulty, and far more extensive interest; and, even in her failures, has frequently given indication of greater powers, than have sufficed for the success of her more prudent contemporaries.

While other female writers have contented themselves, for the most part, with embellishing or explaining the truths which the more robust intellect of the other sex had previously established, — in making knowledge more familiar, or virtue more engaging — or, at most, in multiplying the finer distinctions which may be detected about the boundaries of taste or of morality, — and in illustrating the importance of the minor virtues to the general happiness of life — this distinguished person has not only aimed at extending the boundaries of knowledge, and rectifying the errors of received opinions upon subjects of the greatest importance, but has vigorously applied herself to

* I reprint this paper as containing a more comprehensive view of the progress of Literature, especially in the ancient world, than any other from which I could make the selection; and also, in some degree, for the sake of the general discussion on Perfectibility, which I still think satisfactorily conducted. I regret that, in the body of the article, the portions that are taken from Madame de Staël are not better discriminated from those for which I only am responsible. The reader, however, will not go far wrong, if he attribute to that distinguished person the greater part of what may strike him as bold, imaginative, and original; and leave to me the humbler province of the sober, corrective, and distrustful.

trace out the operation of general causes, and, by combining the past with the present, and pointing out the connection and reciprocal action of all co-existent phenomena, to develop the harmonious system which actually prevails in the apparent chaos of human affairs; and to gain something like an assurance as to the complexion of that futurity towards which our thoughts are so anxiously driven, by the selfish as well as the generous principles of our nature.

We are not acquainted, indeed, with any writer who has made such bold and vigorous attempts to carry the generalizing spirit of true philosophy into the history of literature and manners; or who has thrown so strong a light upon the capricious and apparently unaccountable diversities of national taste, genius, and morality, — by connecting them with the political structure of society, the accidents of climate and external relation, and the variety of creeds and superstitions. In her lighter works, this spirit is indicated chiefly by the force and comprehensiveness of those general observations with which they abound; and which strike at once, by their justness and novelty, and by the great extent of their application. They prove also in how remarkable a degree she possesses the rare talent of embodying in one luminous proposition those sentiments and impressions which float unquestioned and undefined over many an understanding, and give a colour to the character, and a bias to the conduct, of multitudes, who are not so much as aware of their existence. Besides all this, her novels bear testimony to the extraordinary accuracy and minuteness of her observation of human character, and to her thorough knowledge of those dark and secret workings of the heart, by which misery is so often elaborated from the pure element of the affections. Her knowledge, however, we must say, seems to be more of evil than of good: for the predominating sentiment in her fictions is, despair of human happiness and human virtue; and their interest is founded almost entirely on the inherent and almost inevitable heartlessness of polished man. The impression which they leave upon the mind, therefore, though powerfully pathetic, is both painful and humiliating: at the same time that it proceeds, we are inclined to believe, upon the double error of supposing that the bulk of intelligent people are as selfish as those splendid victims of fashion and philosophy from whom her characters are selected; and that a sensibility to unkindness can long survive the extinction of all kindly emotions. The work before us, however, exhibits the fairest specimen which we have yet seen of the systematizing spirit of the author, as well as of the moral enthusiasm by which she seems to be possessed.

The professed object of this work is to show that all the peculiarities in the literature of different ages and countries may be explained by a reference to the condition of society, and the political and religious institutions of each; and at the same time, to point out in what way the progress of letters has in its turn modified and affected the government and religion of those nations among whom they have flourished. All this, however, is bottomed upon the more fundamental and favourite proposition, that *there is a progress*, to produce these effects — that letters and intelligence are in a state of constant, universal, and irresistible advancement — in other words, that human nature is tending, by a slow and interminable progression, to a state of perfection. This fascinating idea seems to have been kept constantly in view by Madame de Staël, from the beginning to the end of the work before us; — and though we conceive it to have been pursued with far too sanguine and assured a spirit, and to have led in this way to most of what is rash and questionable in her conclusions, it is impossible to doubt that it has also helped her to many explanations that are equally solid and ingenious, and thrown a light upon many phenomena that would otherwise have appeared very dark and unaccountable.

In the range which she here takes, indeed, she has need of all the lights and all the aids that can present themselves; — for her work contains a critique and a theory of all the literature and philosophy in the world, from the days of Homer to the tenth year of the French revolution. She begins with the early learning and philosophy of Greece; and after characterizing the national taste and genius of that illustrious people, in all its departments, and in the different stages of their progress, she proceeds to a similar investigation of the literature and science of the Romans; and then,

after a hasty sketch of the decline of arts and letters in the later days of the empire, and of the actual progress of the human mind during the dark ages, when it is supposed to have slumbered in complete inactivity, she enters upon a more detailed examination of the peculiarities, and the causes of the peculiarities, of all the different aspects of national taste and genius that characterize the literature of Italy, Spain, England, Germany, and France,—entering, as to each, into a pretty minute exposition of its general merits and defects,—and not only of the circumstances in the situation of the country that have produced those characteristics, but even of the authors and productions, in which they are chiefly exemplified. To go through all this with tolerable success, and without committing any very gross or ridiculous blunders, evidently required, in the first place, a greater allowance of learning than has often fallen to the lot of persons of the learned gender, who lay a pretty bold claim to distinction upon the ground of their learning alone; and, in the next place, an extent of general knowledge, and a power and comprehensiveness of thinking, that has still more rarely been the ornament of great scholars. Madame de Staël may be surpassed, perhaps, in scholarship (so far as relates to accuracy at least, if not extent), by some—and in sound philosophy by others. But there are few indeed who can boast of having so much of both; and no one, so far as we know, who has applied the one to the elucidation of the other with so much boldness and success. But it is time to give a little more particular account of her lucubrations.

There is a very eloquent and high-toned Introduction, illustrating, in a general way, the influence of literature on the morals, the glory, the freedom, and the enjoyments of the people among whom it flourishes. It is full of brilliant thoughts and profound observations;—but we are most struck with those sentiments of mingled triumph and mortification by which she connects these magnificent speculations with the tumultuous aspect of the times in which they were nourished.

"Que ne puis-je rappeler tous les esprits éclairés à la jouissance des méditations philosophiques! Les contemporains d'une Révolution perdent souvent tout intérêt à la recherche de la vérité. Tant d'événemens décidés par la force, tant de crimes absous par le succès, tant de vertus flétries par le blâme, tant d'infortunes insultées par le pouvoir, tant de sentimens généreux devenus l'objet de la moquerie, tant de vils calculs philosophiquement commentés; tout lasse de l'espérance les hommes les plus fidèles au culte de la raison. Néanmoins ils doivent se ranimer en observant, dans l'histoire de l'esprit humain, qu'il n'a existé ni une pensée utile, ni une vérité profonde qui n'ait trouvé son siècle et ses admirateurs. C'est sans doute un triste effort que de transporter son intérêt, de reposer son attente, à travers l'avenir, sur nos successeurs, sur les étrangers bien loin de nous, sur les inconnus, sur tous les hommes enfin dont le souvenir et l'image ne peuvent se retracer à notre esprit. Mais, hélas! si l'on en excepte quelques amis inaltérables, la plupart de ceux qu'on se rappelle après dix années de révolution, contristent votre cœur, étouffent vos mouvemens, en imposent à votre talent même, non par leur supériorité, mais par cette malveillance qui ne cause de la douleur qu'aux ames douces, et ne fait souffrir que ceux qui ne la meritent pas."—Tom. i. p. 27, 28.

The connection between good morals and that improved state of intelligence which Madame de Staël considers as synonymous with the cultivation of literature, is too obvious to require any great exertion of her talents for its elucidation. She observes, with great truth, that much of the guilt and the misery which are vulgarly imputed to great talents, really arise from not having talent enough,—and that the only certain cure for the errors which are produced by superficial thinking, is to be found in thinking more deeply:—At the same time it ought not to be forgotten, that all men have not the capacity of thinking deeply—and that the most general cultivation of literature will not invest every one with talents of the first order. If there be a degree of intelligence, therefore, that is more unfavourable to the interests of morality and just opinion, than an utter want of intelligence, it may be presumed, that, in very enlightened times, this will be the portion of the greater multitude,—or at least that nations and individuals will have to pass through this troubled and dangerous sphere, in their way to the loftier and purer regions of perfect understanding. The better answer therefore probably is, that it is not intelligence that does the mischief in any case whatsoever, but the presumption that sometimes accompanies the lower degrees of it; and which is best disjoined from them, by making the higher degrees more attainable. It is quite true, as Madame de Staël observes, that the

power of public opinion, which is the only sure and ultimate guardian either of freedom or of virtue, is greater or less exactly as the public is more or less enlightened; and that this public never can be trained to the habit of just and commanding sentiments, except under the influence of a sound and progressive literature.* The abuse of power, and the abuse of the means of enjoyment, are the great sources of misery and depravity in an advanced stage of society. Both originate with those who stand on the highest stages of human fortune; and the cure is to be found, in both cases, only in the enlightened opinion of those who stand a little lower.

Liberty, it will not be disputed, is still more clearly dependent on intelligence than morality itself. When the governors are ignorant, they are naturally tyrannical. Force is the obvious resource of those who are incapable of convincing; and the more unworthy any one is of the power with which he is invested, the more rigorously will he exercise that power. But it is in the intelligence of the people themselves that the chief bulwark of their freedom will be found to consist, and all the principles of political amelioration to originate. This is true, however, as Madame de Staël observes, only of what she terms "*la haute littérature;*" or the general cultivation of philosophy, eloquence, history, and those other departments of learning which refer chiefly to the heart and the understanding, and depend upon a knowledge of human nature, and an attentive study of all that contributes to its actual enjoyments. What is merely for delight, again, and addresses itself exclusively to the imagination, has neither so noble a genealogy, nor half so illustrious a progeny. Poetry and works of gaiety and amusement, together with music and the sister arts of painting and sculpture, have a much slighter connection either with virtue or with freedom. Though among *their* most graceful ornaments, they may yet flourish under tyrants, and be relished in the midst of the greatest and most debasing corruption of manners. It is a fine and a just remark too, of Madame de Staël, that the pursuits which minister to mere delight, and give to life its charm and voluptuousness, generally produce a great indifference about dying. They supersede and displace all the stronger passions and affections, by which alone we are bound very closely to existence; and, while they habituate the mind to transitory and passive impressions, seem naturally connected with those images of indolence and intoxication and slumber, to which the idea of death is so readily assimilated, in characters of this description. When life, in short, is considered as nothing more than an amusement, its termination is contemplated with far less emotion, and its course, upon the whole, is overshadowed with deeper clouds of *ennui*, than when it is presented as a scene of high duties and honourable labours, and holds out to us at every turn — not the perishable pastimes of the passing hour, but the fixed and distant objects of those serious and lofty aims which connect us with a long futurity.

The Introduction ends with an eloquent profession of the author's unshaken faith in the philosophical creed of Perfectibility: — upon which, as it does not happen to be our creed, and is very frequently brought into notice in the course of the work, we must here be indulged with a few preliminary observations.

This splendid illusion, which seems to have succeeded that of Optimism in the favour of philosophical enthusiasts, and rests, like it, upon the notion that the whole scheme of a beneficent Providence is to be developed *in this world*, is supported by Madame de Staël upon a variety of grounds: and as, like most other illusions, it has a considerable admixture of truth, it is supported, in many points, upon grounds that are both solid and ingenious. She relies chiefly, of course, upon the experience of the past; and, in particular, upon the marked and decided superiority of the moderns in respect of thought and reflection, — their more profound knowledge of human feelings, and more comprehensive views of human affairs. She ascribes less importance than is usually done to our attainments in mere science, and the arts that relate to matter; and augurs less confidently as to the future fortune of the species, from the exploits of Newton, Watt, and Davy, than from those of Bacon, Bossuet, Locke, Hume, and Voltaire. In eloquence, too, and in taste and fancy, she admits that there has been a less conspicuous advancement; because, in these things, there is a natural limit or point of perfection, which

has been already attained: but there are no boundaries to the increase of human knowledge, or to the discovery of the means of human happiness; and every step that is gained in those higher walks, is gained, she conceives, for posterity, and for ever.

The great objection derived from the signal check which the arts and civility of life received from the inroads of the northern barbarians on the decline of the Roman power, and the long period of darkness and degradation which ensued, she endeavours to obviate, by a very bold and ingenious speculation. It is her object here to show that the invasion of the northern tribes not only promoted their own civilization more effectually than any thing else could have done, but actually imparted to the genius of the vanquished, a character of energy, solidity, and seriousness, which could never have sprung up of itself in the volatile regions of the South. The amalgamation of the two races, she thinks, has produced a mighty improvement on both; and the vivacity, the elegance and versatility of the warmer latitudes, been mingled, infinitely to their mutual advantage, with the majestic melancholy, the profound thought, and the sterner morality of the North. This combination, again, she conceives, could have been effected in no way so happily as by the successful invasion of the ruder people; and the conciliating influence of that common faith, which at once repressed the frivolous, and mollified the ferocious tendencies of our nature. The temporary disappearance therefore of literature and politeness, upon the first shock of this mighty collision, was but the subsidence of the sacred flame under the heaps of fuel which were thus profusely provided for its increase; and the seeming waste and sterility that ensued, was but the first aspect of the fertilizing flood and accumulated manure under which vegetation was buried for a while, that it might break out at last with a richer and more indestructible luxuriance. The human intellect was neither dead nor inactive, she contends, during that long slumber, in which it was collecting vigour for unprecedented exertions; and the occupations to which it was devoted, though not of the most brilliant or attractive description, were perhaps the best fitted for its ultimate and substantial improvement. The subtle distinctions, the refined casuistry, and ingenious logic of the school divines, were all favourable to habits of careful and accurate thinking; and led insensibly to a far more thorough and profound knowledge of human nature—the limits of its faculties and the grounds of its duties—than had been attained by the more careless inquirers of antiquity. When men, therefore, began again to reason upon human affairs, they were found to have made an immense progress during the period when all appeared to be either retrograde or stationary; and Skakspeare, Bacon, Machiavel, Montaigne, and Galileo, who appeared almost at the same time, in the most distant countries of Europe, each displayed a reach of thought and a power of reasoning which we should look for in vain in the eloquent dissertations of the classical ages. To them succeeded such men as Jeremy Taylor, Molière, Pascal, Locke, and La Bruyère, — all of them observers of a character, to which there is nothing at all parallel in antiquity; and yet only preparing the way, in the succeeding age, for Montesquieu, Hume, Voltaire, Smith, Burke. Bentham, Malthus, and so many others; who have made the world familiar with truths, which, however important and demonstrable at all times, certainly never entered into the conception of the earlier inhabitants of the world. Those truths, and others still more important, of which they are destined to be the parents, have already, according to Madame de Staël, produced a prodigious alteration, and an incalculable improvement on the condition of human nature. Through their influence, assisted no doubt by that of the Gospel, slavery has been abolished, trade and industry set free from restriction, and war disarmed of half its horrors; while, in private life, women have been restored to their just rank in society; sentiments of justice and humanity have been universally cultivated, and public opinion been armed with a power which renders every other both safe and salutary.

Many of these truths, which were once the doubtful or derided discoveries of men of original genius, are now admitted as elementary principles in the reasonings of ordinary people; and are every day extending their empire, and multiplying their progeny. Madame de Staël sees no reason to doubt, therefore, that they will one day inherit the whole earth; and,

under their reign, she takes it to be clear, that war, and poverty, and all the misery that arises from vice and ignorance, will disappear from the face of society; and that men, universally convinced that justice and benevolence are the true sources of enjoyment, will seek their own happiness in a constant endeavour to promote that of their neighbours.

It would be very agreeable to believe all this — in spite of the grudging which would necessarily arise, from the reflection that we ourselves were born so much too soon for virtue and enjoyment in this world. But it is really impossible to overlook the manifold imperfections of the reasoning on which this splendid anticipation is founded; — though it may be worth while to ascertain, if possible, in what degree it is founded in truth.

The first thing that occurs to a sober-minded listener to this dream of perfectibility, is the extreme narrowness of the induction from which these sweeping conclusions are so confidently deduced. A progress that is in its own nature infinite and irresistible, must necessarily have been both universal and unremitting; and yet the evidence of its existence is founded, if we do not deceive ourselves, upon the history of a very small portion of the human race, for a very small number of generations. The proposition is, that the human species is advancing, and has always been advancing, to a state of perfection, by a law of their nature, of the existence of which their past history and present state leave no room to doubt. But when we cast a glance upon this high destined species, we find this necessary and eternal progress scarcely begun, even now, in the old inhabited continent of Africa — stationary, as far back as our information reaches, in China — and retrograde, for a period of at least twelve centuries, and up to this day, in Egypt, India, Persia, and Greece. Even in our own Europe, which contains probably less than one tenth part of our kind, it is admitted that for upwards of a thousand years, this great work of moral nature not only stood still, but went visibly backwards, over its fairest regions; and though there has been a prodigious progress in England and France and Germany during the last two hundred years, it may be doubted whether any thing of this sort can be said of Spain or Italy; or various other portions, even of this favoured quarter of the world. It may be very natural for Madame de Staël, or for us, looking only to what has happened in our own world, and in our own times, to indulge in those dazzling views of the unbounded and universal improvement of the whole human race; but such speculations would appear rather wild, we suspect, to those whose lot it is to philosophize among the unchanging nations of Asia; and would probably carry even something of ridicule with them, if propounded upon the ruins of Thebes or Babylon, or even among the profaned relics of Athens or Rome.

We are not inclined, however, to push this very far. The world *is* certainly something the wiser for its past experience, — and there is an accumulation of useful knowledge, which we think likely to increase. The invention of printing and fire-arms, and the perfect communication that is established over all Europe, insures us, we think, against any considerable falling back in respect of the sciences; or the arts and attainments that minister to the conveniences of ordinary life. We have no idea that any of the important discoveries of modern times will ever again be lost or forgotten; or that any future generation will be put to the trouble of inventing, for a second time, the art of making gunpowder or telescopes — the astronomy of Newton, or the mechanics of Watt. All knowledge which admits of demonstration will advance, we have no doubt, and extend itself; and all processes will be improved, that do not interfere with the passions of human nature, or the apparent interest of its ruling classes. But with regard to every thing depending on probable reasoning, or susceptible of debate, and especially with regard to every thing touching morality and enjoyment, we really are not sanguine enough to reckon on any considerable improvement; and suspect that men will go on blundering in speculation, and transgressing in practice, pretty nearly as they do at present, to the latest period of their history.

In the nature of things, indeed, there can be no end to disputes upon probable, or what is called moral evidence; nor to the contradictory conduct and consequent hostility and oppression, which must result from the opposite views that are taken of such subjects; —

and this, partly, because the elements that enter into the calculations are so vast and numerous, that many of the most material must always be overlooked by persons of ordinary talent and information; and partly because there not only is no standard by which the value of those elements can be ascertained and made manifest, but that they actually have a different value for almost every different individual. With regard to all nice, and indeed all debateable questions of happiness or morals, therefore, there never can be any agreement among men; because, in reality, there is no truth in which they can agree. All questions of this kind turn upon a comparison of the opposite advantages and disadvantages of any particular course of conduct or habit of mind: but these are really of very different magnitude and importance to different persons; and their decision, therefore, even if they all saw the whole consequences, or even the same set of consequences, must be irreconcileably diverse. If the matter in deliberation, for example, be, whether it is better to live without toil or exertion, but, at the same time, without wealth or glory, or to venture for both upon a scene of labour and hazard — it is easy to see that the determination which would be wise and expedient for one individual, might be just the reverse for another. Ease and obscurity are the *summum bonum* of one description of men; while others have an irresistible vocation to strenuous enterprise, and a positive delight in contention and danger. Nor is the magnitude of our virtues and vices referable to a more invariable standard. Intemperance is less a vice in the robust, and dishonesty less foolish in those who care but little for the scorn of society. Some men find their chief happiness in relieving sorrow — some in sympathizing with mirth. Some, again, derive most of their enjoyment from the exercise of their reasoning faculties — others from that of their imagination; — while a third sort attend to little but the gratification of their senses, and a fourth to that of their vanity. One delights in crowds, and another in solitude; — one thinks of nothing but glory, and another of comfort; — and so on, through all the infinite variety, and infinite combinations, of human tastes, temperaments, and habits. Now, it is plain, that each of those persons not only will, but plainly ought to pursue a different road to the common objects of happiness; and that they must clash and consequently often jostle with each other, even if each were fully aware of the peculiarity of his own notions, and of the consequences of all that he did in obedience to their impulses. It is altogether impossible, therefore, we humbly conceive, that men should ever settle the point as to what is, on the whole, the wisest course of conduct, or the best disposition of mind; or consequently take even the first step towards that perfection of moral science, or that cordial concert and co-operation in their common pursuit of happiness, which is the only alternative to their fatal opposition.

This impossibility will become more apparent when it is considered, that the only instrument by which it is pretended that this moral perfection is to be attained, is such a geneneral illumination of the intellect as to make all men fully aware of the consequences of their actions; while the fact is, that it is not, in general, through ignorance of their consequences, that actions producing misery are actually performed. When the misery is inflicted upon others, the actors most frequently disregard it, upon a fair enough comparison of its amount with the pain they should inflict on themselves by forbearance; and even when it falls on their own heads, they will generally be found rather to have been unlucky in the game, than to have been truly unacquainted with its hazards; and to have ventured with as full a knowledge of the risks, as the fortunes of others can ever impress on the enterprizing. There are many men, it should always be recollected, to whom the happiness of others gives very little satisfaction, and their sufferings very little pain; — and who would rather eat a luxurious meal by themselves, than scatter plenty and gratitude over twenty famishing cottages. No enlightening of the understanding will make such men the instruments of general happiness; and wherever there is a competition, — wherever the question is stirred as to whose claims shall be renounced or asserted, we are all such men, we fear, in a greater or a less degree. There are others, again, who presume upon their own good fortune, with a degree of confidence that no exposition of the chances of failure can ever

repress; and in all cases where failure is possible, there must be a risk of suffering from its occurrence, however prudent the venture might have appeared. These, however, are the chief sources of all the unhappiness which results from the conduct of man; — and they are sources which we do not see that the improved intellect, or added experience of the species, is likely to close or diminish.

Take the case, for example, of War, — by far the most prolific and extensive pest of the human race, whether we consider the sufferings it inflicts, or the happiness it prevents, — and see whether it is likely to be arrested by the progress of intelligence and civilization. In the first place, it is manifest, that instead of becoming less frequent or destructive, in proportion to the rapidity of that progress, our European wars have, in point of fact, been incomparably more constant, and more sanguinary, since Europe became signally enlightened and humanized, — and that they have uniformly been most obstinate and most popular, in its most polished countries. The brutish Laplanders, and bigoted and profligate Italians, have had long intervals of repose; but France and England are now pretty regularly at war, for about fourscore years out of every century. In the second place, the lovers and conductors of war are by no means the most ferocious or stupid of their species, — but for the most part the very contrary; — and their delight in it, notwithstanding their compassion for human suffering, and their complete knowledge of its tendency to produce suffering, seems to us sufficient almost of itself to discredit the confident prediction of those who assure us, that when men have attained to a certain degree of intelligence, war must necessarily cease among all the nations of the earth. There can be no better illustration indeed, than this, of the utter futility of all those dreams of perfectibility, which are founded on a radical ignorance of what it is that constitutes the real enjoyment of human nature, and upon the play of how many principles and opposite *stimuli* that happiness depends, which, it is absurdly imagined, would be found in the mere negation of suffering, or in a state of Quakerish placidity, dulness, and uniformity. Men delight in war, in spite of the pains and miseries which they know it entails upon them and their fellows, because it exercises all the talents, and calls out all the energies of their nature — because it holds them out conspicuously as objects of public sentiment and general sympathy — because it gratifies their pride of art, and gives them a lofty sentiment of their own power, worth, and courage, — but principally because it sets the game of existence upon a higher stake, and dispels, by its powerful interest, those feelings of *ennui* which steal upon every condition from which hazard and anxiety are excluded, and drive us into danger and suffering as a relief. While human nature continues to be distinguished by those attributes, we do not see any chance of war being superseded by the increase of wisdom and morality.

We should be pretty well advanced in the career of perfectibility, if all the inhabitants of Europe were as intelligent, and upright, and considerate, as Sir John Moore, or Lord Nelson, or Lord Collingwood, or Lord Wellington, — but we should not have the less war, we take it, with all its attendant miseries. The more wealth and intelligence, and liberty, there is in a country indeed, the greater love we fear there will always be for war; — for a gentleman is uniformly a more pugnacious animal than a plebeian, and a free man than a slave. The case is the same with the minor contentions that agitate civil life, and shed abroad the bitter waters of political animosity, and grow up into the rancours and atrocities of faction and cabal. The leading actors in those scenes are not the lowest or most debased characters in the country, — but, almost without exception, of the very opposite description It would be too romantic to suppose, that the whole population of any country should ever be raised to the level of our Fox and Pitt, Burke, Windham, or Grattan; and yet if that miraculous improvement were to take place, we know that they would be at least as far from agreeing, as they are at present; and may fairly conclude, that they would contend with far greater warmth and animosity.

For that great class of evils, therefore, which arise from contention, emulation, and diversity of opinion upon points which admit of no demonstrative solution, it is evident that the general increase of intelligence would afford no remedy; and there even seems to be reason

for thinking that it would increase their amount. If we turn to the other great source of human suffering, the abuse of power and wealth, and the other means of enjoyment, we suspect we shall not find any ground for indulging in more sanguine expectations. Take the common case of youthful excess and imprudence, for example, in which the evil commonly rests on the head of the transgressor, — the injury done to fortune, by thoughtless expense — to health and character, by sensual indulgence, and to the whole felicity of after life, by rash and unsorted marriages. The whole mischief and hazard of such practices, we are persuaded, is just as thoroughly known and understood at present, as it will be when the world is 5000 years older; and as much pains are now taken to impress the ardent spirits of youth with the belief of those hazards, as can well be taken by the monitors who may discharge that office in the most remote futurity. But the truth is, that the offenders do not offend so much in ignorance, as in presumption. They know very well, that men are oftener ruined than enriched at the gaming table; and that love marriages, clapt up under age, are frequently followed by divorces: but they know too, that this is not always the case; and they flatter themselves that their good luck, and good judgment, will class them among the exceptions, and not among the ordinary examples of the rule. They are told well enough, for the most part, of the excessive folly of acting upon such a presumption, in matters of such importance: but it is the nature of youth, to despise much of the wisdom that is thus pressed upon them; and to think well of their fortune and sagacity, till they have actually had experience of their slipperiness. We really have no idea that their future teachers will be able to change this nature; or to destroy the eternal distinction between the character of early and mature life; and therefore it is, that we despair of the cure of the manifold evils that spring from this source: and remain persuaded, that young men will be nearly as foolish, and as incapable of profiting by the experience of their seniors, 10,000 years hence, as they are at this moment.

With regard to the other glittering curses of life — the heartless dissipations — the cruel seductions — the selfish extravagance — the rejection of all interesting occupation or serious affection, which blast the splendid summit of human fortune with perpetual barrenness and discomfort — we can only say, that as they are miseries which now exist almost exclusively among the most polished and intelligent of the species, we do not think it very probable, at least, that they will be eradicated by rendering the species in general more polished and intelligent. They are not occasioned, we think, by ignorance or improper education; but by that eagerness for strong emotion and engrossing occupation, which still proclaim it to be the irreversible destiny of man to earn his bread by the sweat of his brows. It is a fact indeed rather perplexing and humiliating to the advocates of perfectibility, that as soon as a man is delivered from the necessity of subsisting himself, and providing for his family, he generally falls into a state of considerable unhappiness; and if some fortunate anxiety, or necessity for exertion, does not come to his relief, is commonly obliged to seek for a slight and precarious distraction in vicious and unsatisfactory pursuits. It is not for want of knowing that they are unsatisfactory that he persists in them, nor for want of being told of their folly and criminality; — for moralists and divines have been occupied with little else for the best part of a century; and writers of all descriptions, indeed, have charitably expended a good part of their own *ennui* in copious directions for the innocent and effectual reduction of that common enemy. In spite of all this, however, the malady has increased with our wealth and refinement; and has brought along with it the increase of all those vices and follies in which its victims still find themselves constrained to seek a temporary relief. The truth is, that military and senatorial glory is neither within the reach, nor suited to the taste, of any very great proportion of the sufferers; and that the cultivation of waste lands, and the superintendence of tippling-houses and charity schools, have not always been found such effectual and delightful remedies as the inditers of godly romances have sometimes represented. So that those whom fortune has cruelly exempted from the necessity of doing any thing, have been led very generally to do evil of their own accord; and have fancied that they rather diminished

than added to the sum of human misery, by engaging in intrigues and gaming-clubs, and establishing coteries for detraction or sensuality.

The real and radical difficulty is to find some laudable pursuit that will permanently interest, —some worthy object that will continue to captivate and engross the faculties: and this, instead of becoming easier in proportion as our intelligence increases, obviously becomes more difficult. It is knowledge that destroys enthusiasm, and dispels all those prejudices of admiration which people simpler minds with so many idols of enchantment. It is knowledge that distracts by its variety, and satiates by its abundance, and generates, by its communication, that dark and cold spirit of fastidiousness and derision which revenges on those whom it possesses, the pangs which it inflicts on those on whom it is exerted. Yet it is to the increase of knowledge and talents alone, that the prophets of perfectibility look forward for the cure of all our vices and all our unhappiness!

Even as to intellect, and the pleasures that are to be derived from the exercise of a vigorous understanding, we doubt greatly whether we ought to look forward to posterity with any very lively feelings of envy or humiliation. More knowledge they probably will have,—as we have undoubtedly more knowledge than our ancestors had two hundred years ago; but for vigour of understanding, or pleasure in the exercise of it, we must beg leave to demur. The more there is already known, the less there remains to be discovered; and the more time a man is obliged to spend in ascertaining what his predecessors have already established, the less he will have to bestow in adding to its amount. The time, however, is of less consequence; but the habits of mind that are formed by walking patiently, humbly, and passively in the paths that have been traced by others, are the very habits that disqualify us for vigorous and independent excursions of our own. There is a certain degree of knowledge, to be sure, that is but wholesome aliment to the understanding — materials for it to work upon — or instruments to facilitate its labours: but a larger quantity is apt to oppress and incumber it; and as industry, which is excited by the importation of the raw material, may be superseded and extinguished by the introduction of the finished manufacture, so the minds which are stimulated to activity by a certain measure of instruction may, unquestionably, be reduced to a state of passive and languid acquiescence, by a more profuse and redundant supply.

Madame de Staël, and the other advocates of her system, talk a great deal of the prodigious advantage of having the results of the laborious discoveries of one generation made matters of familiar and elementary knowledge in another; and for practical utility, it may be so: but nothing, we conceive, can be so completely destructive of all intellectual enterprise, and all force and originality of thinking, as this very process, of the reduction of knowledge to its results, or the multiplication of those summary and accessible pieces of information in which the student is saved the whole trouble of investigation, and put in possession of the prize, without either the toils or the excitement of the contest. This, in the first place, necessarily makes the prize much less a subject of exultation or delight to him; for the chief pleasure is in the chase itself, and not in the object which it pursues: and he who sits at home, and has the dead game brought to the side of his chair, will be very apt, we believe, to regard it as nothing better than an unfragrant vermin. But, in the next place, it does him no good; for he misses altogether the invigorating exercise, and the invaluable training to habits of emulation and sagacity and courage, for the sake of which alone the pursuit is deserving of applause. And, in the last place, he not only fails in this way to acquire the qualities that may enable him to run down knowledge for himself, but necessarily finds himself without taste or inducement for such exertions. He thinks, and in one sense he thinks justly, that if the proper object of study be to acquire knowledge, he can employ his time much more profitably in implicitly listening to the discoveries of others, than in a laborious attempt to discover something for himself. It is infinitely more fatiguing to think, than to remember; and incomparably shorter to be led to an object, than to explore our own way to it. It is inconceivable what an obstruction this furnishes to the original exercise of the understanding in a certain state of information; and how effectually the general

diffusion of easily accessible knowledge operates as a bounty upon indolence and mental imbecility. Where the quantity of approved and collected knowledge is already very great in any country, it is naturally required of all well-educated persons to possess a considerable share of it; and where it has also been made very accessible, by being reduced to its summary and ultimate results, an astonishing variety of those abstracts may be stowed away in the memory, with scarcely any fatigue or exercise to the other faculties. The whole mass of attainable intelligence, however, must still be beyond the reach of any individual; and he may go on, therefore, to the end of a long and industrious life, constantly acquiring knowledge in this cheap and expeditious manner. But if, in the course of these passive and humble researches, he should be tempted to inquire a little for himself, he cannot fail to be struck with the prodigious waste of time, and of labour, that is necessary for the attainment of a very inconsiderable portion of original knowledge. His progress is as slow as that of a man who is making a road, compared with that of those who afterwards travel over it; and he feels, that in order to make a very small advance in one department of study, he must consent to sacrifice very great attainments in others. He is disheartened, too, by the extreme insignificance of any thing that he can expect to contribute, when compared with the great store that is already in possession of the public; and is extremely apt to conclude, that it is not only safer, but more profitable to follow, than to lead; and that it is fortunate for the lovers of wisdom, that our ancestors have accumulated enough of it for our use, as well as for their own.

But while the general diffusion of knowledge tends thus powerfully to repress all original and independent speculation in individuals, it operates still more powerfully in rendering the public indifferent and unjust to their exertions. The treasures they have inherited from their predecessors are so ample, as not only to take away all disposition to labour for their farther increase, but to lead them to undervalue and overlook any little addition that may be made to them by the voluntary offerings of individuals. The works of the best models are perpetually before their eyes, and their accumulated glory in their remembrance; the very variety of the sorts of excellence which are constantly obtruded on their notice, renders excellence itself cheap and vulgar in their estimation. As the mere possessors or judges of such things, they are apt to ascribe to themselves a character of superiority, which renders any moderate performance unworthy of their regard; and their cold and languid familiarity with what is best, ultimately produces no other effect than to render them insensible to its beauties, and at the same time intolerant of all that appears to fall short of it.

In such a condition of society, it is obvious that men must be peculiarly disinclined from indulging in those bold and original speculations, for which their whole training had previously disqualified them; and we appeal to our readers, whether there are not, at this day, apparent symptoms of such a condition of society. A childish love of novelty may indeed give a transient popularity to works of mere amusement; but the age of original genius, and of comprehensive and independent reasoning, seems to be over. Instead of such works as those of Bacon, and Shakspeare, and Taylor, and Hooker, we have Encyclopædias, and geographical compilations, and county histories, and new editions of black-letter authors — and trashy biographies and posthumous letters — and disputations upon prosody — and ravings about orthodoxy and methodism. Men of general information and curiosity seldom think of adding to the knowledge that is already in the world; and the inferior persons upon whom that task is consequently devolved, carry it on, for the most part, by means of that minute subdivision of labour which is the great secret of the mechanical arts, but can never be introduced into literature without depriving its higher branches of all force, dignity, or importance. One man spends his life in improving a method of dyeing cotton red; — another in adding a few insects to a catalogue which nobody reads; — a third in settling the metres of a few Greek Choruses; — a fourth in decyphering illegible romances, or old grants of farms; — a fifth in picking rotten bones out of the earth; — a sixth in describing all the old walls and hillocks in his parish; — and five hundred others in occupations equally liberal and important: each of them being, for the

most part, profoundly ignorant of every thing out of his own narrow department, and very generally and deservedly despised by his competitors for the favour of that public — which despises and supports them all.

Such, however, it appears to us, is the state of mind that is naturally produced by the great accumulation and general diffusion of various sorts of knowledge. Men learn, instead of reasoning. Instead of meditating, they remember; and, in place of the glow of inventive genius, or the warmth of a generous admiration, nothing is to be met with, in society, but timidity on the one hand, and fastidiousness on the other — a paltry accuracy, and a more paltry derision — a sensibility to small faults, and an incapacity of great merits — a disposition to exaggerate the value of knowledge that is not to be used, and to underrate the importance of powers which have ceased to exist. If these, however, are the consequences of accumulated and diffused knowledge, it may well be questioned whether the human intellect will gain in point of dignity and energy by the only certain acquisitions to which we are entitled to look forward. For our own part, we will confess we have no such expectations. There will be improvements, we make no doubt, in all the mechanical and domestic arts; — better methods of working metal, and preparing cloth; — more commodious vehicles, and more efficient implements of war. Geography will be made more complete, and astronomy more precise; — natural history will be enlarged and digested; — and perhaps some little improvement suggested in the forms of administering law. But as to any general enlargement of the understanding, or more prevailing vigour of judgment, we will own, that the tendency seems to be all the other way; and that we think strong sense, and extended views of human affairs, are more likely to be found, and to be listened to at this moment, than two or three hundred years hereafter. The truth is, we suspect, that the vast and enduring products of the virgin soil can no longer be reared in that factitious mould to which cultivation has since given existence; and that its forced and deciduous progeny will go on degenerating, till some new deluge shall restore the vigour of the glebe by a temporary destruction of all its generations.

Hitherto we have spoken only of the higher and more instructed classes of society, — to whom it is reasonable to suppose that the perfection of wisdom and happiness will come first, in their progress through the whole race of men; and we have seen what reason there is to doubt of their near approach. The lower orders, however, we think, have still less good fortune to reckon on. In the whole history of the species, there has been nothing at all comparable to the improvement of England within the last century; never anywhere was there such an increase of wealth and luxury — so many admirable inventions in the arts — so many works of learning and ingenuity — such a progress in cultivation — such an enlargement of commerce: — and yet, in that century, the number of paupers in England has increased fourfold, and is now rated at one tenth of her whole population; and, notwithstanding the enormous sums that are levied and given privately for their relief, and the multitudes that are drained off by the waste of war, the peace of the country is perpetually threatened by the outrages of famishing multitudes. This fact of itself is decisive, we think, as to the effect of general refinement and intelligence on the condition of the lower orders; but it is not difficult to trace the steps of its operation.

Increasing refinement and ingenuity lead naturally to the establishment of manufactures; and not only enable society to spare a great proportion of its agricultural labourers for this purpose, but actually encourage the breeding of an additional population, to be maintained out of the profits of this new occupation. For a time, too, this answers; and the artisan shares in the conveniences to which his labours have contributed to give birth; but it is in the very nature of the manufacturing system, to be liable to great fluctuation, occasional check, and possible destruction; and, at all events, it has a tendency to produce a greater population than it can permanently support in comfort or prosperity. The average rate of wages, for the last forty years, has been insufficient to maintain a labourer with a tolerably large family; — and yet such have been the occasional fluctuations, and such the sanguine calculations of persons incapable of taking a comprehensive view of the whole, that the manufacturing population has been prodigiously

increased in the same period. It is the interest of the manufacturer to keep this population in excess, as the only sure means of keeping wages low; and wherever the means of subsistence are uncertain, and liable to variation, it seems to be the general law of our nature, that the population should be adapted to the highest, and not to the average rate of supply. In India, where a dry season used to produce a failure of the crop, once in every ten or twelve years, the population was always up to the measure of the greatest abundance; and in manufacturing countries, the miscalculation is still more sanguine and erroneous. Such countries, therefore, are always over-peopled; and it seems to be the necessary effect of increasing talent and refinement, to convert all countries into this denomination. China, the oldest manufacturing nation in the world, and by far the greatest that ever existed with the use of little machinery, has always suffered from a redundant population, and has always kept the largest part of its inhabitants in a state of the greatest poverty.

The effect, then, which is produced on the lower orders of society, by that increase of industry and refinement, and that multiplication of conveniences which are commonly looked upon as the surest tests of increasing prosperity, is to convert the peasants into manufacturers, and the manufacturers into paupers; while the chance of their ever emerging from this condition becomes constantly less, the more complete and mature the system is which had originally produced it. When manufactures are long established, and thoroughly understood, it will always be found, that persons possessed of a large capital, can carry them on upon lower profits than persons of any other description; and the natural tendency of this system, therefore, is to throw the whole business into the hands of great capitalists; and thus not only to render it next to impossible for a common workman to advance himself into the condition of a master, but to drive from the competition the greater part of those moderate dealers, by whose prosperity alone the general happiness of the nation can be promoted. The state of the operative manufacturers, therefore, seems every day more hopelessly stationary; and that great body of the people, it appears to us, is likely to grow into a fixed and degraded *caste*, out of which no person can hope to escape, who has once been enrolled among its members. They cannot look up to the rank of master manufacturers; because, without considerable capital, it will every day be more impossible to engage in that occupation,—and back they cannot go to the labours of agriculture, because there is no demand for their services. The improved system of farming, furnishes an increased produce with many fewer hands than were formerly employed in procuring a much smaller return; and besides all this, the lower population has actually increased to a far greater amount than ever was at any time employed in the cultivation of the ground.

To remedy all these evils, which are likely, as we conceive, to be aggravated, rather than relieved, by the *general* progress of refinement and intelligence, we have little to look to but the beneficial effects of this increasing intelligence upon the lower orders themselves;—and we are far from undervaluing this influence. By the universal adoption of a good system of education, habits of foresight and self-control, and rigid economy, may in time, no doubt, be pretty generally introduced, instead of the improvidence and profligacy which too commonly characterize the larger assemblages of our manufacturing population; and if this lead, as they are likely to do, to the general institution of Friendly Societies and banks for savings among the workmen, a great palliative will have been provided for the disadvantages of a situation, which must always be considered as one of the least fortunate which Providence has assigned to any of the human race.

There is no end, however, we find to these speculations; and we must here close our remarks on perfectibility, without touching upon the *Political* changes which are likely to be produced by a long course of progressive refinements and scientific improvement—though we are afraid that an enlightened anticipation would not be much more cheering in this view, than in any of those we have hitherto considered. Luxury and refinement have a tendency, we fear, to make men sensual and selfish; and, in that state, increased talent and intelligence is apt only to render them more mercenary and servile. Among the prejudices

which this kind of philosophy roots out, that of patriotism, we fear, is generally among the first to be surmounted; — and then a dangerous opposition to power, and a sacrifice of interest to affection, speedily come to be considered as romantic. Arts are discovered to palliate the encroachments of arbitrary power; and a luxurious, patronizing and vicious monarchy is firmly established amidst the adulations of a corrupt nation. But we must proceed at last to Madame de Staël's History of Literature.

Not knowing any thing of the Egyptians and Phœnicians, she takes the Greeks for the first inventors of literature. — and explains many of their peculiarities by that supposition. The first development of talent, she says, is in Poetry; and the first poetry consists in the rapturous description of striking objects in nature, or of the actions and exploits that are then thought of the greatest importance. There is little reflection — no nice development of feeling or character — and no sustained strain of tenderness or moral emotion in this primitive poetry: which charms almost entirely by the freshness and brilliancy of its colouring — the spirit and naturalness of its representations — and the air of freedom and facility with which every thing is executed. This was the age of Homer. After that, though at a long interval, came the age of Pericles: — When human nature was a little more studied and regarded, and poetry received accordingly a certain cast of thoughtfulness, and an air of labour — eloquence began to be artful, and the rights and duties of men to be subjects of meditation and inquiry. This, therefore, was the era of the tragedians, the orators, and the first ethical philosophers. Last came the age of Alexander, when science had superseded fancy, and all the talent of the country was turned to the pursuits of philosophy. This, Madame de Staël thinks, is the natural progress of literature in all countries; and that of the Greeks is only distinguished by their having been the first that pursued it, and by the peculiarities of their mythology, and their political relations. It is not quite clear indeed that they were the first; but Madame de Staël is very eloquent upon that supposition.

The state of society, however, in those early times, was certainly such as to impress very strongly on the mind those objects and occurrences which formed the first materials of poetry. The intercourse with distant countries being difficult and dangerous, the legends of the traveller were naturally invested with more than the modern allowance of the marvellous. The smallness of the civilized states connected every individual in them with its leaders, and made him personally a debtor for the protection which their prowess afforded from the robbers and wild beasts which then infested the unsubdued earth. Gratitude and terror, therefore, combined to excite the spirit of enthusiasm; and the same ignorance which imputed to the direct agency of the gods, the more rare and dreadful phenomena of nature, gave a character of supernatural greatness to the reported exploits of their heroes. Philosophy, which has led to the exact investigation of causes, has robbed the world of much of its sublimity; and by preventing us from believing much, and from wondering at any thing, has taken away half our enthusiasm, and more than half our admiration.

The purity of taste which characterizes the very earliest poetry of the Greeks, seems to us more difficult to be accounted for. Madame de Staël ascribes it chiefly to the influence of their copious mythology; and the eternal presence of those Gods — which, though always about men, were always above them, and gave a tone of dignity or elegance to the whole scheme of their existence. Their tragedies were acted in temples — in the supposed presence of the Gods, the fate of whose descendants they commemorated, and as a part of the religious solemnities instituted in their honour. Their legends, in like manner, related to the progeny of the immortals: and their feasts — their dwellings — their farming — their battles — and every incident and occupation of their daily life being under the immediate sanction of some presiding deity, it was scarcely possible to speak of them in a vulgar or inelegant manner; and the nobleness of their style therefore appeared to result naturally from the elegance of their mythology.

Now, even if we could pass over the obvious objection, that this mythology was itself a creature of the same poetical imagination which it is here supposed to have modified, it is impossible not to observe, that though the

circumstances now alluded to may account for the raised and lofty tone of the Grecian poetry, and for the exclusion of low or familiar life from their dramatic representations, it will not explain the far more substantial indications of pure taste afforded by the absence of all that gross exaggeration, violent incongruity, and tedious and childish extravagance which are found to deform the primitive poetry of most other nations. The Hindoos, for example, have a mythology at least as copious, and still more closely interwoven with every action of their lives: but their legends are the very models of bad taste; and unite all the detestable attributes of obscurity, puerility, insufferable tediousness, and the most revolting and abominable absurdity. The poetry of the northern bards is not much more commendable: but the Greeks are wonderfully rational and moderate in all their works of imagination; and speak, for the most part, with a degree of justness and brevity, which is only the more marvellous, when it is considered how much religion had to do in the business. A better explanation, perhaps, of their superiority, may be derived from recollecting that the sins of affectation, and injudicious effort, really cannot be committed where there are no models to be at once copied and avoided. The first writers naturally took possession of what was most striking, and most capable of producing effect, in nature and in incident. Their successors consequently found these occupied; and were obliged, for the credit of their originality, to produce something which should be different at least, if not better, than their originals. They had not only to adhere to nature, therefore, but to avoid representing her exactly as she had been represented by their predecessors; and when they could not accomplish both these objects, they contrived, at least, to make sure of the last. The early Greeks had but one task to perform: they were in no danger of comparisons, or imputations of plagiarism; and wrote down whatever struck them as just and impressive, without fear of finding that they had been stealing from a predecessor. The wide world, in short, was before them, unappropriated and unmarked by any preceding footstep; and they took their way, without hesitation, by the most airy heights and sunny valleys; while those who came after, found it so seamed and crossed with tracks in which they were forbidden to tread, that they were frequently driven to make the most fantastic circuits and abrupt descents to avoid them.

The characteristic defects of the early Greek poetry are all to be traced to the same general causes, — the peculiar state of society, and that newness to which they were indebted for its principal beauties. They describe every thing, because nothing had been previously described; and incumber their whole diction with epithets that convey no information. There is no reach of thought, or fineness of sensibility, because reflection had not yet awakened the deeper sympathies of their nature; and we are perpetually shocked with the imperfections of their morality, and the indelicacy of their affections, because society had not subsisted long enough in peace and security to develop those finer sources of emotion. These defects are most conspicuous in every thing that relates to women. They had absolutely no idea of that mixture of friendship, veneration, and desire, which is indicated by the word Love, in the modern languages of Europe. The love of the Greek tragedians is a species of insanity or frenzy, — a blind and ungovernable impulse inflicted by the gods in their vengeance, and leading its humiliated victim to the commission of all sorts of enormities. Racine, in his *Phèdre*, has ventured to exhibit a love of this description on a modern stage; but the softenings of delicate feeling — the tenderness and profound affliction which he has been forced to add to the fatal impulse of the original character, show, more strongly than any thing else, the radical difference between the ancient and the modern conception of the passion.

The Political institutions of Greece had also a remarkable effect on their literature; and nothing can show this so strongly as the striking contrast between Athens and Sparta — placed under the same sky — with the same language and religion — and yet so opposite in their government and in their literary pursuits. The ruling passion of the Athenians was that of amusement; for, though the emulation of glory was more lively among them than among any other people, it was still subordinate to their rapturous admiration of

successful talent. Their law of ostracism is a proof how much they were afraid of their own propensity to idolize. They could not trust themselves in the presence of one who had become too popular. This propensity also has had a sensible effect upon their poetry; and it should never be forgotten, that it was not composed to be read and studied and criticized in the solitude of the closet, like the works that have been produced since the invention of printing; but to be recited to music, before multitudes assembled at feasts and high solemnities, where every thing favoured the kindling and diffusion of that enthusiasm, of which the history now seems to us so incredible.

There is a separate chapter on the Greek drama — which is full of brilliant and original observations; — though we have already anticipated the substance of many of them. The great basis of its peculiarity, was the constant interposition of the Gods. Almost all the violent passions are represented as the irresistible inspirations of a superior power; — almost all their extraordinary actions as the fulfilment of an oracle — the accomplishment of an unrelenting destiny. This probably added to the awfulness and terror of the representation, in an audience which believed implicitly in the reality of those dispensations. But it has impaired their dramatic excellence, by dispensing them too much from the necessity of preparing their catastrophes by a gradation of natural events, — the exact delineation of character, and the touching representation of those preparatory struggles which precede a resolution of horror. Orestes kills his mother, and Electra encourages him to the deed, — without the least indication, in either, of that poignant remorse which afterwards avenges the parricide. No modern dramatist could possibly have omitted so important and natural a part of the exhibition; — but the explanation of it is found at once in the ruling superstition of the age. Apollo had commanded the murder — and Orestes could not hesitate to obey. When it is committed, the furies are commissioned to pursue him; and the audience shudders with reverential awe at the torments they inflict on their victim. Human sentiments, and human motives, have but little to do in bringing about these catastrophes. They are sometimes suggested by the Chorus, — but the heroes themselves act always by the order of the Gods. Accordingly, the authors of the most atrocious actions are seldom represented in the Greek tragedies as properly guilty, but only as piacular; — and their general moral is rather, that the Gods are omnipotent, than that crimes should give rise to punishment and detestation.

A great part of the effect of these representations must have depended on the exclusive nationality of their subjects, and the extreme nationality of their auditors; though it is a striking remark of Madame de Staël, that the Greeks, after all, were more national than republican, — and were never actuated with that profound hatred and scorn of tyranny which afterwards exalted the Roman character. Almost all their tragic subjects, accordingly, are taken from the misfortunes of kings; — of kings descended from the Gods, and upon whose genealogy the nation still continued to pride itself. The fate of the Tarquins could never have been regarded at Rome as a worthy occasion either of pity or horror. Republican sentiments are occasionally introduced into the Greek Choruses; — though we cannot agree with Madame de Staël in considering the musical bodies as intended to represent the people.

It is in their comedy, that the defects of the Greek literature are most conspicuous. The world was then too young to supply its materials. Society had not existed long enough, either to develop the finer shades of character in real life, or to generate the talent of observing, generalizing, and representing them. The national genius, and the form of government, led them to delight in detraction and popular abuse; for, though they admired and applauded their great men, they had not in their hearts any great respect for them; and the degradation or seclusion in which they kept their women, took away almost all interest or elegance from the intercourse of private life, and reduced its scenes of gaiety to those of coarse debauch, or broad and humorous derision. The extreme coarseness and vulgarity of Aristophanes, is apt to excite our wonder, when we first consider him as the contemporary of Euripides, and Socrates, and Plato; — but the truth is, that the Athenians, after all, were but an ordinary populace as to moral

delicacy and social refinement. Enthusiasm, and especially the enthusiasm of superstition and nationality, is as much a passion of the vulgar, as a delight in ribaldry and low buffoonery. The one was gratified by their tragedy; — and the comedy of Aristophanes was exactly calculated to give delight to the other. In the end, however, their love of buffoonery and detraction unfortunately proved too strong for their nationality. When Philip was at their gates, all the eloquence of Demosthenes could not rouse them from their theatrical dissipations. The great danger which they always apprehended to their liberties, was from the excessive power and popularity of one of their own great men; and, by a singular fatality, they perished, from a profligate indifference and insensibility to the charms of patriotism and greatness.

In philosophy, Madame de Staël does not rank the Greeks very high. The greater part of them, indeed, were orators and poets, rather than profound thinkers, or exact inquirers. They discoursed rhetorically upon vague and abstract ideas; and, up to the time of Aristotle, proceeded upon the radical error of substituting hypothesis for observation. That eminent person first showed the use and the necessity of analysis; and did infinitely more for posterity than all the mystics that went before him. As their states were small, and their domestic life inelegant, men seem to have been considered almost exclusively in their relations to the public. There is, accordingly, a noble air of patriotism and devotedness to the common weal in all the morality of the ancients; and though Socrates set the example of fixing the principles of virtue for private life, the ethics of Plato, and Xenophon, and Zeno, and most of the other philosophers, are little else than treatises of political duties. In modern times, from the prevalence of monarchical government, and the great extent of societies, men are very generally loosened from their relations with the public, and are but too much engrossed with their private interests and affections. This may be venial, when they merely forget the state, — by which they are forgotten; but it is base and fatal, when they are guided by those interests in the few public functions they have still to perform. After all, the morality of the Greeks was very clumsy and imperfect. In political science, the variety of their governments, and the perpetual play of war and nogotiation, had made them more expert. Their historians narrate with spirit and simplicity; and this is their merit. They make scarcely any reflections; and are marvellously indifferent as to vice or virtue. They record the most atrocious and most heroic actions — the most disgusting crimes and most exemplary generosity — with the same tranquil accuracy with which they would describe the succession of storms and sunshine. Thucydides is somewhat of a higher pitch; but the immense difference between him and Tacitus proves, better perhaps than any general reasoning, the progress which had been made in the interim in the powers of reflection and observation; and how near the Greeks, with all their boasted attainments, should be placed to the intellectual infancy of the species. In all their productions, indeed, the fewness of their ideas is remarkable; and their most impressive writings may be compared to the music of certain rude nations, which produces the most astonishing effects by the combination of not more than four or five simple notes.

Madame de Staël now proceeds to the Romans — who will not detain us by any means so long. Their literature was confessedly borrowed from that of Greece; for little is ever invented, where borrowing will serve the purpose: but it was marked with several distinctions, to which alone it is now necessary to attend. In the first place — and this is very remarkable — the Romans, contrary to the custom of all other nations, began their career of letters with philosophy; and the cause of this peculiarity is very characteristic of the nation. They had subsisted longer, and effected more, without literature, than any other people on record. They had become a great state, wisely constituted and skilfully administered, long before any one of their citizens had ever appeared as an author. The love of their country was the passion of each individual — the greatness of the Roman name the object of their pride and enthusiasm. Studies which had no reference to political objects, therefore, could find no favour in their eyes; and it was from their subserviency to popular and senatorial oratory, and the aid which they promised to afford in the management of factions and na-

tional concerns, that they were first led to listen to the lessons of the Greek philosophers. Nothing else could have induced Cato to enter upon such a study at an advanced period of life. Though the Romans borrowed their philosophy from the Greeks, however, they made much more use of it than their masters. They carried into their practice much of what the others contented themselves with setting down in their books; and thus came to attain much more precise notions of practical duty, than could ever be invented by mere discoursers. The philosophical writings of Cicero, though incumbered with the subtleties of his Athenian preceptors, contain a much more complete code of morality than is to be found in all the volumes of the Greeks — though it may be doubted, whether his political information and acuteness can be compared with that of Aristotle. It was the philosophy of the Stoics, however, that gained the hearts of the Romans; for it was that which fell in with their national habits and dispositions.

The same character and the same national institutions that led them to adopt the Greek philosophy instead of their poetry, restrained them from the imitation of their theatrical excesses. As their free government was strictly aristocratical, it could never permit its legitimate chiefs to be held up to mockery on the stage, as the democratical licence of the Athenians held up the pretenders to their favour. But, independently of this, the severer dignity of the Roman character, and the deeper respect and prouder affection they entertained for all that exalted the glory of their country, would at all events have interdicted such indecorous and humiliating exhibitions. The comedy of Aristophanes never could have been tolerated at Rome; and though Plautus and Terence were allowed to imitate, or rather to translate, the more inoffensive dramas of a later age, it is remarkable, that they seldom ventured to subject even to that mitigated and more general ridicule any one invested with the dignity of a Roman citizen. The manners represented are almost entirely Greek manners; and the ridiculous parts are almost without any exception assigned to foreigners, and to persons of a servile condition. Women were, from the beginning, of more account in the estimation of the Romans than of the Greeks — though their province was still strictly domestic, and did not extend to what, in modern times, is denominated society. With all the severity of their character, the Romans had much more real tenderness than the Greeks, — though they repressed its external indications, as among those marks of weakness which were unbecoming men intrusted with the interests and the honour of their country. Madame de Staël has drawn a pretty picture of the parting of Brutus and Portia; and contrasted it, as a specimen of national character, with the Grecian group of Pericles pleading for Aspasia. The general observation, we are persuaded, is just; but the examples are not quite fairly chosen. Brutus is a little too good for an average of Roman virtue. If she had chosen Mark Antony, or Lepidus, the contrast would have been less brilliant. The self-control which their principles required of them — the law which they had imposed on themselves, to have no indulgence for suffering in themselves or in others, excluded tragedy from the range of their literature. Pity was never to be recognized by a Roman, but when it came in the shape of a noble clemency to a vanquished foe; — and wailings and complaints were never to disgust the ears of men, who knew how to act and to suffer in tranquillity. The very frequency of suicide in Rome, belonged to this characteristic. There was no other alternative but to endure firmly, or to die; — nor were importunate lamentations to be endured from one who was free to quit life whenever he could not bear it without murmuring.

What has been said relates to the literature of republican Rome. The usurpation of Augustus gave a new character to her genius, and brought it back to those poetical studies with which most other nations have begun. The cause of this, too, is obvious. While liberty survived, the study of philosophy and oratory and history was but as an instrument in the hands of a liberal and patriotic ambition, and naturally attracted the attention of all whose talents entitled them to aspire to the first dignities of the state. After an absolute government was established, those high prizes were taken out of the lottery of life; and the primitive uses of those noble instruments expired. There was no longer any safe or worthy end to be gained, by influencing the

conduct, or fixing the principles of men. But it was still permitted to seek their applause by ministering to their delight; and talent and ambition, when excluded from the nobler career of political activity, naturally sought for a humbler harvest of glory in the cultivation of poetry, and the arts of imagination. The poetry of the Romans, however, derived this advantage from the lateness of its origin, that it was enriched by all that knowledge of the human heart, and those habits of reflection, which had been generated by the previous study of philosophy. There is uniformly more thought, therefore, and more development, both of reason and of moral feeling, in the poets of the Augustan age, than in any of their Greek predecessors; and though repressed in a good degree by the remains of their national austerity, there is also a great deal more tenderness of affection. In spite of the pathos of some scenes in Euripides, and the melancholy passion of some fragments of Simonides and Sappho, there is nothing at all like the fourth book of Virgil, the Alcmene, and Baucis and Philemon of Ovid, and some of the elegies of Tibullus, in the whole range of Greek literature. The memory of their departed freedom, too, conspired to give an air of sadness to much of the Roman poetry, and their feeling of the lateness of the age in which they were born. The Greeks thought only of the present and the future; but the Romans had begun already to live in the past, and to make pensive reflections on the faded glory of mankind. The historians of this classic age, though they have more of a moral character than those of Greece, are still but superficial teachers of wisdom. Their narration is more animated, and more pleasingly dramatized, by the orations with which it is interspersed; — but they have neither the profound reflection of Tacitus, nor the power of explaining great events by general causes, which distinguishes the writers of modern times.

The atrocious tyranny that darkened the earlier ages of the empire, gave rise to the third school of Roman literature. The sufferings to which men were subjected, turned their thoughts inwards on their own hearts; and that philosophy which had first been courted as the handmaid of a generous ambition, was now sought as a shelter and consolation in misery. The maxims of the Stoics were again revived, — not, indeed, to stimulate to noble exertion, but to harden against misfortune. Their lofty lessons of virtue were again repeated — but with a bitter accent of despair and reproach; and that indulgence, or indifference towards vice, which had characterized the first philosophers, was now converted, by the terrible experience of its evils, into vehement and gloomy invective. Seneca, Tacitus, Epictetus, all fall under this description; and the same spirit is discernible in Juvenal and Lucan. Much more profound views of human nature, and a far greater moral sensibility characterize this age, — and show that even the unspeakable degradation to which the abuse of power had then sunk the mistress of the world, could not arrest altogether that intellectual progress which gathers its treasures from all the varieties of human fortune. Quintilian and the two Plinys afford further evidence of this progress; — for they are, in point of thought and accuracy, and profound sense, conspicuously superior to any writers upon similar subjects in the days of Augustus. Poetry and the fine arts languished, indeed, under the rigours of this blasting despotism; — and it is honourable, on the whole, to the memory of their former greatness, that so few Roman poets should have sullied their pens by any traces of adulation towards the monsters who then sat in the place of power.

We pass over Madame de Staël's view of the middle ages, and of the manner in which the mixture of the northern and southern races ameliorated the intellect and the morality of both. One great cause of their mutual improvement, however, she truly states to have been the general prevalence of Christianity; which, by the abolition of domestic slavery, removed the chief cause, both of the corruption and the ferocity of ancient manners. By investing the conjugal union, too, with a sacred character of equality, it at once redressed the long injustice to which the female sex had been subjected, and blessed and gladdened private life with a new progeny of joys, and a new fund of knowledge of the most interesting description. Upon a subject of this kind, we naturally expect a woman to express herself with peculiar animation; and Madame

de Staël has done it ample justice in the following, and in other passages.

"C'est donc alors que les femmes commencèrent à être de moitié dans l'association humaine. C'est alors aussi que l'on connut véritablement le bonheur domestique. Trop de puissance déprave la bonté, altère toutes les jouissances de la délicatesse; les vertus et les sentimens ne peuvent résister d'une part à l'exercice du pouvoir, de l'autre à l'habitude de la crainte. La félicité de l'homme s'accrut de toute l'indépendance qu'obtint l'objet de sa tendresse; il put se croire aimé; un être libre le choisit; un être libre obéit à ses désirs. Les apperçus de l'esprit, les nuances senties par le cœur se multiplièrent avec les idées et les impressions de ces ames nouvelles, qui s'essayoient à l'existence morale, après avoir long-temps langui dans la vie. Les femmes n'ont point composé d'ouvrages véritablement supérieurs; mais elles n'en ont pas moins éminemment servi les progrès de la littérature, par la foule de pensées qu'ont inspirées aux hommes les relations entretenues avec ces êtres mobiles et délicats. Tous les rapports se sont doublés, pour ainsi dire, depuis que les objets ont été considérés sous un point de vue tout-à-fait nouveau. La confiance d'un lien intime en a plus appris sur la nature morale, que tous les traités et tous les systêmes qui peignoient l'homme tel qu'il se montre à l'homme, et non tel qu'il est réellement." — Pp. 197, 198.

"Les femmes ont découvert dans les caractères une foule de nuances, que le besoin de dominer ou la crainte d'être asservies leur a fait appercevoir: elles ont fourni au talent dramatique de nouveaux secrets pour émouvoir. Tous les sentimens auxquels il leur est permis de se livrer, la crainte de la mort, le regret de la vie, le dévouement sans bornes, l'indignation sans mesure, enrichissent la littérature d'expressions nouvelles. De-là vient que les moralistes modernes ont en général beaucoup plus de finesse et de sagacité dans la connoissance des hommes, que les moralistes de l'antiquité. Quiconque, chez les anciens, ne pouvoit atteindre à la renommée, n'avoit aucun motif de développement. Depuis qu'on est deux dans la vie domestique, les communications de l'esprit et l'exercice de la morale existent toujours, au moins dans un petit cercle; les enfans sont devenus plus chers à leur parens, par la tendresse réciproque qui forme le lien conjugal; et toutes les affections ont pris l'empreinte de cette divine alliance de l'amour et de l'amitié, de l'estime et de l'attrait, de la confiance méritée et de la séduction involontaire.

"Un âge aride, que la gloire et la vertu pouvoient honorer, mais que ne devoit plus être ranimé par les émotions du cœur, la vieillesse s'est enrichie de toutes les pensées de la mélancolie; il lui a été donné de se ressouvenir, de regretter, d'aimer encore ce qu'elle avoit aimé. Les affections morales, unies, dès la jeunesse, aux passions brûlantes, peuvent se prolonger par de nobles traces jusqu'à la fin de l'existence, et laisser voir encore le même tableau sous la crêpe funèbre du temps.

"Une sensibilité rêveuse et profonde est un des plus grands charmes de quelques ouvrages modernes; et ce sont les femmes qui, ne connoissant de la vie que la faculté d'aimer, ont fait passer la douceur de leurs impressions dans le style de quelques écrivains. En lisant les livres composés depuis la renaissance des lettres, l'on pourroit marquer à chaque page, qu'elles sont les idées qu'on n'avoit pas, avant qu'on eût accordé aux femmes une sorte d'égalité civile. La générosité, la valeur, l'humanité, ont pris à quelques égards une acception différente. Toutes les vertus des anciens étoient fondées sur l'amour de la patrie; les femmes exercent leurs qualités d'une manière indépendante. La pitié pour la foiblesse, la sympathie pour le malheur, une élévation d'ame, sans autre but que la jouissance même de cette élévation, sont beaucoup plus dans leur nature que les vertus politiques. Les modernes, influencés par les femmes, ont facilement cédé aux liens de la philanthropie; et l'esprit est devenu plus philosophiquement libre, en se livrant moins à l'empire des associations exclusives." — Pp. 212—215.

It is principally to this cause that she ascribes the improved morality of modern times. The improvement of their intellect she refers more generally to the accumulation of knowledge, and the experience of which they have had the benefit. Instead of the eager spirit of emulation, and the unweighed and rash enthusiasm which kindled the genius of antiquity into a sort of youthful or instinctive animation, we have a spirit of deep reflection, and a feeling of mingled melancholy and philanthropy, inspired by a more intimate knowledge of the sufferings, the affections, and the frailties of human nature. There is a certain touching and pathetic tone, therefore, diffused over almost all modern writings of the higher order; and in the art of agitating the soul, and moving the gentler affections of the heart, there is nothing in all antiquity that can be considered as belonging to the same class with the writings of Bossuet or Rousseau — many passages in the English poets —and some few in those of Germany. The sciences, of course, have made prodigious advances; for in these nothing once gained can be lost, — and the mere elapse of ages supposes a vast accumulation. In morals, the progress has been greatest in the private virtues — in the sacred regard for life — in compassion, sympathy, and beneficence. Nothing, indeed, can illustrate the difference of the two systems more strikingly, than the opposite views they take of the relation of parent and child. Filial obedience

and submission was enjoined by the ancient code with a rigour from which reason and justice equally revolt. According to our present notions, parental love is a duty of at least mutual obligation; and as nature has placed the power of showing kindness almost exclusively in the hands of the father, it seems but reasonable that the exercise of it should at last be enjoined as a duty.

Madame de Staël begins her review of modern literature with that of Italy. It was there that the manuscripts — the monuments — the works of art of the imperial nation, were lost; — and it was there, of course, that they were ultimately recovered. The researches necessary for this, required authority and money; and they were begun, accordingly, under the patronage of princes and academies: — circumstances favourable to the accumulation of knowledge, and the formation of mere scholars — but adverse to the development of original genius. The Italians, accordingly, have been scholars, and have furnished the rest of Europe with the implements of liberal study; but they have achieved little for themselves in the high philosophy of politics and morals—though they have to boast of Galileo, Cassini, and a long list of celebrated names in the physical sciences. In treating of subjects of a large and commanding interest, they are almost always bombastic and shallow. Nothing, indeed, can be more just or acute than the following delineation of this part of their character.

"Les Italiens, accoutumés souvent à ne rien croire et à tout professer, se sont bien plus exercés dans la plaisanterie que dans le raisonnement. Ils se moquent de leur propre manière d'être. Quand ils veulent renoncer à leur talent naturel, à l'esprit comique, pour essayer de l'éloquence oratoire, ils ont presque toujours de l'affectation. Les souvenirs d'une grandeur passée, sans aucun sentiment de grandeur présente, produisent le gigantesque. Les Italiens auroient de la dignité, si la plus sombre tristesse formoit leur caractère; mais quand les successeurs des Romains, privés de tout éclat national, de toute liberté politique, sont encore un des peuples les plus gais de la terre, ils ne peuvent avoir aucune élévation naturelle.

"Les Italiens se moquent dans leur contes, et souvent même sur le théâtre, des prêtres, auxquels ils sont d'ailleurs entièrement asservis. Mais ce n'est point sous un point de vue philosophique qu'ils attaquent les abus de la religion. Ils n'ont pas, comme quelques-uns de nos écrivains, le but de réformer les défauts dont ils plaisantent; ce qu'ils veulent seulement, c'est s'amuser d'autant plus que le sujet est plus sérieux. Leurs opinions sont, dans le fond, assez opposées à tous les genres d'autorité auxquels ils sont soumis; mais cet esprit d'opposition n'a de force que ce qu'il faut pour pouvoir mépriser ceux qui les commandent. C'est la ruse des enfans envers leurs pédagogues; ils leur obéissent à condition qu'il leur soit permis de s'en moquer." — P. 248.

In poetry, however, the brilliant imagination of the South was sure to re-assert its claims to admiration; and the first great poets of modern Italy had the advantage of opening up a new career for their talents. Poetical fiction, as it is now known in Europe, seems to have had two distinct sources. Among the fierce and illiterate nations of the North, nothing had any chance of being listened to, that did not relate to the feats of war in which it was their sole ambition to excel; and poetical invention was forced to display itself in those legends of chivalry, which contain merely an exaggerated picture of scenes that were familiar to all their auditors. In Asia, again, the terrors of a sanguinary despotism had driven men to express their emotions, and to insinuate their moral admonitions, in the form of apologues and fables; and as these necessarily took a very wild and improbable course, their fictions assumed a much more extravagant and varied form than those of the northern romancers. The two styles however were brought together, partly by the effect of the crusades, and partly by the Moorish settlement in Spain; and Ariosto had the merit of first combining them into one, in that miraculous poem, which contains more painting, more variety, and more imagination, than any other poem in existence. The fictions of Boyardo are more purely in the taste of the Orientals; and Tasso is imbued far more deeply with the spirit and manner of the Augustan classics.

The false refinements, the *concetti*, the ingenious turns and misplaced subtlety, which have so long been the reproach of the Italian literature, Madame de Staël ascribes to their early study of the Greek Theologians, and later Platonists, who were so much in favour at the first revival of learning. The nice distinctions and sparkling sophistries which these gentlemen applied, with considerable success, in argument, were unluckily transferred, by Petrarch, to subjects of love and gallantry; and the fashion was set of a most unnatural

alliance between wit and passion — ingenuity and profound emotion, which has turned out, as might have been expected, to the discredit of both the contracting parties. We admit the fact, and its consequences: but we do not agree as to the causes which are here supposed to have produced it. We really do not think that the polemics of Constantinople are answerable for this extravagance; and have little doubt that it originated in that desire to impress upon their productions the visible marks of labour and art, which is felt by almost all artists in the infancy of the study. As all men can speak, and set words together in a natural order, it was likely to occur to those who first made *an art* of composition, and challenged general admiration for an arrangement of words, that it was necessary to make a very strong and conspicuous distinction between their compositions and ordinary and casual discourse; and to proclaim to the most careless reader or hearer, that a great difficulty had been surmounted, and something effected which every one was not in a condition to accomplish. This feeling, we have no doubt, first gave occasion to versification in all languages; and will serve to account, in a good degree, for the priority of metrical to prose compositions; but where versification was remarkably easy, or already familiar, some visible badge of artifice would also be required in the thought; and, accordingly, there seems to have been a certain stage in the progress of almost all literature, in which this excess has been committed. In Italy, it occurred so early as the time of Petrarch. In France, it became conspicuous in the writings of Voiture, Balsac, and all that coterie: and in England, in Cowley, Donne, and the whole tribe of metaphysical poets. Simplicity, in short, is the last attainment of progressive literature; and men are very long afraid of being natural, from the dread of being taken for ordinary. There is a simplicity, indeed, that is antecedent to the existence of any thing like literary ambition or critical taste in the nation, — the simplicity of the primitive ballads and legends of all rude nations; but after a certain degree of taste has been created, and composition has become an object of pretty general attention, simplicity is sure to be despised for a considerable period; and indeed, to be pretty uniformly violated in practice, even after it is restored to nominal honour and veneration.

We do not, however, agree the less cordially with Madame de Staël in her remarks upon the irreparable injury which affectation does to taste and to character. The following is marked with all her spirit and sagacity.

"L'affectation est de tous les défauts des caractères et des écrits, celui qui tarit de la manière la plus irréparable la source de tout bien; car elle blase sur la vérité même, dont elle imite l'accent. Dans quelque genre que ce soit, tous les mots qui ont servi à des idées fausses, à de froides exaggérations, sont pendant long-temps frappés d'aridité; et telle langue même peut perdre entièrement la puissance d'émouvoir sur tel sujet, si elle a été trop souvent prodiguée à ce sujet même. Ainsi peut-être l'Italien est-il de toutes les langues de l'Europe la moins propre à l'éloquence passionnée de l'amour, comme la nôtre est maintenant usée pour l'éloquence de la liberté." — Pp. 241, 242.

Their superstition and tyranny — their inquisition and arbitrary governments — have arrested the progress of the Italians as they have in a great degree prevented that of the Spaniards in the career of letters and philosophy. But for this the Spanish genius would probably have gone far. Their early romances show a grandeur of conception, and a genuine enthusiasm; and their dramas, though irregular, are full of spirit and invention. Though bombastic and unnatural in most of their serious compositions, their extravagance is not so cold and artificial as that of the Italians; but seems rather to proceed from a natural exaggeration of the fancy, and an inconsiderate straining after a magnificence which they had not skill or patience to attain.

We come now to the literature of the North, — by which name Madame de Staël designates the literature of England and Germany, and on which she passes an encomium which we scarcely expected from a native of the South. She startles us a little, indeed, when she sets off with a dashing parallel between Homer and Ossian; and proceeds to say, that the peculiar character of the northern literature has all been derived from that Patriarch of the Celts, in the same way as that of the south of Europe may be ultimately traced back to the genius of Homer. It is certainly rather against this hypothesis, that the said Ossian has only been known to the readers and writers of the North for about forty years from the present day, and

has not been held in especial reverence by those who have most distinguished themselves in that short period. However, we shall suppose that Madame de Staël means only, that the style of Ossian reunites the peculiarities that distinguish the northern school of letters, and may be supposed to exhibit them such as they were before the introduction of the classical and southern models. We rather think she is right in saying, that there is a radical difference in the taste and genius of the two regions; and that there is more melancholy, more tenderness, more deep feeling and fixed and lofty passion, engendered among the clouds and mountains of the North, than upon the summer seas or beneath the perfumed groves of the South. The causes of the difference are not perhaps so satisfactorily stated. Madame de Staël gives the first place to the climate.

Another characteristic is the hereditary independence of the northern tribes, — arising partly from their scattered population and inaccessible retreats, and partly from the physical force and hardihood which their way of life, and the exertions requisite to produce subsistence in those regions, necessarily produced. Their religious creed, too, even before their conversion to Christianity, was less fantastic, and more capable of leading to heroic emotions than that of the southern nations. The respect and tenderness with which they always regarded their women, is another cause (or effect) of the peculiarity of their national character; and, in later times, their general adoption of the Protestant faith has tended to confirm that character. For our own part, we are inclined to ascribe more weight to the last circumstance, than to all the others that have been mentioned; and that not merely from the better education which it is the genius of Protestantism to bestow on the lower orders, but from the necessary effect of the universal study of the Scriptures which it enjoins. A very great proportion of the Protestant population of Europe is familiarly acquainted with the Bible; and there are many who are acquainted with scarcely any other book. Now, the Bible is not only full of lessons of patience and humility, and compassion, but abounds with a gloomy and awful poetry, which cannot fail to make a powerful impression on minds that are not exposed to any other, and receive this under the persuasion of its divine origin. The peculiar character, therefore, which Madame de Staël has ascribed to the people of the North in general, will now be found, we believe, to belong only to such of them as profess the reformed religion; and to be discernible in all the communities that maintain that profession, without much regard to the degree of latitude which they inhabit — though at the same time it is undeniable, that its general adoption in the North must be explained by some of the more general causes which we have shortly indicated above.

The great fault which the French impute to the writers of the North, is want of taste and politeness. They generally admit that they have genius; but contend that they do not know how to use it; while their partisans maintain, that what is called want of taste is merely excess of genius, and independence of pedantic rules and authorities. Madame de Staël, though admitting the transcendent merits of some of the English writers, takes part, upon the whole, against them in this controversy; and, after professing her unqualified preference of a piece compounded of great blemishes and great beauties, compared with one free of faults, but distinguished by little excellence, proceeds very wisely to remark, that it would be still better if the great faults were corrected— and that it is but a bad species of independence which manifests itself by being occasionally offensive: and then she attacks Shakspeare, as usual, for interspersing so many puerilities and absurdities and *grossièretés* with his sublime and pathetic passages. Now, there is no denying, that a poem would be better without faults; and that judicious painters use shades only to set off their pictures, and not blots. But there are two little remarks to be made. In the *first* place, if it be true that an extreme horror at faults is usually found to exclude a variety of beauties, and that a poet can scarcely ever attain the higher excellencies of his art, without some degree of that rash and headlong confidence which naturally gives rise to blemishes and excesses, it may not be quite so absurd to hold, that this temperament and disposition, with all its hazards, deserves encouragement, and to speak with indulgence of faults that are symptomatic of great beauties. There is a

primitive fertility of soil that naturally throws out weeds along with the matchless crops which it alone can bear; and we might reasonably grudge to reduce its vigour for the sake of purifying its produce. There are certain savage virtues that can scarcely exist in perfection in a state of complete civilisation; and, as specimens at least, we may wish to preserve, and be allowed to admire them, with all their exceptionable accompaniments. It is easy to say, that there is no necessary connection between the faults and the beauties of our great dramatist: but *the fact* is, that since men have become afraid of falling into his faults, no one has approached to his beauties: and we have already endeavoured, on more than one occasion, to explain the grounds of this connection.

But our *second* remark is, that it is not quite fair to represent the controversy as arising altogether from the excessive and undue indulgence of the English for the admitted faults of their favourite authors, and their persisting to idolize Shakspeare in spite of his buffooneries, extravagancies, and bombast. We admit that he has those faults; and, as they are faults, that he would be better without them: but there are many more things which the French call faults, but which we deliberately consider as beauties. And here, we suspect, the dispute does not admit of any settlement: because both parties, if they are really sincere in their opinion, and understand the subject of discussion, may very well be right, and for that very reason incapable of coming to any agreement. We consider taste to mean merely the faculty of receiving pleasure from beauty, and, so far as relates to the person *receiving* that pleasure, we apprehend it to admit of little doubt, that the best taste is that which enables him to receive the greatest quantity of pleasure from the greatest number of things. With regard to the author again, or artist of any other description, who pretends to *bestow* the pleasure, his object of course should be, to give as much, and to as many persons as possible; and especially to those who, from their rank and education, are likely to regulate the judgment of the remainder. It is his business, therefore, to ascertain what does please the greater part of such persons; and to fashion his productions according to the rules of taste which may be deduced from that discovery. Now, we humbly conceive it to be a complete and final justification for the whole body of the English nation who understand French as well as English, and yet prefer Shakspeare to Racine, just to state, modestly and firmly, the fact of that preference; and to declare, that their habits and tempers, and studies and occupations, have been such as to make them receive far greater pleasure from the more varied imagery—the more flexible tone — the closer imitation of nature — the more rapid succession of incident, and vehement bursts of passion of the English author, than from the unvarying majesty — the elaborate argument — and epigrammatic poetry of the French dramatist. For the taste of the nation at large, we really cannot conceive that any other apology can be necessary; and though it might be very desirable that they should agree with their neighbours upon this point, as well as upon many others, we can scarcely imagine any upon which their disagreement could be attended with less inconvenience. For the authors, again, that have the misfortune not to be so much admired by the adjoining nations as by their own countrymen, we can only suggest, that this is a very common misfortune; and that, as they wrote in the language of their country, and will probably be always most read within its limits, it was not perhaps altogether unwise or unpardonable in them to accommodate themselves to the taste which was there established.

Madame de Staël has a separate chapter upon Shakspeare; in which she gives him full credit for originality, and for having been the first, and perhaps the only considerable author, who did not copy from preceding models, but drew all his greater conceptions directly from his own feelings and observations. His representations of human passions, therefore, are incomparably more true and touching, than those of any other writer; and are presented, moreover, in a far more elementary and simple state, and without any of those circumstances of dignity or contrast with which feebler artists seem to have held it indispensable that they should be set off. She considers him as the first writer who has ventured upon the picture of overwhelming sorrow and hopeless wretchedness; — that desolation of the heart, which arises from the long contemplation of ruined hopes

and irreparable privation; — that inward anguish and bitterness of soul which the public life of the ancients prevented them from feeling, and their stoical precepts interdicted them from disclosing. The German poets, and some succeeding English authors, have produced a prodigious effect by the use of this powerful instrument; but nothing can exceed the original sketches of it exhibited in Lear, in Hamlet, in Timon of Athens, and in some parts of Richard and of Othello. He has likewise drawn, with the hand of a master, the struggles of nature under the immediate contemplation of approaching death; and that without those supports of conscious dignity or exertion with which all other writers have thought it necessary to blend or to contrast their pictures of this emotion. But it is in the excitement of the two proper tragic passions of pity and terror, that the force and originality of his genius are most conspicuous; pity not only for youth and innocence, and nobleness and virtue, as in Imogen and Desdemona, Brutus and Coriolanus — but for insignificant persons like the Duke of Clarence, or profligate and worthless ones like Cardinal Wolsey;—terror, in all its forms, from the madness of Lear, and the ghost of Hamlet, up to the dreams of Richard and Lady Macbeth. In comparing the effects of such delineations with the superstitious horror excited by the mythological persons of the Greek drama, the vast superiority of the English author cannot fail to be apparent. Instead of supernatural beings interfering with their cold and impassive natures, in the agitations and sufferings of men, Shakspeare employs only the magic of powerful passion, and of the illusions to which it gives birth. The phantoms and apparitions which he occasionally conjures up to add to the terror of the scene, are in truth but a bolder personification of those troubled dreams, and thick coming fancies, which harrow up the souls of guilt and agony; and even his sorcery and incantation are but traits of the credulity and superstition which so frequently accompany the exaltation of the greater passions. But perhaps the most miraculous of all his representations, are those in which he has pourtrayed the wanderings of a disordered intellect, and especially of that species of distraction which arises from excess of sorrow. Instead of being purely terrible, those scenes are, in his hands, in the highest degree touching and pathetic; and the wildness of fancy, and richness of imagery which they display, are even less admirable than the constant, though incoherent expression of that one sentiment of agonizing grief which had overborne all the faculties of the soul.

Such are the chief beauties which Madame de Staël discovers in Shakspeare; and though they are not perhaps exactly what an English reader would think of bringing most into notice, it is interesting to know what strikes an intelligent foreigner, in pieces with which we ourselves have always been familiar. The chief fault she imputes to him, besides the mixture of low buffoonery with tragic passion, are occasional tediousness and repetition — too much visible horror and bloodshed — and the personal deformity of Caliban and Richard III.; for all which we shall leave it to our readers to make the best apology they can.

Madame de Staël thinks very poorly of our talent for pleasantry; and is not very successful in her delineation of what we call humour. The greater part of the nation, she says, lives either in the serious occupations of business and politics, or in the tranquil circle of family affection. What is called society, therefore, has scarcely any existence among them; and yet it is in that sphere of idleness and frivolity, that taste is matured, and gaiety made elegant. They are not at all trained, therefore, to observe the finer shades of character and of ridicule in real life; and consequently neither think of delineating them in their compositions, nor are aware of their merit when delineated by others. We are unwilling to think this perfectly just; and are encouraged to suspect, that the judgment of the ingenious author may not be altogether without appeal on such a subject, by observing, that she represents the paltry flippancy and disgusting affectation of Sterne, as the purest specimen of true English humour; and classes the character of Falstaff along with that of *Pistol*, as parallel instances of that vulgar caricature from which the English still condescend to receive amusement. It is more just, however, to observe, that the humour, and in general the pleasantry, of our nation, has very frequently a sarcastic and even misanthropic character, which distinguishes it from the mere playfulness and

constitutional gaiety of our French neighbours; and that we have not, for the most part, succeeded in our attempts to imitate the graceful pleasantry and agreeable trifling of that ingenious people. We develop every thing, she maintains, a great deal too laboriously; and give a harsh and painful colouring to those parts which the very nature of their style requires to be but lightly touched and delicately shaded. We never think we are heard, unless we cry out; — nor understood, if we leave any thing untold: — an excess of diffuseness and labour which could never be endured out of our own island. It is curious enough, indeed, to observe, that men who have nothing to do with their time but to get rid of it in amusement, are always much more impatient of any kind of tediousness in their entertainers, than those who have but little leisure for entertainment. The reason is, we suppose, that familiarity with business makes the latter habitually tolerant of tediousness; while the less engrossing pursuits of the former, in order to retain any degree of interest, require a very rapid succession and constant variety. On the whole, we do not think Madame de Staël very correct in her notions of English gaiety; and cannot help suspecting, that she must have been in some respects unfortunate in her society, during her visit to this country.

Her estimate of our poetry, and our works of fiction, is more unexceptionable. She does not allow us much invention, in the strictest sense of that word; and still less grace and sprightliness in works of a light and playful character: but for glowing descriptions of nature — for the pure language of the affections — for profound thought and lofty sentiment, she admits, that the greater poets of England are superior to any thing else that the world has yet exhibited. Milton, Young, Thomson, Goldsmith, and Gray seem to be her chief favourites. We do not find that Cowper, or any later author, had come to her knowledge. The best of them, however, she says, are chargeable with the national faults of exaggeration, and "*des longueurs*." She overrates the merit, we think, of our novels, when she says, that with the exception of La Nouvelle Heloise, which belongs exclusively to the genius of the singular individual who produced it, and has no relation to the character of his nation, all the novels that have succeeded in France have been undisguised imitations of the English, to whom she ascribes, without qualification, the honour of that meritorious invention.

The last chapter upon English literature relates to their philosophy and eloquence; and here, though the learned author seems aware of the transcendent merit of Bacon, we rather thinks she proves herself to be unacquainted with that of his illustrious contemporaries or immediate successors, Hooker, Taylor, and Barrow — for she places Bacon as the only luminary of our sphere in the period preceding the Usurpation, and considers the true era of British philosophy as commencing with the reign of King William. We cannot admit the accuracy of this intellectual chronology. The character of the English philosophy is to be patient, profound, and always guided by a view to utility. They have done wonders in the metaphysic of the understanding; but have not equalled De Retz, La Bruyère, or even Montaigne, in their analysis of the passions and dispositions. The following short passage is full of sagacity and talent.

"Les Anglais ont avancé dans les sciences philosophiques comme dans l'industrie commerciale, à l'aide de la patience et du temps. Le penchant de leurs philosophes pour les abstractions sembloit devoir les entraîner dans des systêmes qui pouvoient être contraires à la raison: mais l'esprit de calcul, qui régularise, dans leur application, les combinaisons abstraites, la moralité, qui est la plus expérimentale de toutes les idées humaines, l'intérêt du commerce, l'amour de la liberté, ont toujours ramené les philosophes Anglais à des résultats pratiques. Que d'ouvrages entrepris pour servir utilement les hommes, pour l'éducation des enfans, pour le soulagement des malheureux, pour l'économie politique, la législation criminelle, les sciences, la morale, la métaphysique! Quelle philosophie dans les conceptions! quel respect pour l'expérience dans le choix des moyens!

"C'est à la liberté qu'il faut attribuer cette émulation et cette sagesse. On pouvoit si rarement se flatter en France d'influer par ses écrits sur les institutions de son pays, qu'on ne songeoit qu'à montrer de l'esprit dans les discussions même les plus sérieuses. On poussoit jusqu'au paradoxe un systême vrai dans une certaine mesure; la raison ne pouvant avoir une effet utile, on vouloit au moins que le paradoxe fût brillant. D'ailleurs sous une monarchie absolue, on pouvoit sans danger vanter, comme dans le Contrat Social, la démocratie pure; mais on n'auroit point osé approcher des idées possibles. Tout étoit jeu d'esprit en France, hors les arrêts du conseil du roi: tandis

qu'en Angleterre, chacun pouvant agir d'une manière quelconque sur les résolutions de ses représentans, l'on prend l'habitude de comparer la pensée avec l'action, et l'on s'accoutume à l'amour du bien public par l'espoir d'y contribuer." — Vol. ii. pp. 5—7.

She returns again, however, to her former imputation of "*longueurs*," and repetitions, and excessive development; and maintains, that the greater part of English books are obscure, in consequence of their prolixity, and of the author's extreme anxiety to be perfectly understood. We suspect a part of the confusion is owing to her want of familiarity with the language. In point of fact, we know of no French writer on similar subjects so concise as Hume or Smith; and believe we might retort the charge of *longueurs*, in the name of the whole English nation, upon one half of the French classic authors — upon their Rollin and their Masillon — their D'Alembert — their Buffon — their Helvetius — and the whole tribe of their dramatic writers: — while as to repetitions, we are quite certain that there is no one English author who has repeated the same ideas half so often as Voltaire himself — certainly not the most tedious of the fraternity. She complains also of a want of warmth and animation in our prose writers. And it is true that Addison and Shaftesbury are cold; but the imputation only convinces us the more, that she is unacquainted with the writings of Jeremy Taylor, and that illustrious train of successors which has terminated, we fear, in the person of Burke. Our debates in parliament, she says, are more remarkable for their logic than their rhetoric; and have more in them of sarcasm, than of poetical figure and ornament. And no doubt it is so — and *must* be so — in all the discussions of permanent assemblies, occupied from day to day, and from month to month, with great questions of internal legislation or foreign policy. If she had heard Fox or Pitt, however, or Burke or Windham, or Grattan, we cannot conceive that she should complain of our want of animation; and, warm as she is in her encomiums on the eloquence of Mirabeau, and some of the orators of the first revolution, she is forced to confess, that our system of eloquence is better calculated for the detection of sophistry, and the effectual enforcement of all salutary truth. We really are not aware of any other purposes which eloquence can serve in a great national assembly.

Here end her remarks on our English literature — and here we must contrive also to close this desultory account of her lucubrations — though we have accompanied her through little more than one half of the work before us. It is impossible, however, that we can now find room to say any thing of her exposition of German or of French literature — and still less of her anticipations of the change which the establishment of a republican government in the last of those countries is likely to produce, — or of the hints and cautions with which, in contemplation of that event, she thinks it necessary to provide her countrymen. These are perhaps the most curious parts of the work: — but we cannot enter upon them at present; — and indeed, in what we have already said, we have so far exceeded the limits to which we always wish to confine ourselves, that we do not very well know what apology to make to our readers — except merely, that we are not without hope, that the miscellaneous nature of the subject, by which we have been insensibly drawn into this great prolixity, may have carried them also along, with as moderate a share of fatigue as we have ourselves experienced. If it be otherwise — we must have the candour and the gallantry to say, that we are persuaded the fault is to be imputed to us, and not to the ingenious author upon whose work we have been employed; and that, if we had confined ourselves to a mere abstract of her lucubrations, or interspersed fewer of our own remarks with the account we have attempted to give of their substance, we might have extended this article to a still greater length, without provoking the impatience even of the more fastidious of our readers. As it is, we feel that we have done but scanty justice, either to our author or her subject — though we can now make no other amends, than by earnestly entreating our readers to study both of them for themselves.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

(JULY, 1806.)

The Complete Works, in Philosophy, Politics, and Morals, of the late DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. *Now first collected and arranged. With Memoirs of his Early Life, written by Himself.* 3 vols. 8vo. pp. 1450. Johnson: London, 1806.

NOTHING, we think, can show more clearly the singular want of literary enterprise or activity, in the United States of America, than that no one has yet been found in that flourishing republic, to collect and publish the works of their only philosopher. It is not even very creditable to the liberal curiosity of the English public, that there should have been no complete edition of the writings of Dr. Franklin, till the year 1806: and we should have been altogether unable to account for the imperfect and unsatisfactory manner in which the task has now been performed, if it had not been for a statement in the prefatory advertisement, which removes all blame from the editor, to attach it to a higher quarter. It is there stated, that recently after the death of the author, his grandson, to whom the whole of his papers had been bequeathed, made a voyage to London, for the purpose of preparing and disposing of a complete collection of all his published and unpublished writings, with memoirs of his life, brought down by himself to the year 1757, and continued to his death by his descendant. It was settled, that the work should be published in three quarto volumes, in England, Germany, and France; and a negotiation was commenced with the booksellers, as to the terms of the purchase and publication. At this stage of the business, however, the proposals were suddenly withdrawn; and nothing more has been heard of the work, in this its fair and natural market. "The proprietor, it seems, had found a bidder of a different description, in *some emissary of Government*, whose object was to *withhold* the manuscripts from the world, —not to benefit it by their publication; and they thus either passed into other hands, or the person to whom they were bequeathed, received a remuneration for *suppressing* them."

If this statement be correct, we have no hesitation in saying, that no emissary of Government was ever employed on a more miserable and unworthy service. It is ludicrous to talk of the danger of disclosing, in 1795, any secrets of state, with regard to the war of American independence; and as to any anecdotes or observations that might give offence to individuals, we think it should always be remembered, that public functionaries are the property of the public; that their character belongs to history and to posterity; and that it is equally absurd and discreditable to think of *suppressing* any part of the evidence by which their merits must be ultimately determined. But the whole of the works that have been suppressed, certainly did not relate to republican politics. The history of the author's life, down to 1757, could not well contain any matter of offence; and a variety of general remarks and speculations which he is understood to have left behind him, might have been permitted to see the light, though his diplomatic revelations had been forbidden. The emissary of Government, however, probably took no care of those things. He was resolved, we suppose, "to leave no rubs nor botches in his work;" and to stifle the dreaded revelation, he thought the best way was to strangle all the innocents in the vicinage.

Imperfect as the work now before us necessarily is, we think the public is very much indebted to its editor. It is presented in a cheap and unostentatious form; and though it contains little that has not been already printed as the composition of the author, and does not often settle any point of disputed authenticity in a satisfactory manner, it seems, on the whole, to have been compiled with sufficient diligence, and arranged with considerable judgment. Few writings, indeed, require the aid of a commentator less than those of Dr. Franklin; and though this editor is rather too sparing of his presence, we are infinitely better satisfied to be left now and then to our conjectures, than to be incumbered with the explanations, and overpowered with the loquacity, of a more officious attendant.

We do not propose to give any thing like a regular account of the papers contained in these volumes. The best of them have long been familiar to the public; and there are many which it was proper to preserve, that cannot now be made interesting to the general reader. Dr. Franklin, however, is too great

a man to be allowed to walk past, without some observation; and our readers, we are persuaded, will easily forgive us, if we yield to the temptation of making a few remarks on his character.

This self-taught American is the most rational perhaps of all philosophers. He never loses sight of common sense in any of his speculations; and when his philosophy does not consist entirely in its fair and vigorous application, it is always regulated and controlled by it in its application and result. No individual, perhaps, ever possessed a juster understanding; or was so seldom obstructed in the use of it, by indolence, enthusiasm, or authority.

Dr. Franklin received no regular education; and he spent the greater part of his life in a society where there was no relish and no encouragement for literature. On an ordinary mind, these circumstances would have produced their usual effects, of repressing all sorts of intellectual ambition or activity, and perpetuating a generation of incurious mechanics; but to an understanding like Franklin's, we cannot help considering them as peculiarly propitious; and imagine that we can trace back to them, distinctly, almost all the peculiarities of his intellectual character.

Regular education, we think, is unfavourable to vigour or originality of understanding. Like civilisation, it makes society more intelligent and agreeable; but it levels the distinctions of nature. It strengthens and assists the feeble; but it deprives the strong of his triumph, and casts down the hopes of the aspiring. It accomplishes this, not only by training up the mind in an habitual veneration for authorities, but, by leading us to bestow a disproportionate degree of attention upon studies that are only valuable as keys or instruments for the understanding, they come at last to be regarded as ultimate objects of pursuit; and the means of education are absurdly mistaken for its end. How many powerful understandings have been lost in the Dialectics of Aristotle! And of how much good philosophy are we daily defrauded, by the preposterous error of taking a knowledge of prosody for useful learning! The mind of a man, who has escaped this training, will at least have fair play. Whatever other errors he may fall into, he will be safe at least from these infatuations: and if he thinks proper, after he grows up, to study Greek, it will probably be for some better purpose than to become critically acquainted with its dialects. His prejudices will be those of a man, and not of a schoolboy; and his speculations and conclusions will be independent of the maxims of tutors, and the oracles of literary patrons.

The consequences of living in a refined and literary community, are nearly of the same kind with those of a regular education. There are so many critics to be satisfied — so many qualifications to be established — so many rivals to encounter, and so much derision to be hazarded, that a young man is apt to be deterred from so perilous an enterprise, and led to seek for distinction in some safer line of exertion. He is discouraged by the fame and the perfection of certain models and favourites, who are always in the mouths of his judges, and, "under them, his genius is rebuked," and his originality repressed, till he sinks into a paltry copyist, or aims at distinction, by extravagance and affectation. In such a state of society, he feels that mediocrity has no chance of distinction: and what beginner can expect to rise at once into excellence? He imagines that mere good sense will attract no attention; and that the manner is of much more importance than the matter, in a candidate for public admiration. In his attention to the manner, the matter is apt to be neglected; and, in his solicitude to please those who require elegance of diction, brilliancy of wit, or harmony of periods, he is in some danger of forgetting that strength of reason, and accuracy of observation, by which he first proposed to recommend himself. His attention, when extended to so many collateral objects, is no longer vigorous or collected; — the stream, divided into so many channels, ceases to flow either deep or strong; — he becomes an unsuccessful pretender to fine writing, or is satisfied with the frivolous praise of elegance or vivacity.

We are disposed to ascribe so much power to these obstructions to intellectual originality, that we cannot help fancying, that if Franklin had been bred in a college, he would have contented himself with expounding the metres of Pindar, and mixing argument with his port in the common room; and that if Boston had

abounded with men of letters, he would never have ventured to come forth from his printing-house; or been driven back to it, at any rate, by the sneers of the critics, after the first publication of his Essays in the Busy Body.

This will probably be thought exaggerated; but it cannot be denied, we think, that the contrary circumstances in his history had a powerful effect in determining the character of his understanding, and in producing those peculiar habits of reasoning and investigation by which his writings are distinguished. He was encouraged to publish, because there was scarcely any one around him whom he could not easily excel. He wrote with great brevity, because he had not leisure for more voluminous compositions, and because he knew that the readers to whom he addressed himself were, for the most part, as busy as himself. For the same reason, he studied great perspicuity and simplicity of statement. His countrymen had then no relish for fine writing, and could not easily be made to understand a deduction depending on a long or elaborate process of reasoning. He was forced, therefore, to concentrate what he had to say; and since he had no chance of being admired for the beauty of his composition, it was natural for him to aim at making an impression by the force and the clearness of his statements.

His conclusions were often rash and inaccurate, from the same circumstances which rendered his productions concise. Philosophy and speculation did not form the business of his life; nor did he dedicate himself to any particular study, with a view to exhaust and complete the investigation of it in all its parts, and under all its relations. He engaged in every interesting inquiry that suggested itself to him, rather as the necessary exercise of a powerful and active mind, than as a task which he had bound himself to perform. He cast a quick and penetrating glance over the facts and the *data* that were presented to him; and drew his conclusions with a rapidity and precision that have not often been equalled. But he did not generally stop to examine the completeness of the *data* upon which he proceeded, nor to consider the ultimate effect or application of the principles to which he had been conducted. In all questions, therefore, where the facts upon which he was to determine, and the materials from which his judgment was to be formed, were either few in number, or of such a nature as not to be overlooked, his reasonings are, for the most part, perfectly just and conclusive, and his decisions unexceptionably sound; but where the elements of the calculation were more numerous and widely scattered, it appears to us that he has often been precipitate, and that he has either been misled by a partial apprehension of the conditions of the problem, or has discovered only a portion of the truth which lay before him. In all physical inquiries, in almost all questions of particular and immediate policy, and in much of what relates to the practical wisdom and happiness of private life, his views will be found to be admirable, and the reasoning by which they are supported most masterly and convincing. But upon subjects of general politics, of abstract morality, and political economy, his notions appear to be more unsatisfactory and incomplete. He seems to have wanted leisure, and perhaps inclination also, to spread out before him the whole vast premises of those extensive sciences, and scarcely to have had patience to hunt for his conclusions through so wide and intricate a region as that upon which they invited him to enter. He has been satisfied, therefore, on many occasions, with reasoning from a very limited view of the facts, and often from a particular instance; and he has done all that sagacity and sound sense could do with such materials: but it cannot excite wonder, if he has sometimes overlooked an essential part of the argument, and often advanced a particular truth into the place of a general principle. He seldom reasoned upon those subjects at all, we believe, without having some practical application of them immediately in view; and as he began the investigation rather to determine a particular case, than to establish a general maxim, so he probably desisted as soon as he had relieved himself of the present difficulty.

There are not many among the thorough-bred scholars and philosophers of Europe, who can lay claim to distinction in more than one or two departments of science or literature. The uneducated tradesman of America has left writings that call for our respectful attention, in natural philosophy, — in politics, — in political

economy, — and in general literature and morality.

Of his labours in the department of *Physics*, we do not propose to say much. They were almost all suggested by views of utility in the beginning, and were, without exception, applied, we believe, to promote such views in the end. His letters upon *Electricity* have been more extensively circulated than any of his other writings of this kind; and are entitled to more praise and popularity than they seem ever to have met with in this country. Nothing can be more admirable than the luminous and graphical precision with which the experiments are narrated; the ingenuity with which they are projected; and the sagacity with which the conclusion is inferred, limited, and confirmed.

The most remarkable thing, however, in these, and indeed in the whole of his physical speculations, is the unparalleled simplicity and facility with which the reader is conducted from one stage of the inquiry to another. The author never appears for a moment to labour or to be at a loss. The most ingenious and profound explanations are suggested, as if they were the most natural and obvious way of accounting for the phenomena; and the author seems to value himself so little on his most important discoveries, that it is necessary to compare him with others, before we can form a just notion of his merits. As he seems to be conscious of no exertion, he feels no partiality for any part of his speculations, and never seeks to raise the reader's idea of their importance, by any arts of declamation or eloquence. Indeed, the habitual precision of his conceptions, and his invariable practice of referring to specific facts and observations, secured him, in a great measure, both from those extravagant conjectures in which so many naturalists have indulged, and from the zeal and enthusiasm which seems so naturally to be engendered in their defence. He was by no means averse to give scope to his imagination, in suggesting a variety of explanations of obscure and unmanageable phenomena; but he never allowed himself to confound these vague and conjectural theories with the solid results of experience and observation. In his Meteorological papers, and in his Observations upon Heat and Light, there is a great deal of such bold and original suggestions: but he evidently sets but little value upon them; and has no sooner disburdened his mind of the impressions from which they proceeded, than he seems to dismiss them entirely from his consideration, and turns to the legitimate philosophy of experiment with unabated diligence and humility. As an instance of this disposition, we may quote part of a letter to the Abbé Soulaive, upon a new Theory of the Earth, which he proposes and dismisses, without concern or anxiety, in the course of a few sentences; though, if the idea had fallen upon the brain of an European philosopher, it might have germinated into a volume of eloquence, like Buffon's, or an infinite array of paragraphs and observations, like those of Parkinson and Dr. Hutton.

After remarking, that there are manifold indications of some of the highest parts of the land having been formerly covered by the sea, Dr. Franklin observes —

"Such changes in the superficial parts of the globe seemed to me unlikely to happen, if the earth were solid to the centre. I therefore imagined, that the internal parts might be a fluid more dense, and of greater specific gravity than any of the solids we are acquainted with, which therefore might swim in or upon that fluid. Thus the surface of the globe would be a shell, capable of being broken and disordered by the violent movements of the fluid on which it rested. And as air has been compressed by art so as to be twice as dense as water, and as we know not yet the degree of density to which air may be compressed, and M. Amontons calculated that its density increasing as it approached the centre in the same proportion as above the surface, it would, at the depth of leagues, be heavier than gold, and possibly the dense fluid occupying the internal parts of the globe might therefore be air compressed. And as the force of expansion in dense air, when heated, is in proportion to its density, this central air might afford another agent to move the surface, as well as be of use in keeping alive the subterraneous fires; though, as you observe, the sudden rarefaction of water coming into contact with those fires, may also be an agent sufficiently strong for that purpose, when acting between the incumbent earth and the fluid on which it rests.

"If one might indulge imagination in supposing how such a globe was formed, I should conceive that all the elements in separate particles being originally mixed in confusion, and occupying a great space, they would (as soon as the Almighty fiat ordained gravity, or the mutual attraction of certain parts and the mutual repulsion of others, to exist) all move to their common centre: that the air being a fluid whose parts repel each other, though drawn to the common centre by their gravity, would be densest towards the centre,

and rarer as more remote; consequently, all matters lighter than the central parts of that air, and immersed in it, would recede from the centre, and rise till they arrived at that region of the air which was of the same specific gravity with themselves, where they would rest; while other matter, mixed with the lighter air, would descend, and the two, meeting, would form the shell of the first earth, leaving the upper atmosphere nearly clear. The original movement of the parts towards their common centre, would naturally form a whirl there; which would continue, upon the turning of the new-formed globe upon its axis; and the greatest diameter of the shell would be in its equator. If, by any accident afterwards, the axis should be changed, the dense internal fluid, by altering its form, must burst the shell, and throw all its substance into the confusion in which we find it. I will not trouble you at present with my fancies concerning the manner of forming the rest of our system. Superior beings smile at our theories, and at our presumption in making them." — Vol. ii. pp. 117—119.

He afterwards makes his theory much finer and more extravagant, by combining with it a very wild speculation upon magnetism; and, notwithstanding the additional temptation of this new piece of ingenuity, he abandons it in the end with as much unconcern, as if he had no share in the making of it. We shall add the whole passage.

"It has long been a supposition of mine, that the iron contained in the surface of the globe has made it capable of becoming, as it is, a great magnet; that the fluid of magnetism perhaps exists in all space; so that there is a magnetical north and south of the Universe, as well as of this globe, so that if it were possible for a man to fly from star to star, he might govern his course by the compass; that it was by the power of this general magnetism this globe became a particular magnet. In soft or hot iron the fluid of magnetism is naturally diffused equally: but when within the influence of the magnet, it is drawn to one end of the iron; made denser there, and rarer at the other. While the iron continues soft and hot, it is only a temporary magnet: if it cools or grows hard in that situation, it becomes a permanent one, the magnetic fluid not easily resuming its equilibrium. Perhaps it may be owing to the permanent magnetism of this globe, which it had not at first, that its axis is at present kept parallel to itself and not liable to the changes it formerly suffered, which occasioned the rupture of its shell, the submersions and emersions of its lands, and the confusion of its seasons. The present polar and equatorial diameters differing from each other near ten leagues, it is easy to conceive, in case some power should shift the axis gradually, and place it in the present equator, and make the new equator pass through the present poles, what a sinking of the waters would happen in the present equatorial regions, and what a rising in the present polar regions; so that vast tracts would be discovered, that now are under water, and others covered, that are now dry, the water rising and sinking in the different extremes near five leagues. Such an operation as this possibly occasioned much of Europe, and among the rest this Mountain of Passy on which I live, and which is composed of limestone rock and sea-shells, to be abandoned by the sea, and to change its ancient climate, which seems to have been a hot one. The globe being now become a perfect magnet, we are, perhaps, safe from any change of its axis. But we are still subject to the accidents on the surface, which are occasioned by a wave in the internal ponderous fluid, and such a wave is producible by the sudden violent explosion you mention, happening from the junction of water and fire under the earth, which not only lifts the incumbent earth that is over the explosion, but impressing with the same force the fluid under it, creates a wave, that may run a thousand leagues, lifting, and thereby shaking, successively, all the countries under which it passes. I know not whether I have expressed myself so clearly, as not to get out of your sight in these reveries. If they occasion any new inquiries, and produce a better hypothesis, they will not be quite useless. You see I have given a loose to imagination; but I approve much more your method of philosophizing, which proceeds upon actual observation, makes a collection of facts, and concludes no further than those facts will warrant. In my present circumstances, that mode of studying the nature of the globe is out of my power, and therefore I have permitted myself to wander a little in the wilds of fancy." — Vol. ii. pp. 119—121.

Our limits will not permit us to make any analysis of the other physical papers contained in this collection. They are all admirable for the clearness of the description, the felicity and familiarity of the illustrations, and the singular sagacity of the remarks with which they are interspersed. The theory of whirlwinds and waterspouts, as well as the observations on the course of the winds and on cold, seem to be excellent. The paper called Maritime Observations is full of ingenuity and practical good sense; and the remarks on Evaporation, and on the Tides, most of which are contained in a series of letters to a young lady, are admirable, not merely for their perspicuity, but for the interest and amusement they are calculated to communicate to every description of readers. The remarks on Fire-places and Smoky chimneys are infinitely more original, concise, and scientific, than those of Count Rumford; and the observations on the Gulf-stream afford, we believe, the first ex-

ample of just theory and accurate investigation, applied to that phenomenon.

Dr. Franklin, we think, has never made use of the mathematics, in his investigation of the phenomena of nature; and though this may render it surprising that he has fallen into so few errors of importance, we conceive that it helps in some measure to explain the unequalled perspicuity and vivacity of his expositions. An algebraist, who can work wonders with letters, seldom condescends to be much indebted to words; and thinks himself entitled to make his sentences obscure, provided his calculations be distinct. A writer who has nothing but words to make use of, must make all the use he can of them: he cannot afford to neglect the only chance he has of being understood.

We should now say something of the political writings of Dr. Franklin, — the productions which first raised him into public office and eminence, and which will be least read or attended to by posterity. They may be divided into two parts; those which relate to the internal affairs and provincial differences of the American colonies, before their quarrel with the mother country; and those which relate to that quarrel and its consequences. The former are no longer in any degree interesting: and the editor has done wisely, we think, in presenting his readers with an abstract only of the longest of them. This was published in 1759, under the title of an Historical Review of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, and consisted of upwards of 500 pages, composed for the purpose of showing that the political privileges reserved to the founder of the colony had been illegally and oppressively used. The Canada pamphlet, written in 1760, for the purpose of pointing out the importance of retaining that colony at the peace, is given entire; and appears to be composed with great force of reason, and in a style of extraordinary perspicuity. The same may be said of what are called the Albany Papers, or the plan for a general political union of the colonies in 1754; and of a variety of other tracts on the provincial politics of that day. All these are worth preserving, both as monuments of Dr. Franklin's talents and activity, and as affording, in many places, very excellent models of strong reasoning and popular eloquence: but the interest of the subjects is now completely gone by; and the few specimens of general reasoning which we meet with, serve only to increase our regret, that the talents of the author should have been wasted on such perishable materials.

There is not much written on the subject of the dispute with the colonies; and most of Dr. Franklin's papers on that subject are already well known to the public. His examination before the House of Commons in 1766 affords a striking proof of the extent of his information, the clearness and force of his *extempore* composition, and the steadiness and self-possession which enabled him to display these qualities with so much effect upon such an occasion. His letters before the commencement of hostilities are full of grief and anxiety; but no sooner did matters come to extremities, than he appears to have assumed a certain keen and confident cheerfulness, not unmixed with a seasoning of asperity, and more vindictiveness of spirit than perhaps became a philosopher. In a letter written in October 1775, he expresses himself in this manner: —

"Tell our dear good friend * * *, who sometimes has his doubts and despondencies about our firmness, that America is determined and unanimous; a very few Tories and placemen excepted, who will probably soon export themselves. Britain, at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankies this campaign, which is 20,000*l.* a head; and, at Bunker's Hill, she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time, sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data*, his mathematical head will easily calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory." — Vol. iii. pp. 357, 358.

The following letters, which passed between Dr. Franklin and Lord Howe, when his Lordship arrived off the American coast with what were called the pacificatory proposals in 1776, show not only the consideration in which the former was held by the Noble Commissioner, but contain a very striking and prophetic statement of the consequences to be apprehended from the perseverance of Great Britain in her schemes of compulsion. His Lordship writes, in June 1776, —

"I cannot, my worthy friend, permit the letters and parcels, which I have sent (in the state I received them), to be landed, without adding a word upon the

subject of the injurious extremities in which our unhappy disputes have engaged us.

"You will learn the nature of my mission, from the official despatches which I have recommended to be forwarded by the same conveyance. Retaining all the earnestness I ever expressed, to see our differences accommodated; I shall conceive, if I meet with the disposition in the colonies which I was once taught to expect, the most flattering hopes of proving serviceable in the objects of the King's paternal solicitude, by promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the Colonies. But, if the deep-rooted prejudices of America, and the necessity of preventing her trade from passing into foreign channels, must keep us still a divided people, I shall, from every private as well as public motive, most heartily lament, that this is not the moment, wherein those great objects of my ambition are to be attained, and that I am to be longer deprived of an opportunity to assure you, personally, of the regard with which I am," &c. — Vol. iii. pp. 365—367.

Dr. Franklin answered, —

"I received safe the letters your Lordship so kindly forwarded to me, and beg you to accept *my* thanks.

"The official despatches to which you refer me, contain nothing more than what we had seen in the act of Parliament, viz. 'Offers of pardon upon submission;' which I was sorry to find; as it must give your Lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business.

"Directing pardons to be offered to the colonies, who are the very parties injured, expresses indeed that opinion of our ignorance, baseness, and insensibility, which your uninformed and proud nation has long been pleased to entertain of us; but it can have no other effect than that of increasing our resentments. It is impossible we should think of submission to a government that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burned our defenceless towns in the midst of winter; excited the savages to massacre our (peaceful) farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters; and is even now* bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. These atrocious injuries have *extinguished* every spark of affection for that parent country we once held so dear: but, were it possible for *us* to forget and forgive them, it is not possible for *you* (I mean the British nation) to forgive the people you have so heavily injured. You can never confide again in those as fellow-subjects, and permit them to enjoy equal freedom, to whom you know you have given such just causes of lasting enmity: and this must impel you, were we again under your government, to endeavour the breaking of our spirit by the severest tyranny, and obstructing, by every means in your power, our growing strength and prosperity.

"But your Lordship mentions 'the King's paternal solicitude for promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the Colonies.' If by *peace* is here meant, a peace to be entered into by distinct states, now at war; and his Majesty has given your Lordship powers to treat with us of such a peace; I may venture to say, though without authority, that I think a treaty for that purpose not quite impracticable before we enter into foreign alliances. But I am persuaded you have no such powers. Your nation, though, by punishing those American governors who have fomented the discord, rebuilding our burnt towns, and repairing as far as possible the mischiefs done us, she might recover a great share of our regard, and the greatest share of our growing commerce, with all the advantages of that additional strength to be derived from a friendship with us; yet I know too well her abounding pride and deficient wisdom, to believe she will ever take such salutary measures. Her fondness for conquest as a warlike nation; her lust of dominion as an ambitious one; and her thirst for a gainful monopoly as a commercial one (none of them legitimate causes of war), will join to hide from her eyes every view of her true interest, and continually goad her on in those ruinous distant expeditions, so destructive both of lives and of treasure, that they must prove as pernicious to her in the end, as the Croisades formerly were to most of the nations of Europe.

"I have not the vanity, my Lord, to think of intimidating, by thus predicting the effects of this war: for I know it will in England have the fate of all my former predictions — not to be believed till the event shall verify it.

"Long did I endeavour, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble porcelain vase — the British empire; for I knew that, being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their *share* of the strength and value that existed in the whole; and that a perfect re-union of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for. Your Lordship may possibly remember the tears of joy that wetted my cheek, when, at your good sister's in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune to find these expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was labouring to prevent. My consolation under that groundless and malevolent treatment was, that I retained the friendship of many wise and good men in that country; and, among the rest, some share in the regard of Lord Howe.

"The well-founded esteem, and, permit me to say, affection, which I shall always have for your Lordship, make it painful to me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which (as described in your letter) is 'the necessity of preventing the American *trade* from passing into foreign channels.' To me it seems, that neither the obtaining or

* About this time the Hessians, &c. had just arrived from Europe at Staten Island and New York. B. V.

retaining any trade, how valuable soever, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce are the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profits of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and holding it by fleets and armies. I consider this war against us, therefore, as both unjust and unwise, and I am persuaded that cool and dispassionate posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it; and that even success will not save from some degree of dishonour, those who have voluntarily engaged to conduct it.

"I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and I believe, when you find that to be impossible, on any terms given you to propose, you will then relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honourable private station.

"With the greatest and most sincere respect, I have the honour to be," &c.—Vol. iii. pp. 367—371.

None of Dr. Franklin's political writings, during the nine years when he resided as Ambassador at the Court of France, have yet been made public. Some of them, we should imagine, must be highly interesting.

Of the merit of this author as a political economist, we have already had occasion to say something, in the general remarks which we made on the character of his genius; and we cannot now spare time to go much into particulars. He is perfectly sound upon many important and practical points;—upon the corn-trade, and the theory of money, for instance; and also upon the more general doctrines, as to the freedom of commerce, and the principle of population. In the more elementary and abstract parts of the science, however, his views seem to have been less just and luminous. He is not very consistent or profound in what he says of the effects of luxury: and seems to have gone headlong into the radical error of the *Economistes*, when he maintains, that all that is done by manufacture, is to embody the value of the manufacturer's subsistence in his work, and that agriculture is the only source from which a real increase of wealth can be derived. Another favourite position is, that all commerce is *cheating*, where a commodity, produced by a certain quantity of labour, is exchanged for another, on which more labour has been expended; and that the only *fair* price of any thing, is some other thing requiring the same exertion to bring it to market. This is evidently a very narrow and erroneous view of the nature of commerce. The fair price to the purchaser is, whatever he deliberately chooses to give, rather than go without the commodity;—it is no matter to him, whether the seller bestowed much or little labour upon it, or whether it came into his possession without any labour at all;—whether it be a diamond, which he picked up, or a picture, at which he had been working for years. The commodity is not valued by the purchaser, on account of the labour which is supposed to be embodied in it, but solely on account of certain qualities, which he finds convenient or agreeable: he compares the convenience and delight which he expects to derive from this object, with the convenience and delight which is afforded by the things asked in exchange for it; and if he find the former preponderate, he consents to the exchange, and makes a beneficial bargain.

We have stated the case in the name of a purchaser, because, in barter, both parties are truly purchasers, and act upon the same principles; and it is easy to show, that all commerce resolves itself, ultimately, into barter. There can be no unfairness in trade, except where there is concealment on the part of the seller, either of the defects of the commodity, or of the fact that the purchaser may be supplied with it at a cheaper rate by another. It is a matter of *fact*, but not of morality, that the price of most commodities will be influenced by the labour employed in producing them.—If they are capable of being produced in unlimited quantities, the competition of the producers will sink the price very nearly to what is necessary to maintain this labour; and the impossibility of continuing the production, without repaying that labour, will prevent it from sinking lower. The doctrine does not apply at all to cases where the materials, or the skill necessary to work them up, are scarce in proportion to the demand. The author's speculations on the effects of paper-money, seem also to be superficial and inaccurate. *Statistics* had not been carefully studied in the days of his activity; and, accordingly, we meet with a good deal of loose assumption, and sweeping calculation in his writings. Yet he had a genius for exact observation, and complicated detail; and probably wanted nothing but leisure, to have made very great advances in this branch of economy.

As a writer on morality and general literature, the merits of Dr. Franklin cannot be estimated properly, without taking into consideration the peculiarities that have been already alluded to in his early history and situation. He never had the benefit of any academical instruction, nor of the society of men of letters; — his style was formed entirely by his own judgment and occasional reading; and most of his moral pieces were written while he was a tradesman, addressing himself to the tradesmen of his native city. We cannot expect, therefore, either that he should write with extraordinary elegance or grace; or that he should treat of the accomplishments, follies, and occupations of polite life. He had no great occasion, as a moralist, to expose the guilt and the folly of gaming or seduction; or to point a poignant and playful ridicule against the lighter immoralities of fashionable life. To the mechanics and traders of Boston and Philadelphia, such warnings were altogether unnecessary; and he endeavoured, therefore, with more appropriate eloquence, to impress upon them the importance of industry, sobriety, and economy, and to direct their wise and humble ambition to the attainment of useful knowledge and honourable independence. That morality, after all, is certainly the most valuable, which is adapted to the circumstances of the greater part of mankind; and that eloquence the most meritorious, that is calculated to convince and persuade the multitude to virtue. Nothing can be more perfectly and beautifully adapted to its object, than most of Dr. Franklin's compositions of this sort. The tone of familiarity, of good-will, and homely jocularity — the plain and pointed illustrations — the short sentences, made up of short words — and the strong sense, clear information, and obvious conviction of the author himself, make most of his moral exhortations perfect models of popular eloquence; and afford the finest specimens of a style which has been but too little cultivated in a country which numbers perhaps more than half a million of readers among its tradesmen and artificers.

In writings which possess such solid and unusual merit, it is of no great consequence that the fastidious eye of a critic can discover many blemishes. There is a good deal of vulgarity in the practical writings of Dr. Franklin; and more vulgarity than was any way necessary for the object he had in view. There is something childish, too, in some of his attempts at pleasantry; his story of the Whistle, and his Parisian letter, announcing the discovery that the sun gives light as soon as he rises, are instances of this. The soliloquy of an Ephemeris, however, is much better; and both it, and the Dialogue with the Gout, are executed with the lightness and spirit of genuine French compositions. The Speech in the Divan of Algiers, composed as a parody on those of the defenders of the slave trade, and the scriptural parable against persecution, are inimitable; — they have all the point and facility of the fine pleasantries of Swift and Arbuthnot, with something more of directness and apparent sincerity.

The style of his letters, in general, is excellent. They are chiefly remarkable for great simplicity of language, admirable good sense and ingenuity, and an amiable and inoffensive cheerfulness, that is never overclouded or eclipsed. Among the most valuable of the writings that are published for the first time, in the present edition, are four letters from Dr. Franklin to Mr. Whatley, written within a few years of his death, and expressive of all that unbroken gaiety, philanthropy, and activity, which distinguish the compositions of his earlier years. We give with pleasure the following extracts.

"I am not acquainted with the saying of Alphonsus, which you allude to as a sanctification of your rigidity, in refusing to allow me the plea of old age as an excuse for my want of exactitude in correspondence. What was that saying? — You do not, it seems, feel any occasion for such an excuse, though you are, as you say, rising 75, but I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) 80 — and I leave the excuse with you till you arrive at that age; perhaps you may then be more sensible of its validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

"I must agree with you that the gout is bad, and that the stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together; and I join in your prayer that you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the author of the epitaph you sent me is a little mistaken, when, speaking of the world, he says that

——'he ne'er car'd a pin
What they said or may say of the mortal within.'

"It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that desire; and that at least he

wished to be thought a wit, or he would not have given himself the trouble of writing so good an epitaph to leave behind him."—"You see I have some reason to wish that in a future state I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it: for I, too, with your poet, *trust in God.* And when I observe that there is great frugality as well as wisdom in his works, since he has been evidently sparing both of labour and materials; for, by the various wonderful inventions of propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his world with plants and animals, without being at the trouble of repeated new creations; and by the natural reduction of compound substances to their original elements, capable of being employed in new compositions, he has prevented the necessity of creating new matter; for that the earth, water, air, and perhaps fire, which being compounded, form wood, do, when the wood is dissolved, return, and again become air, earth, fire and water;—I say, that when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls; or believe that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall in some shape or other always exist. And with all the inconveniences human *life* is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping, however, that the errata of the last may be corrected."—Vol. iii. pp. 546—548.

"Our constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the congress were a permanent body, there would be more reason in being jealous of giving it powers. But its members are chosen annually, and cannot be chosen more than three years successively, nor more than three years in seven; and any of them may be recalled at any time, whenever their constituents shall be dissatisfied with their conduct. They are of the people, and return again to mix with the people, having no more durable pre-eminence than the different grains of sand in an hour-glass. Such an assembly cannot easily become dangerous to liberty. They are the servants of the people, sent together to do the people's business, and promote the public welfare; their powers must be sufficient, or their duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable appointments, but a mere payment of daily wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their expenses; so that, having no chance of great places and enormous salaries or pensions, as in some countries, there is no intriguing or bribing for elections. I wish old England were as happy in its government, but I do not see it. Your people, however, think their constitution the best in the world, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good opinion of one's self, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own religion, king, and wife, the best of all possible wives, kings, and religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travelled two years in Europe, under the care of some Moravian missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England: when I asked them at Philadelphia (when they were in their way home) whether, now they had seen how much more commodiously the white people lived by the help of the arts, they would not choose to remain among us—their answer was, that they were pleased with having had an opportunity of seeing many fine things, *but they chose to live in their own country:* which country, by the way, consisted of rock only; for the Moravians were obliged to carry earth in their ship from New York, for the purpose of making there a cabbage garden!"—Vol. iii. pp. 550, 551.

"You are now 78, and I am 82. You tread fast upon my heels: but, though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop, which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth, and I now often hear persons, whom I knew when children, called *old* Mr. such a one, to distinguish them from their sons, now men grown and in business; so that, by living twelve years beyond *David*'s period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been abed and asleep. Yet, had I gone at 70, it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed, too, in matters of the greatest importance; but whether I have been doing good or mischief, is for time to discover. I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

"Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Rowley. I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to hear that my malady does not grow sensibly worse, and that is a great point; for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and being cheerful in conversation. I owe this in a great measure to his good counsels."—Vol iii. pp. 555, 556.

"Your eyes must continue very good, since you are able to write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter even of large print; but am happy in the invention of double spectacles, which, serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities of old age could be as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while, my friend, to live a good deal longer. But I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitutions as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning.—Adieu, and believe me ever," &c.—Vol. iii. pp. 544, 545.

There is something extremely amiable in old age, when thus exhibited without querulousness, discontent, or impatience, and free, at the same time, from any affected or unbecoming levity. We think there must be many more of Dr. Franklin's letters in existence, than have yet been given to the public: and from the tone and tenour of those which we

have seen, we are satisfied that they would be read with general avidity and improvement.

His account of his own life, down to the year 1730, has been in the hands of the public since 1790. It is written with great simplicity and liveliness, though it contains too many trifling details and anecdotes of obscure individuals. It affords however a striking example of the irresistible force with which talents and industry bear upwards in society; as well as an impressive illustration of the substantial wisdom and good policy of invariable integrity and candour. We should think it a very useful reading for all young persons of unconfirmed principles, who have their fortunes to make or to mend in the world.

Upon the whole, we look upon the life and writings of Dr. Franklin as affording a striking illustration of the incalculable value of a sound and well directed understanding: and of the comparative uselessness of learning and laborious accomplishments. Without the slightest pretensions to the character of a scholar or a man of science, he has extended the bounds of human knowledge on a variety of subjects, which scholars and men of science had previously investigated without success; and has only been found deficient in those studies which the learned have generally turned from in disdain. We would not be understood to say any thing in disparagement of scholarship and science; but the value of these instruments is apt to be over-rated by their possessors; and it is a wholesome mortification, to show them that the work may be done without them. We have long known that their employment does not insure its success.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

(Sept. 1816.)

The Works of Jonathan Swift, D.D., *Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. Containing Additional Letters, Tracts, and Poems not hitherto published. With Notes, and a Life of the Author, by* Walter Scott, Esq. 19 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh: 1815.

By far the most considerable change which has taken place in the world of letters, in our days, is that by which the wits of Queen Anne's time have been gradually brought down from the supremacy which they had enjoyed, without competition, for the best part of a century. When we were at our studies, some twenty-five years ago, we can perfectly remember that every young man was set to read Pope, Swift, and Addison, as regularly as Virgil, Cicero, and Horace. All who had any tincture of letters were familiar with their writings and their history; allusions to them abounded in all popular discourses and all ambitious conversation; and they and their contemporaries were universally acknowledged as our great models of excellence, and placed without challenge at the head of our national literature. New books, even when allowed to have merit, were never thought of as fit to be placed in the same class, but were generally read and forgotten, and passed away like the transitory meteors of a lower sky; while *they* remained in their brightness, and were supposed to shine with a fixed and unalterable glory.

All this, however, we take it, is now pretty well altered; and in so far as persons of our antiquity can judge of the training and habits of the rising generation, those celebrated writers no longer form the manual of our studious youth, or enter necessarily into the institution of a liberal education. Their names, indeed, are still familiar to our ears; but their writings no longer solicit our habitual notice, and their subjects begin already to fade from our recollection. Their high privileges and proud distinctions, at any rate, have evidently passed into other hands. It is no longer to them that the ambitious look up with envy, or the humble with admiration; nor is it in their pages that the pretenders to wit and eloquence now search for allusions that are sure to captivate, and illustrations that cannot be mistaken. In this decay of their reputation they have few advocates, and no imitators: and from a comparison of many observations, it seems to be clearly ascertained, that they are declined considerably from "the high meridian of their glory," and may fairly be apprehended to be "hastening to their setting." Neither is it time alone that has wrought this obscuration; for the fame of Shakspeare still shines in undecaying brightness; and that of Bacon has been steadily advancing and gathering new honours during the whole period which has

witnessed the rise and decline of his less vigorous successors.

There are but two possible solutions for phenomena of this sort. Our taste has either degenerated — or its old models have been fairly surpassed; and we have ceased to admire the writers of the last century, only because they are too good for us — or because they are not good enough. Now, we confess we are no believers in the absolute and permanent corruption of national taste; on the contrary, we think that it is, of all faculties, that which is most sure to advance and improve with time and experience; and that, with the exception of those great physical or political disasters which have given a check to civilization itself, there has always been a sensible progress in this particular; and that the general taste of every successive generation is better than that of its predecessors. There are little capricious fluctuations, no doubt, and fits of foolish admiration or fastidiousness, which cannot be so easily accounted for: but the great movements are all progressive: and though the progress consists at one time in withholding toleration from gross faults, and at another in giving their high prerogative to great beauties, this alternation has no tendency to obstruct the general advance; but, on the contrary, is the best and the safest course in which it can be conducted.

We are of opinion, then, that the writers who adorned the beginning of the last century have been eclipsed by those of our own time; and that they have no chance of ever regaining the supremacy in which they have thus been supplanted. There is not, however, in our judgment, any thing very stupendous in this triumph of our contemporaries; and the greater wonder with us is, that it was so long delayed, and left for them to achieve. For the truth is, that the writers of the former age had not a great deal more than their judgment and industry to stand on; and were always much more remarkable for the fewness of their faults than the greatness of their beauties. Their laurels were won much more by good conduct and discipline, than by enterprising boldness or native force; — nor can it be regarded as any very great merit in those who had so little of the inspiration of genius, to have steered clear of the dangers to which that inspiration is liable. Speaking generally of that generation of authors, it may be said that, as poets, they had no force or greatness of fancy — no pathos, and no enthusiasm; — and, as philosophers, no comprehensiveness, depth, or originality. They are sagacious, no doubt, neat, clear, and reasonable; but for the most part cold, timid, and superficial. They never meddle with the great scenes of nature, or the great passions of man; but content themselves with just and sarcastic representations of city life, and of the paltry passions and meaner vices that are bred in that lower element. Their chief care is to avoid being ridiculous in the eyes of the witty, and above all to eschew the ridicule of excessive sensibility or enthusiasm — to be at once witty and rational themselves, with as good a grace as possible; but to give their countenance to no wisdom, no fancy, and no morality, which passes the standards current in good company. — Their inspiration, accordingly, is little more than a sprightly sort of good sense; and they have scarcely any invention but what is subservient to the purposes of derision and satire. Little gleams of pleasantry, and sparkles of wit, glitter through their compositions; but no glow of feeling — no blaze of imagination — no flashes of genius, ever irradiate their substance. They never pass beyond "the visible diurnal sphere," or deal in any thing that can either lift us above our vulgar nature, or ennoble its reality. With these accomplishments, they may pass well enough for sensible and polite writers, — but scarcely for men of genius; and it is certainly far more surprising, that persons of this description should have maintained themselves, for near a century, at the head of the literature of a country that had previously produced a Shakspeare, a Spenser, a Bacon, and a Taylor, than that, towards the end of that long period, doubts should have arisen as to the legitimacy of the title by which they laid claim to that high station. Both parts of the phenomenon, however, we dare say, had causes which better expounders might explain to the satisfaction of all the world. We see them but imperfectly, and have room only for an imperfect sketch of what we see.

Our first literature consisted of saintly legends, and romances of chivalry, — though Chaucer gave it a more national and popular

character, by his original descriptions of external nature, and the familiarity and gaiety of his social humour. In the time of Elizabeth, it received a copious infusion of classical images and ideas: but it was still intrinsically romantic — serious — and even somewhat lofty and enthusiastic. Authors were then so few in number, that they were looked upon with a sort of veneration, and considered as a kind of inspired persons; — at least they were not yet so numerous, as to be obliged to abuse each other, in order to obtain a share of distinction for themselves; — and they neither affected a tone of derision in their writings, nor wrote in fear of derision from others. They were filled with their subjects, and dealt with them fearlessly in their own way; and the stamp of originality, force, and freedom, is consequently upon almost all their productions. In the reign of James I., our literature, with some few exceptions, touching rather the form than the substance of its merits, appears to us to have reached the greatest perfection to which it has yet attained; though it would probably have advanced still farther in the succeeding reign, had not the great national dissensions which then arose, turned the talent and energy of the people into other channels — first, to the assertion of their civil rights, and afterwards to the discussion of their religious interests. The graces of literature suffered of course in those fierce contentions; and a deeper shade of austerity was thrown upon the intellectual character of the nation. Her genius, however, though less captivating and adorned than in the happier days which preceded, was still active, fruitful, and commanding; and the period of the civil wars, besides the mighty minds that guided the public councils, and were absorbed in public cares, produced the giant powers of Taylor, and Hobbes, and Barrow, — the muse of Milton — the learning of Coke — and the ingenuity of Cowley.

The Restoration introduced a French court — under circumstances more favourable for the effectual exercise of court influence than ever before existed in England: but this of itself would not have been sufficient to account for the sudden change in our literature which ensued. It was seconded by causes of far more general operation. The Restoration was undoubtedly a popular act; — and, indefensible as the conduct of the army and the civil leaders was on that occasion, there can be no question that the severities of Cromwell, and the extravagancies of the sectaries, had made republican professions hateful, and religious ardour ridiculous, in the eyes of a great proportion of the people. All the eminent writers of the preceding period, however, had inclined to the party that was now overthrown; and their writings had not merely been accommodated to the character of the government under which they were produced, but were deeply imbued with its obnoxious principles, which were those of their respective authors. When the restraints of authority were taken off, therefore, and it became profitable, as well as popular, to discredit the fallen party, it was natural that the leading authors should affect a style of levity and derision, as most opposite to that of their opponents, and best calculated for the purposes they had in view. The nation, too, was now for the first time essentially divided in point of character and principle, and a much greater proportion were capable both of writing in support of their own notions, and of being influenced by what was written. Add to all this, that there were real and serious defects in the style and manner of the former generation; and that the grace, and brevity, and vivacity of that gayer manner which was now introduced from France, were not only good and captivating in themselves, but had then all the charms of novelty and of contrast; and it will not be difficult to understand how it came to supplant that which had been established of old in the country, — and that so suddenly, that the same generation, among whom Milton had been formed to the severe sanctity of wisdom and the noble independence of genius, lavished its loudest applauses on the obscenity and servility of such writers as Rochester and Wycherly.

This change, however, like all sudden changes, was too fierce and violent to be long maintained at the same pitch; and when the wits and profligates of King Charles had sufficiently insulted the seriousness and virtue of their predecessors, there would probably have been a revulsion towards the accustomed taste of the nation, had not the party of the innovators been reinforced by champions of more temperance and judgment. The result seemed at

one time suspended on the will of Dryden—in whose individual person the genius of the English and of the French school of literature may be said to have maintained a protracted struggle. But the evil principle prevailed! Carried by the original bent of his genius, and his familiarity with our older models, to the cultivation of our native style, to which he might have imparted more steadiness and correctness—for in force and in sweetness it was already matchless—he was unluckily seduced by the attractions of fashion, and the dazzling of the dear wit and gay rhetoric in which it delighted, to lend his powerful aid to the new corruptions and refinements; and in fact, to prostitute his great gifts to the purposes of party rage or licentious ribaldry.

The sobriety of the succeeding reigns allayed this fever of profanity; but no genius arose sufficiently powerful to break the spell that still withheld us from the use of our own peculiar gifts and faculties. On the contrary, it was the unfortunate ambition of the next generation of authors, to improve and perfect the new style, rather than to return to the old one;—and it cannot be denied that they did improve it. They corrected its gross indecency—increased its precision and correctness—made its pleasantry and sarcasm more polished and elegant—and spread through the whole of its irony, its narration, and its reflection, a tone of clear and condensed good sense, which recommended itself to all who had, and all who had not any relish for higher beauties.

This is the praise of Queen Anne's wits—and to this praise they are justly entitled. This was left for them to do, and they did it well. They were invited to it by the circumstances of their situation, and do not seem to have been possessed of any such bold or vigorous spirit, as either to neglect or to outgo the invitation. Coming into life immediately after the consummation of a bloodless revolution, effected much more by the cool sense, than the angry passions of the nation, they seem to have felt that they were born in an age of reason, rather than of feeling or fancy; and that men's minds, though considerably divided and unsettled upon many points, were in a much better temper to relish judicious argument and cutting satire, than the glow of enthusiastic passion, or the richness of a luxuriant imagination. To those accordingly they made no pretensions; but, writing with infinite good sense, and great grace and vivacity, and, above all, writing for the first time in a tone that was peculiar to the upper ranks of society, and upon subjects that were almost exclusively interesting to them, they naturally figured, at least while the manner was new, as the most accomplished, fashionable, and perfect writers which the world had ever seen; and made the wild, luxuriant, and humble sweetness of our earlier authors appear rude and untutored in the comparison. Men grew ashamed of admiring, and afraid of imitating writers of so little skill and smartness; and the opinion became general, not only that their faults were intolerable, but that even their beauties were puerile and barbarous, and unworthy the serious regard of a polite and distinguishing age.

These, and similar considerations, will go far to account for the celebrity which those authors acquired in their day; but it is not quite so easy to explain how they should have so long retained their ascendant. One cause undoubtedly was, the real excellence of their productions, in the style which they had adopted. It was hopeless to think of surpassing them in that style; and, recommended as it was, by the felicity of their execution, it required some courage to depart from it, and to recur to another, which seemed to have been so lately abandoned for its sake. The age which succeeded, too, was not the age of courage or adventure. There never was, on the whole, a quieter time than the reigns of the first two Georges, and the greater part of that which ensued. There were two little provincial rebellions indeed, and a fair proportion of foreign war; but there was nothing to stir the minds of the people at large, to rouse their passions, or excite their imaginations—nothing like the agitations of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, or of the civil wars in the seventeenth. They went on, accordingly, minding their old business, and reading their old books, with great patience and stupidity: and certainly there never was so remarkable a dearth of original talent—so long an *interregnum* of native genius—as during about sixty years in the middle of the last century. The dramatic art was dead fifty years before—and poetry seemed verging to

a similar extinction. The few sparks that appeared, too, showed that the old fire was burnt out, and that the altar must hereafter be heaped with fuel of another quality. Gray, with the talents, rather of a critic than a poet — with learning, fastidiousness, and scrupulous delicacy of taste, instead of fire, tenderness, or invention — began and ended a small school, which we could scarcely have wished to become permanent, admirable in many respects as some of its productions are — being far too elaborate and artificial, either for grace or for fluency, and fitter to excite the admiration of scholars, than the delight of ordinary men. However, he had the merit of not being in any degree French, and of restoring to our poetry the dignity of seriousness, and the tone at least of force and energy. The Whartons, both as critics and as poets, were of considerable service in discrediting the high pretensions of the former race, and in bringing back to public notice the great stores and treasures of poetry which lay hid in the records of our older literature. Akenside attempted a sort of classical and philosophical rapture, which no elegance of language could easily have rendered popular, but which had merits of no vulgar order for those who could study it. Goldsmith wrote with perfect elegance and beauty, in a style of mellow tenderness and elaborate simplicity. He had the harmony of Pope without his quaintness, and his selectness of diction without his coldness and eternal vivacity. And, last of all, came Cowper, with a style of complete originality, — and, for the first time, made it apparent to readers of all descriptions, that Pope and Addison were no longer to be the models of English poetry.

In philosophy and prose writing in general, the case was nearly parallel. The name of Hume is by far the most considerable which occurs in the period to which we have alluded. But, though his thinking was English, his style is entirely French; and being naturally of a cold fancy, there is nothing of that eloquence or richness about him, which characterizes the writings of Taylor, and Hooker, and Bacon — and continues, with less weight of matter, to please in those of Cowley and Clarendon. Warburton had great powers; and wrote with more force and freedom than the wits to whom he succeeded — but his faculties were perverted by a paltry love of paradox, and rendered useless to mankind by an unlucky choice of subjects, and the arrogance and dogmatism of his temper. Adam Smith was nearly the first who made deeper reasonings and more exact knowledge popular among us; and Junius and Johnson the first who again familiarized us with more glowing and sonorous diction — and made us feel the tameness and poorness of the serious style of Addison and Swift.

This brings us down almost to the present times — in which the revolution in our literature has been accelerated and confirmed by the concurrence of many causes. The agitations of the French Revolution, and the discussions as well as the hopes and terrors to which it gave occasion — the genius of Edmund Burke, and some others of his land of genius — the impression of the new literature of Germany, evidently the original of our lake-school of poetry, and of many innovations in our drama — the rise or revival of a more evangelical spirit, in the body of the people — and the vast extension of our political and commercial relations, which have not only familiarized all ranks of people with distant countries, and great undertakings, but have brought knowledge and enterprise home, not merely to the imagination, but to the actual experience of almost every individual, — all these, and several other circumstances, have so far improved or excited the character of our nation, as to have created an effectual-demand for more profound speculation, and more serious emotion than was dealt in by the writers of the former century, and which, if it has not yet produced a corresponding supply in all branches, has at least had the effect of decrying the commodities that were previously in vogue, as unsuited to the altered condition of the times.

Of those ingenious writers, whose characteristic certainly was not vigour, any more than tenderness or fancy, SWIFT was indisputably the most vigorous — and perhaps the least tender or fanciful. The greater part of his works being occupied with politics and personalities that have long since lost all interest, can now attract but little attention, except as memorials of the manner in which politics and personalities were then conducted.

In other parts, however, there is a vein of peculiar humour and strong satire, which will always be agreeable — and a sort of heartiness of abuse, and contempt of mankind, which produces a greater sympathy and animation in the reader than the more elaborate sarcasms that have since come into fashion. Altogether, his merits appear to be more *unique* and inimitable than those of any of his contemporaries; and as his works are connected in many parts with historical events which it must always be of importance to understand, we conceive that there are none, of which a new and careful edition is so likely to be acceptable to the public, or so worthy to engage the attention of a person qualified for the undertaking. In this respect, the projectors of the present publication must be considered as eminently fortunate — the celebrated person who has here condescended to the functions of an editor, being almost as much distinguished for the skill and learning required for that humbler office, as for the creative genius which has given such unexampled popularity to his original compositions — and uniting to the minute knowledge and patient research of the Malones and Chalmerses, a vigour of judgment and a vivacity of style to which they had no pretensions. In the exercise of these comparatively humble functions, he has acquitted himself, we think, on the present occasion, with great judgment and ability. The edition, upon the whole, is much better than that of Dryden. It is less loaded with long notes and illustrative quotations; while it furnishes all the information that can reasonably be desired, in a simple and compendious form. It contains upwards of a hundred letters, and other original pieces of Swift's never before published — and, among the rest, all that has been preserved of his correspondence with the celebrated Vanessa. Explanatory notes and remarks are supplied with great diligence to all the passages over which time may have thrown any obscurity; and the critical observations that are prefixed to the more considerable productions, are, with a reasonable allowance for an editor's partiality to his author, very candid and ingenious.

The Life is not every where extremely well written, in a literary point of view; but is drawn up, in substance, with great intelligence, liberality, and good feeling. It is quite fair and moderate in politics; and perhaps rather too indulgent and tender towards individuals of all descriptions, — more full, at least, of kindness and veneration for genius and social virtue, than of indignation at baseness and profligacy. Altogether, it is not much like the production of a mere man of letters, or a fastidious speculator in sentiment and morality; but exhibits throughout, and in a very pleasing form, the good sense and large toleration of a man of the world,— with much of that generous allowance for the

"Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise,"

which genius too often requires, and should therefore always be most forward to show. It is impossible, however, to avoid noticing, that Mr. Scott is by far too favourable to the personal character of his author; whom, we think, it would really be injurious to the cause of morality to allow to pass, either as a very dignified or a very amiable person The truth is, we think, that he was extremely ambitious, arrogant, and selfish; of a morose, vindictive, and haughty temper; and, though capable of a sort of patronizing generosity towards his dependants, and of some attachment towards those who had long known and flattered him, his general demeanour, both in public and private life, appears to have been far from exemplary. Destitute of temper and magnanimity — and, we will add, of principle, in the former; and, in the latter, of tenderness, fidelity, or compassion.

The transformation of a young Whig into an old Tory — the gradual falling off of prudent men from unprofitable virtues, is, perhaps, too common an occurrence, to deserve much notice, or justify much reprobation. But Swift's desertion of his first principles was neither gradual nor early, — and was accomplished under such circumstances as really require to be exposed a little, and cannot well be passed over in a fair account of his life and character. He was bred a Whig under Sir William Temple — he took the title publicly in various productions; and during all the reign of King William, was a strenuous, and indeed an intolerant advocate of Revolution principles and Whig pretensions. His first patrons were Somers, Portland, and Halifax; and, under that ministry, the members of

which he courted in private and defended in public, he received church preferment to the value of near 400*l.* a year (equal at least to 1200*l.* at present), with the promise of still further favours. He was dissatisfied, however, because his livings were not in England; and having been sent over on the affairs of the Irish clergy in 1710, when he found the Whig ministry in a tottering condition, he temporized for a few months, till he saw that their downfall was inevitable; and then, without even the pretext of any public motive, but on the avowed ground of not having been sufficiently rewarded for his former services, he went over in the most violent and decided manner to the prevailing party; for whose gratification he abused his former friends and benefactors, with a degree of virulence and rancour, to which it would not be too much to apply the term of brutality; and, in the end, when the approaching death of the Queen, and their internal dissensions, made his services of more importance to his new friends, openly threatened to desert them also, and retire altogether from the scene, unless they made a suitable provision for him; and having, in this way, extorted the deanery of St. Patrick's, which he always complained of as quite inadequate to his merits, he counselled measures that must have involved the country in a civil war, for the mere chance of keeping his party in power; and, finally, on the Queen's death, retired in a state of despicable despondency and bitterness to his living, where he continued, to the end of his life, to libel liberty and mankind with unrelenting and pitiable rancour—to correspond with convicted traitors to the constitution they had sworn to maintain—and to lament as the worst of calamities, the dissolution of a ministry which had no merit but that of having promised him advancement, and of which several of the leading members immediately indemnified themselves by taking office in the court of the Pretender.

As this part of his conduct is passed over a great deal too slightly by his biographer; and as nothing can be more pernicious than the notion, that the political sins of eminent persons should be forgotten in the estimate of their merits, we must beg leave to verify the comprehensive sketch we have now given, by a few references to the documents that are to be found in the volumes before us. Of his original Whig professions, no proof will probably be required; the fact being notorious, and admitted by all his biographers. Abundant evidence, however, is furnished by his first successful pamphlet in defence of Lord Somers, and the other Whig lords impeached in 1701;—by his own express declaration in another work (vol. iii. p. 240.), that "having been long conversant with the Greek and Latin authors, and therefore a lover of liberty, he was naturally inclined to be what they call a Whig in politics;"—by the copy of verses in which he deliberately designates himself "a Whig, and one who wears a gown;"—by his exulting statement to Tisdal, whom he reproaches with being a Tory, and says—"To cool your insolence a little, know that the Queen, and Court, and House of Lords, and half the Commons almost, are Whigs, and the number daily increases:"—And, among innumerable other proofs, by the memorable verses on Whitehall, in which, alluding to the execution of King Charles in front of that building, he is pleased to say, with more zeal than good prosody,

"That theatre produced an action truly great,
On which eternal acclamations wait," &c.

Such being the principles, by the zealous profession of which he had first obtained distinction and preferment, and been admitted to the friendship of such men as Somers, Addison, and Steele, it only remains to be seen on what occasion, and on what considerations, he afterwards renounced them. It is, of itself, a tolerably decisive fact, that this change took place just when the Whig ministry went out of power, and their adversaries came into full possession of all the patronage and interest of the government. The whole matter, however, is fairly spoken out in various parts of his own writings:—and we do not believe there is anywhere on record a more barefaced avowal of political apostasy, undisguised and unpalliated by the slightest colour or pretence of public or conscientious motives. It is quite a singular fact, we believe, in the history of this sort of conversion, that he nowhere pretends to say that he had become aware of any danger to the country from the continuance of the Whig ministry—nor ever presumes to call in question the patriotism or penetration of Addison and the rest of his former associates, who re-

mained faithful to their first professions. His only apology, in short, for this sudden dereliction of the principles which he had maintained for near forty years — for it was at this ripe age that he got the first glimpse of his youthful folly — is a pretence of ill usage from the party with whom he had held them; a pretence — to say nothing of its inherent baseness — which appears to be utterly without foundation, and of which it is enough to say, that no mention is made, till that same party is overthrown. While they remain in office, they have full credit for the sincerity of their good wishes (see vol. xv. p. 250., &c.): — and it is not till it becomes both safe and profitable to abuse them, that we hear of their ingratitude. Nay, so critically and judiciously timed is this discovery of their unworthiness, that, even after the worthy author's arrival in London in 1710, when the movements had begun which terminated in their ruin, he continues, for some months, to keep on fair terms with them, and does not give way to his well considered resentment, till it is quite apparent that his interest must gain by the indulgence. He says, in the Journal to Stella, a few days after his arrival, "The Whigs would gladly lay hold on me, as a twig, while they are drowning, — and their great men are making me their clumsy apologies. But my Lord Treasurer (Godolphin) received me with a great deal of coldness, which has enraged me so, that I am almost vowing revenge." In a few weeks after — the change being by that time complete — he takes his part definitively, and makes his approaches to Harley, in a manner which we should really imagine no *rat* of the present day would have confidence enough to imitate. In mentioning his first interview with that eminent person, he says, "I had prepared him before by another hand, where he was very intimate, and *got myself represented* (which I might justly do) *as one extremely ill used by the last ministry*, after some obligation, because I refused to go certain lengths they would have me." (Vol. xv. p. 350.) About the same period, he gives us farther lights into the conduct of this memorable conversion, in the following passages of the Journal.

"Oct. 7. He (Harley) told me he must bring Mr. St. John and me acquainted; and spoke so many things of personal kindness and esteem, that I am inclined to believe what some friends had told me, that he would do every thing *to bring me over*. He desired me to dine with him on Tuesday; and, after four hours being with him, set me down at St. James's coffee-house in a hackney-coach.

"I must tell you a great piece of refinement in Harley. He charged me to come and see him often; I told him I was loath to trouble him, in so much business as he had, and desired I might have leave to come at his levee; which he immediately refused, and said, 'That was no place for friends.'

"I believe never was any thing compassed so soon: and purely done by my personal credit with Mr. Harley; who *is so excessively obliging, that I know not what to make of it, unless to show the rascals of the other party, that they used a man unworthily who had deserved better*. He speaks all the kind things to me in the world. — Oct. 14. I stand with the new people ten times better than ever I did with the old, and forty times more caressed."—*Life*, vol. i. p. 126.

"Nov. 8. Why should the Whigs think I came to England to leave them? But who the devil cares what they think? Am I under obligations in the least to any of them all? Rot them, ungrateful dogs. I will make them repent their usage of me, before I leave this place. They say the same thing here *of my leaving the Whigs; but they own they cannot blame me, considering the treatment I have had*," &c. &c.

If he really ever scrupled about going lengths with his Whig friends (which we do not believe), he seems to have resolved, that his fortune should not be hurt by any delicacy of this sort in his new connection; — for he took up the cudgels this time with the ferocity of a hireling, and the rancour of a renegade. In taking upon himself the conduct of the paper called "The Examiner," he gave a new character of acrimony and bitterness to the contention in which he mingled, — and not only made the most furious and unmeasured attacks upon the body of the party to which it had formerly been his boast that he belonged, but singled out, with a kind of savage discourtesy, a variety of his former friends and benefactors, and made them, by name and description, the objects of the most malignant abuse. Lord Somers, Godolphin, Steele, and many others with whom he had formerly lived in intimacy, and from whom he had received obligations, were successively attacked in public with the most rancorous personalities, and often with the falsest insinuations: in short, as he has himself emphatically expressed it in the Journal, he "libelled them all round." While he was thus abusing men he could not have

ceased to esteem, it is quite natural, and in course, to find him professing the greatest affection for those he hated and despised. A thorough partisan is a thorough despiser of sincerity; and no man seems to have got over that weakness more completely than the reverend person before us. In every page of the Journal to Stella, we find a triumphant statement of things he was writing or saying to the people about him, in direct contradiction to his real sentiments. We may quote a line or two from the first passage that presents itself. "I desired my Lord Radnor's brother to let my Lord know I would call on him at six, which I did; and was arguing with him three hours to bring him over to us; and I spoke so closely, that I believe he will be tractable. But he is a scoundrel; *and though I said I only talked from my love to him, I told a lie; for I did not care if he were hanged: but every one gained over is of consequence.*" (Vol. iii. p. 2.) We think there are not many, even of those who have served a regular apprenticeship to corruption and jobbing, who could go through their base task with more coolness and hardihood than this pious neophite.

These few references are, of themselves, sufficient to show the spirit and the true motives of this dereliction of his first principles; and seem entirely to e clude the only apology which the partiality of his biographer has been able to suggest, viz. that though, from first to last, a Whig in politics, he was all along still more zealously a High-Churchman as to religion; and left the Whigs merely because the Tories seemed more favourable to ecclesiastical pretensions. It is obvious, however, that this is quite inadmissible. The Whigs were as notoriously connected with the Low-Church party when he joined and defended them, as when he deserted and reviled them; — nor is this anywhere made the specific ground of his revilings. It would not have been very easy, indeed, to have asserted such a principle as the motive of his libels on the Earl of Nottingham, who, though a Whig, was a zealous High-Churchman, or his eulogies on Bolingbroke, who was pretty well known to be no churchman at all. It is plain, indeed, that Swift's High-Church principles were all along but a part of his selfishness and ambition; and meant nothing else than a desire to raise the consequence of the order to which he happened to belong. If he had been a layman, we have no doubt he would have treated the pretensions of the priesthood, as he treated the persons of all priests who were opposed to him, with the most bitter and irreverent disdain. Accordingly, he is so far from ever recommending Whig principles of government to his High-Church friends, or from confining his abuse of the Whigs to their tenets in matters ecclesiastical, that he goes the whole length of proscribing the party, and proposing, with the desperation of a true apostate, that the Monarch should be made substantially absolute by the assistance of a military force, in order to make it impossible that their principles should ever again acquire a preponderance in the country. It is impossible, we conceive, to give any other meaning to the advice contained in his "Free Thoughts on the State of Affairs," which he wrote just before the Queen's death, and which Bolingbroke himself thought too strong for publication, even at that critical period. His leading injunction there, is to adopt a system of the most rigorous exclusion of all Whigs from every kind of employment; and that, as they cannot be too much or too soon disabled, they ought to be proceeded against with as strong measures as can possibly consist with the lenity of our government; so that in no time to come it should be in the power of the Crown, even if it wished it, to choose an ill majority in the House of Commons. This great work, he adds, very explicitly, could only be well carried on by an entire new-modelling of *the army:* and especially of the Royal Guards, — which, as they then stood, he chooses to allege were fitter to guard a prince to the bar of a high court of justice, than to secure him on the throne. (Vol. v. p. 404.) This, even Mr. Scott is so little able to reconcile with the alleged Whig principles of his author, that he is forced to observe upon it, that it is "daring, uncompromising counsel; better suited to the genius of the man who gave it, than to that of the British nation, and most likely, if followed, to have led to a civil war." After this admission, it really is not very easy to understand by what singular stretch of charity the learned editor conceives he may consistently hold, that Swift was always a good Revolution Whig as

to politics, and only sided with the Tories—reluctantly we must suppose, and with great tenderness to his political opponents—out of his overpowering zeal for the Church.

While he thus stooped to the dirtiest and most dishonourable part of a partisan's drudgery, it was not to be expected that he should decline any of the mean arts by which a Court party may be maintained. Accordingly, we find him regular in his attendance upon Mrs. Masham, the Queen's favourite; and, after reading the contemptuous notices that occur of her in some of his Whig letters, as "one of the Queen's dressers, who, by great intrigue and flattery, had gained an ascendant over her," it is very edifying to find him writing periodical accounts of the progress of her pregnancy, and "praying God to preserve her life, which is of great importance to this nation," &c. &c.

A connection thus begun upon an avowed dissatisfaction with the reward of former services, cannot, with consistency, be supposed to have had any thing but self-interest as its foundation: and though Swift's love of power, and especially of the power of wounding, was probably gratified by his exertions in behalf of the triumphant party, no room is left for doubting that these exertions were substantially prompted by a desire to better his own fortune, and that his opinion of the merits of the party depended entirely upon their power and apparent inclination to perform this first of all duties. The thing is spoken out continually in the confidential Journal to Stella; and though he was very angry with Harley for offering him a bank note for fifty pounds, and refused to be his chaplain, this was very plainly because he considered these as no sufficient pay for his services—by no means because he wished to serve without pay. Very soon after his profession of Toryism, he writes to Stella—"This is the last sally I shall ever make; but *I hope it will turn to some account.* I have done more for these, and I think they are more honest than the last." And a little after—"My new friends are very kind; and I have promises enough. To return without some mark of distinction, would look extremely little; and I *would likewise gladly be somewhat richer than I am.*" At last, he seems to have fairly asked for the see of Hereford (Vol. xvi. p. 45.); and when this is refused, he says, "I dined with Lord Treasurer, who chid me for being absent three days. Mighty kind with a p—! Less of civility, and more of interest!" At last, when the state of the Queen's health made the duration of the ministry extremely precarious, and the support of their friends more essential, he speaks out like a true Swiss, and tells them that he will run away and leave them, if they do not instantly make a provision for him. In the Journal to Stella, he writes, that having seen the warrants for three deaneries, and none of them for him, he had gone to the Lord Treasurer, and "told him I had nothing to do but to go back to Ireland immediately; for I could not, with any reputation, stay longer here, *unless I had something honourable immediately given to me.* He afterwards told me he had stopped the warrants, and hoped something might be compassed for me," &c. And in the page following we find, that all his love for his dear friend the Lord Treasurer, would not induce him ever to see him again, if he was disappointed in this object of ambition. "The warrants for the deaneries are still stopped, for fear I should be gone. Do you think any thing will be done? In the mean time I prepare for my journey, and see no great people;—*nor will I see Lord Treasurer any more*, if I go." (Vol. iii. p. 207.) It is under this threat that he extorts the Deanery of St. Patrick's,—which he accepts with much grumbling and discontent, and does not enter into possession till all hope of better preferment seems for the time at an end. In this extremity he seems resolved, however, to make the most of it; and finding that the expenses of his induction and the usual payments to government on the occasion come to a considerable sum, he boldly resolves to ask a thousand pounds from the ministers, on the score of his past services, in order to make himself easy. This he announces to Stella soon after the appointment. "I hope in time they will be persuaded *to give me some money* to clear off these debts. They expect I shall pass the next winter here; and *then I will drive them to give me a sum of money.*" And a little after—"I shall be sadly cramped, unless the Queen will give me a thousand pounds. I am sure she owes me a great deal more. Lord

Treasurer rallies me upon it, and, I am sure, intends it — but *quando?*" And again — "Lord Treasurer uses me barbarously. He laughs when I mention a thousand pounds — though a thousand pounds is a very serious thing." It appears, however, that this modest request never was complied with; for, though Bolingbroke got the Queen's warrant for it, to secure Swift's attachment after he had turned out Harley, yet her Majesty's immediate death rendered the gift unavailing.

If any thing were wanting to show that his change of party and his attachment to that which was now uppermost, was wholly founded on personal, and in no degree on public considerations, it would be supplied by the innumerable traits of personal vanity, and the unrestrained expressions of eulogy or abuse, according as that vanity was gratified or thwarted, that are scattered over the whole journal and correspondence, — and which are utterly irreconcileable with the conduct of a man who was acting on any principle of dignity or fairness. With all his talent and all his pride, indeed, it appears that Swift exhibited, during this period of favour, as much of the ridiculous airs of a *parvenu* — of a low-bred underling brought suddenly into contact with wealth and splendour, as any of the base understrappers that ever made party disgusting. The studied rudeness and ostentatious arrogance with which he withheld the usual tribute of respect that all well-bred persons pay to rank and office, may be reckoned among the signs of this. But for a fuller picture, we would refer to the Diary of Bishop Kennet, who thus describes the demeanour of this politic partisan in the year 1713.

"Dr. Swift came into the coffee-house, and had a bow from every body but me. When I came to the antechamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as a master of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother the Duke of Ormond, to get a chaplain's place established in the garrison of Hull for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in jail, and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my Lord Treasurer, that, according to his petition, he should obtain a salary of 200*l.* *per annum* as minister of the English church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq., going in with the red bag to the Queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my Lord Treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad, and took out his pocket-book, and wrote down several things, as *memoranda*, to do for him. He turned to the fire, and took out his gold watch, and telling the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said 'he was too fast.' — 'How can I help it,' says the doctor, 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman, that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a Papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which 'he must have them all subscribe;' — 'for,' says he, 'the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thousand guineas for him.' Lord Treasurer, after leaving the Queen, came through the room, beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him: both went off *just before prayers*." — *Life*, vol. i. pp. 139, 140.

We are very unwilling, in any case, to ascribe to unworthy motives, what may be sufficiently accounted for upon better considerations; but we really have not charity enough to impute Swift's zealous efforts to prevent the rupture between Harley and Bolingbroke, or his continued friendship with both after that rupture took place, to his personal and disinterested affection for those two individuals. In the first place, he had a most manifest interest to prevent their disunion, as that which plainly tended to the entire dissolution of the ministry, and the ruin of the party on which he depended; and, as to his remaining the friend of both after they had become the most rancorous enemies of each other, it must be remembered that they were still respectively the two most eminent individuals with whom he had been connected; and that, if ever that party should be restored to power, from which alone he could now look for preferment, he who stood well with *both* these statesmen, would have a double chance of success. Considering, indeed, the facility with which he seems to have cast off friendships far more intimate than the inequality of their condition renders it possible that those of Oxford or Bolingbroke could be with him, whenever party interest interfered with them; — considering the disrespect with which he spoke of Sir William Temple's memory, after he had abjured his principles; — the coarseness with which he calls Lord Somers "a false deceitful rascal," after having designated him as the modern Aristides, for his blameless integrity; — and the unfeeling rancour with which he exposes the personal failings and pecuniary

embarrassments of Steele, with whom he had been long so closely united; — it would seem to require something more than the mere personal attachment of a needy pamphleteer to two rival peers, to account for his expressions of affection for both, after one had supplanted the other. The natural solution, indeed, seems to lie sufficiently open. After the perfidy he had shown to the Whig party, and the virulence with which he had revenged his own apostasy, there was no possibility of his being again received by *them*. His only chance, therefore, was in the restoration of the Tories, and his only policy to keep well with both their great leaders.

Mr. Scott, indeed, chooses to represent him as actuated by a romantic attachment to Lord Oxford, and pronounces an eloquent encomium on his devoted generosity in applying for leave of absence, upon that nobleman's disgrace, in order to be able to visit him in his retirement. Though he talks of such a visit, however, it is certain that he never did pay it; and that he was all the time engaged in the most friendly correspondence with Bolingbroke, from whom, the very day after he had kicked out his dear friend with the most undisguised anger and contempt, he condescended to receive an order for the thousand pounds he had so long solicited from his predecessor in vain. The following, too, are the terms in which Bolingbroke, at that very time, thought there was no impropriety, and could be no offence, in writing of Oxford, in a private confidential letter to this his dear devoted friend. "Your state of late passages is right enough. I reflect upon them with indignation; and shall never forgive myself for having trusted so long to so much real pride and awkward humility; — to an air of such familiar friendship, and a heart so void of all tenderness; — to such a temper of engrossing business and power, and so perfect an incapacity to manage one, with such a tyrannical disposition to abuse the other," &c. &c. (Vol. xvi. p. 219.) If Swift's feelings for Oxford had borne any resemblance to those which Mr. Scott has imputed to him, it is not conceivable that he should have continued upon a footing of the greatest cordiality with the man who, after supplanting him, could speak in those terms of his fallen rival. Yet Swift's friendship, as they called it, with Bolingbroke, continued as long as that with Oxford; and we find him not only giving him his advice how to act in the government which had now fallen entirely into his hands, but kindly offering, "if his own services may be of any use, to attend him by the beginning of winter." (Id. p. 215.) Those who know of what stuff political friendships are generally made, indeed, will not require even this evidence to prove the hollowness of those in which Swift was now connected. The following passage, in a letter from Lewis, the most intimate and confidential of all his coadjutors, dated only a week or two before Oxford's disgrace, gives a delicious picture, we think, of the whole of those persons for whom the learned Dean was thus professing the most disinterested attachment, and receiving, no doubt, in return, professions not less animated and sincere. It is addressed to Swift in July, 1714.

"I meet with no man or woman, who pretend upon any probable grounds to judge who will carry the great point. Our female friend (Mrs. Masham) told the dragon (Lord Oxford) in her own house, last Thursday morning, these words: 'You never did the Queen any service, nor are you capable of doing her any.' He made no reply, *but supped with her and Mercurialis* (Bolingbroke) *that night at her own house.* — His *revenge is not the less meditated for that.* He tells the words clearly and distinctly to all mankind. *Those who range under his banner, call her ten thousand bitches and kitchen-wenches. Those who hate him do the same.* And from my heart, I grieve that she should give such a loose to her passion; for she is susceptible of true friendship, and has many social and domestic virtues. The great attorney (Lord Chancellor Harcourt) who made you the sham offer of the Yorkshire living, had a long conference with the dragon on Thursday, *kissed him at parting,* and *cursed him at night!*" — Vol. xvi. pp. 173, 174.

The death of Queen Anne, however, which happened on the 1st of August thereafter, speedily composed all those dissensions, and confounded the victors and the vanquished in one common proscription. Among the most miserable and downcast of all the mourners on that occasion, we confess we were somewhat surprised to find our reverend author. He who, but a few months before, was willing to have hazarded all the horrors of a civil war, for the chance of keeping his party in office, sunk instantly into pitiable and unmanly despondency upon the final disgrace of that party. We are unwilling to believe, and we do not

in fact believe, that Swift was privy to the designs of Bolingbroke, Ormond, and Mar, to bring in the Pretender on the Queen's demise, and are even disposed to hold it doubtful whether Oxford concurred in those measures; but we are sure that no man of common firmness could have felt more sorrow and despair, if the country had been conquered by a lawless invader, than this friend of the Act of Settlement did upon the quiet and regular transmission of the sceptre to the appointed heir; and the discomfiture of those ministers who are proved to have traitorously conspired to accomplish a counter-revolution, and restore a dynasty which he always affected to consider as justly rejected. How all this sorrow is to be reconciled to the character of a good Revolution Whig, we leave it to the learned editor, who has invested him with that character, to discover. To us it merely affords new evidence of the selfishness and ambition of the individual, and of that utter and almost avowed disregard of the public, which constituted his political character. Of the sorrow and despondency itself, we need produce no proofs,— for they are to be found in every page of his subsequent writings. His whole life, indeed, after this event, was one long fit of spleen and lamentation: and, to the very end of his days, he never ceases bewailing the irreparable and grievous calamity which the world had suffered in the death of that most imbecile princess. He speaks of it, in short, throughout, as a pious divine might be supposed to speak of the fall of primeval man from the state of innocence. The sun seems darkened for ever in his eyes, and mankind degenerated beyond the toleration of one who was cursed with the remembrance of their former dignity! And all this for what?—because the government was, with the full assent of the nation, restored to the hands of those whose talents and integrity he had once been proud to celebrate—or rather because it was taken from those who would have attempted, at the evident risk of a civil war, to defeat that solemn settlement of which *he* had always approved, and in virtue of which alone the late Sovereign had succeeded;—because the liberties of the nation were again to be secured in peace, under the same councils which had carried its glories so high in war—and the true friends of the Revolution of 1688 to succeed to that patronage which had previously been exercised by its virtual enemies! Such were the public calamities which he had to lament as a patriot;—and the violence done to his political attachments seems to have been of the same character. His two friends were Bolingbroke and Oxford; and both these had been abusing each other, and endeavouring to supplant each other, with all their might, for a long period of time;—and, at last, one of them did this good office for the other, in the most insulting and malignant manner he could devise: and yet the worthy Dean had charity enough to love them both just as dearly as ever. He was always a zealous advocate, too, for the Act of Settlement; and has in twenty places expressed his abomination of all who could allow themselves to think of the guilt of calling in the Pretender. If, therefore, he could love and honour and flatter Bolingbroke, who not only turned out his beloved Oxford, but actually went over to the Pretender, it is not easy to see why he should have been so implacable towards those older friends of his, who only turned out Bolingbroke in order to prevent the Pretender from being brought in. On public grounds, in short, there is nothing to be said for him;—nor can his conduct or feelings ever receive any explanation upon such principles. But every thing becomes plain and consistent when we look to another quarter—when we consider, that by the extinction of the Tory party, his hopes of preferment were also extinguished; and that he was no longer to enjoy the dearer delight of bustling in the front of a triumphant party—of inhaling the incense of adulation from its servile dependents—and of insulting with impunity the principles and the benefactors he had himself deserted.

That this was the true key to his feelings, on this and on every other occasion, may be concluded indeed with safety, not only from his former, but from his after life. His Irish politics may all be referred to one principle—a desire to insult and embarrass the government by which he was neglected, and with which he despaired of being reconciled:—A single fact is decisive upon this point. While his friends were in power, we hear nothing of the grievances of Ireland; and to the last we hear nothing of its radical grievance, the oppression

of its Catholic population. His object was, not to do good to Ireland, but to vex and annoy the English ministry. To do this, however, with effect, it was necessary that he should speak to the interests and the feelings of some party who possessed a certain degree of power and influence. This unfortunately was not the case in that day with the Catholics; and though this gave them only a stronger title to the services of a truly brave or generous advocate, it was sufficient to silence Swift. They are not so much as named above two or three times in his writings — and then only with scorn and reprobation. In the topics which he does take up, it is no doubt true, that he frequently inveighs against real oppression and acts of indisputable impolicy; yet it is no want of charity to say, that it is quite manifest that these were not his reasons for bringing them forward, and that he had just as little scruple to make an outcry, where no public interest was concerned, as where it was apparent. It was sufficient for him, that the subject was likely to excite popular prejudice and clamour,— or that he had some personal pique or animosity to gratify. The Drapier's letters are a sufficient proof of the influence of the former principle; and the Legion Club, and the numberless brutalities against Tighe and Bettesworth, of the latter. Every body is now satisfied of the perfect harmlessness, and indeed of the great utility of Wood's scheme for a new copper coinage: and the only pretexts for the other scurrilities to which we have alluded were, that the Parliament had shown a disposition to interfere for the alleviation, in some inconsiderable particulars, of the intolerable oppression of the tithe system,— to the detriment, as Swift imagined, of the order to which he himself belonged; and that Mr. Tighe had obtained for a friend of his own, a living which Swift had wished to secure for one of his dependants.

His main object in all this, we make no doubt, was personal pique and vengeance; — yet it is probable, that there was occasionally, or throughout, an expectation of being again brought into the paths of power and preferment, by the notoriety which these publications enabled him to maintain, and by the motives which they held out to each successive ministry, to secure so efficient a pen in their favour. That he was willing to have made his peace with Walpole, even during the reign of George I., is admitted by Mr. Scott — though he discredits the details which Lord Chesterfield and others have given, apparently from very direct authority, of the humiliating terms upon which he was willing to accede to the alliance; — and it is certain, that he paid his court most assiduously to the successor of that Prince, both while he was Prince of Wales, and after his accession to the throne. The manner in which he paid his court, too, was truly debasing, and especially unworthy of a High-Churchman and a public satirist. It was chiefly by flatteries and assiduity to his mistress, Mrs. Howard! with whom he maintained a close correspondence, and upon whom he always professed mainly to rely for advancement. When George I. died, Swift was among the first to kiss the hands of the new Sovereign, and indulged anew in the golden dreams of preferment. Walpole's recal to power however soon overcast those visions; and he then wrote to the mistress, humbly and earnestly entreating her, to tell him sincerely what were his chances of success. She flattered him for a while with hopes; but at last he discovered that the prejudice against him was too strong to be overcome; and ran back in terrible humour to Ireland, where he railed ever after with his usual vehemence against the King, the Queen, and the concubine. The truth, it seems, was, that the latter was disposed to favour him; but that her influence with the King was subordinate to that of the Queen, who made it a principle to thwart all applications which were made through that channel.

Such, we think, is a faithful sketch of the political career of this celebrated person — and if it be correct in the main, or even in any material particulars, we humbly conceive that a more unprincipled and base course of proceeding never was held up to the scorn and ridicule of mankind. To the errors and even the inconsistencies of honest minds, we hope we shall always be sufficiently indulgent; and especially to such errors in practical life as are incident to literary and ingenious men. For Swift, however, there is no such apology. His profession, through life, was much more that of

a politician than of a clergyman or an author. He was not led away in any degree by heated fancy, or partial affection — by deluding visions of impossible improvements, or excessive indignation at incurable vices. He followed, from first to last, the eager, but steady impulse of personal ambition and personal animosity; and in the dirty and devious career into which they impelled him, he never spared the character or the feelings of a single individual who appeared to stand in his way. In no respect, therefore, can he have any claim to lenity; — and now, when his faults are of importance only as they may serve the purpose of warning or misleading to others, we consider it as our indispensable duty to point them out in their true colours; and to show that, even when united to talents as distinguished as his, political profligacy and political rancour must lead to universal distrust and avoidance during the life of the individual, and to contempt and infamy thereafter.

Of Swift's personal character, his ingenious biographer has given almost as partial a representation, as of his political conduct; — a great part of it indeed has been anticipated, in tracing the principles of that conduct; — the same arrogance and disdain of mankind, leading to profligate ambition and scurrility in public life, and to domineering and selfish habits in private. His character seems to have been radically overbearing and tyrannical; — for though, like other tyrants, he could stoop low enough where his interests required it, it was his delight to exact an implicit compliance with his humours and fancies, and to impose upon all around him the task of observing and accommodating themselves to his habits, without the slightest regard to their convenience or comfort. Wherever he came, the ordinary forms of society were to give way to his pleasure; and every thing, even to the domestic arrangements of a family, to be suspended for his caprice. — If he was to be introduced to a person of rank, he insisted that the first advances and the first visit should be made to him. If he went to see a friend in the country, he would order an old tree to be cut down, if it obstructed the view from his window — and was never at his ease unless he was allowed to give nicknames to the lady of the house, and make lampoons upon her acquaintance. On going for the first time into any family, he frequently prescribed beforehand the hours for their meals, sleep, and exercise: and insisted rigorously upon the literal fulfilment of the capitulation. From his intimates he uniformly exacted the most implicit submission to all his whims and absurdities; and carried his prerogative so far, that he sometimes used to chase the Grattans and other accommodating friends, through the apartments of the Deanery, and up and down stairs, driving them like horses, with a large whip, till he thought he had enough of exercise. All his jests have the same character of insolence and coarseness. When he first came to his curate's house, he announced himself as "his master;" took possession of the fireside, and ordered his wife to take charge of his shirts and stockings. When a young clergyman was introduced to him, he offered him the dregs of a bottle of wine, and said, he always kept a poor parson about him to drink up his dregs. Even in hiring servants, he always chose to insult them, by inquiring into their qualifications for some filthy and degrading office. And though it may be true, that his after conduct was not exactly of a piece with those preliminaries, it is obvious, that as no man of proper feelings could submit to such impertinence, so no man could have a right to indulge in it. Even considered merely as a manner assumed to try the character of those with whom he lived, it was a test which no one but a tyrant could imagine himself entitled to apply; — and Swift's practical conclusion from it was just the reverse of what might be expected. He attached himself to those only who were mean enough to bear this usage, and broke with all who resented it. While he had something to gain or to hope from the world, he seems to have been occasionally less imperious; but, after he retired to Ireland, he gave way without restraint to the native arrogance of his character; and, accordingly, confined himself almost entirely to the society of a few easy-tempered persons, who had no talents or pretensions to come in competition with his; and who, for the honour of his acquaintance, were willing to submit to the dominion he usurped.

A singular contrast to the rudeness and arrogance of this behaviour to his friends and dependants, is afforded by the instances of

extravagant adulation and base humility, which occur in his addresses to those upon whom his fortune depended. After he gets into the society of Bolingbroke and Oxford, and up to the age of forty, these are composed in something of a better taste; but the true models are to be found in his addresses to Sir William Temple, the first and most honoured of his patrons, upon whose sickness and recovery he has indited a heroic epistle and a Pindaric ode, more fulsome and extravagant than any thing that had then proceeded from the pen even of a poet-laureate; and to whom, after he had left his family in bad humour, he sends a miserable epistle, entreating a certificate of character, in terms which are scarcely consistent with the consciousness of deserving it; and are, at all events, infinitely inconsistent with the proud and peremptory tone which he assumed to those who would bear with it. A few lines may be worth quoting. He was then full twenty-seven years of age, and a candidate for ordination. After explaining this, he adds—

"I entreat that your honour will consider this, and will please to send me some certificate of my behaviour during almost three years in your family; wherein I shall stand in need of all your goodness to excuse my many weaknesses and oversights, much more to say any thing to my advantage. The particulars expected of me are what relate to morals and learning, and the reasons of quitting your honour's family, that is, whether the last was occasioned by any ill actions. They are all left entirely to your honour's *mercy*, though in the first I think I cannot reproach myself any farther than for *infirmities*.

"This is all I dare beg at present from your honour, under circumstances of life not worth your regard. What is left me to wish, next to the health and prosperity of your honour and family, is, that Heaven would one day allow me the opportunity of leaving my acknowledgments at your feet for so many favours I have received; which, whatever effect they have had upon my fortune, shall never fail to have the greatest upon my mind, in approving myself, upon all occasions, your honour's most obedient and most dutiful servant."—Vol. xv. pp. 230, 231.

By far the most characteristic, and at the same time the most discreditable and most interesting part of Swift's history, however, is that which relates to his connection with the three unfortunate women, whose happiness he ruined, and whose reputation he did what was in him to destroy. We say, the three women—for though *Varina* was cast off before he had fame or practice enough in composition to celebrate her in song, like *Stella* or *Vanessa*, her injuries seem to have been nearly as great, and altogether as unpardonable as those of the other two. Soon after leaving college, he appears to have formed, or at least professed, an attachment to a Miss Jane Waryng, the sister of a fellow-student, to whom his assiduities seem to have rendered him acceptable, and with whom he corresponded for a series of years, under the preposterous name of Varina. There appear to be but two letters of this correspondence preserved, both written by Swift, one in the height of his passion, and the other in its decline—and both extremely characteristic and curious. The first is dated in 1696, and is chiefly remarkable for its extreme badness and stupidity; though it is full enough of love and lamentation. The lady, it seems, had long before confessed a mutual flame; but prudential considerations made her averse to an immediate union,—upon which the lover raves and complains in the following deplorable sentences,—written, it will be observed, when he was on the borders of thirty, and proving, along with his early poems, how very late he came to the use of his faculties.

"Madam,—Impatience is the most inseparable quality of a lover, and indeed of every person who is in pursuit of a design whereon he conceives his greatest happiness or misery to depend. It is the same thing in war, in courts, and in common business. Every one who hunts after pleasure, or fame, or fortune, is still restless and uneasy till he has hunted down his game; and all this is not only very natural, but something reasonable too: for a violent desire is little better than a distemper, and therefore men are not to blame in looking after a cure. *I find myself hugely infected with this malady*, and am easily vain enough to believe it has some very good reasons to excuse it. For indeed, in my case, there are some circumstances which will admit pardon for more than ordinary disquiets. That dearest object upon which all my prospect of happiness entirely depends, is in perpetual danger to be removed for ever from my sight. Varina's life is daily wasting; and though one just and honourable action would furnish health to her, and unspeakable happiness to us both, yet some power that repines at human felicity has that influence to hold her continually doating upon her cruelty, and me on the cause of it.

"Would to Heaven you were but a while sensible of the thoughts into which my present distractions plunge me; *they hale me a thousand ways, and I not able to bear them. It is so, by Heaven:* The love of Varina is of more tragical consequence than her cruelty. Would to God you had treated and scorned

me from the beginning. It was your pity opened the first way to my misfortune; and now your love is finishing my ruin: and is it so then? In one fortnight I must take eternal farewell of Varina: and (I wonder) will she weep at parting, a little to justify her poor pretences of some affection to me?

"Surely, Varina, you have but a very mean opinion of the joys that accompany a true, honourable, unlimited love; yet either nature *and our ancestors* have highly deceived us, or else all other sublunary things are dross in comparison. Is it possible you can be yet insensible to the prospect of a rapture and delight so innocent and so exalted? *By Heaven, Varina, you are more experienced and have less virgin innocence than I.* Would not your conduct make one think you were hugely skilled in all the little politic methods of intrigue? Love, with the gall of too much discretion, is a thousand times worse than with none at all. It is a peculiar part of nature which art debauches, but cannot improve.

"Farewell, madam; and may love make you a while forget your temper to do me justice. Only remember, *that if you still refuse to be mine, you will quickly lose, for ever lose, him that has resolved to die as he has lived, all yours,* JON. SWIFT." — Vol. xv. pp. 232—237.

Notwithstanding these tragic denunciations, he neither died — nor married — nor broke off the connection, for four years thereafter; in the latter part of which, having been at last presented to two livings in Ireland, worth near 400*l.* a year, the lady seems to have been reduced to remind him of his former impatience, and fairly to ask him, whether his affections had suffered any alteration. His answer to this appeal is contained in the second letter; — and is, we think, one of the most complete patterns of meanness, selfishness, and brutality, we have ever met with. The truth undoubtedly was, that his affections were estranged, and had probably settled by this time on the unfortunate Stella: but instead of either fairly avowing this inconstancy, or honourably fulfilling engagements, from which inconstancy perhaps could not release him, he thinks fit to write, in the most frigid, insolent, and hypocritical terms, undervaluing her fortune and person, and finding fault with her humour; — and yet pretending, that if she would only comply with certain conditions which he specifies, he might still be persuaded to venture himself with her into the perils of matrimony. It will be recollected, that when he urged immediate marriage so passionately in 1696, he had no provision in the world, and must have intended to live on her fortune, which yielded about 100*l.* a year, and that he thought her health as well as happiness would be saved by the match. In 1700, when he had got two livings, he addresses her as follows: —

"I desire therefore, you will let me know if your health be otherwise than it was when you told me the doctors advised you against marriage, as what would certainly hazard your life. Are they or you grown of another opinion in this particular? are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs, with an income of less (perhaps) than 300*l.* a-year? (it must have been near 500*l.*) have you such an inclination to my person and humour, as to comply with my desires and way of living, and endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? can you bend your love and esteem and indifference to others the same way as I do mine? shall I have so much power in your heart, or you so much government of your passions, as to grow in good humour upon my approach, though provoked by a ——? have you so much good nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any rugged humour occasioned by the cross accidents of life? shall the place wherever your husband is thrown be more welcome than courts or cities without him? *In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men, who, like me, are deep read in the world; and to a person thus made, I should be proud in giving all due returns towards making her happy.*"— Vol. xv. pp. 247, 248.

He then tells her, that if every thing else were suitable, he should not care whether her person were beautiful, or her fortune large.

"Cleanliness in the first, and competency in the other, is all I look for. I desire, indeed, a plentiful revenue, but would rather it should be of my own? though I should bear from a wife to be reproached for the greatest."— Vol. xv. p. 248.

To complete the picture of his indifference, or rather his ill-disguised disinclination, he adds —

"The dismal account you say I have given you of my livings I can assure you to be a true one; and since it is a dismal one even in your own opinion, *you can best draw consequences from it.* The place where Dr. Bolton lived is upon a living which he keeps with the deanery; but the place of residence for that they have given me, is within a mile of a town called Trim, twenty miles from hence; and there is no other way but to hire a house at Trim, or build one on the spot; the *first is hardly to be done, and the other I am too poor to perform at present.*"— Vol. xv. p. 246.

The lady, as was to be expected, broke off all correspondence after this letter — and so ended Swift's first matrimonial engagement, and first eternal passion! — What became of the unhappy person whom he thus heartlessly

abandoned, with impaired health, and mortified affections, after a seven-years' courtship, is nowhere explained. The fate of his next victim is at least more notorious.

Esther Johnson, better known to the reader of Swift's works by the name of *Stella*, was the child of a London merchant, who died in her infancy; when she went with her mother, who was a friend of Sir W. Temple's sister, to reside at Moorpark, where Swift was then domesticated. Some part of the charge of her education devolved upon him; — and though he was twenty years her senior, the interest with which he regarded her, appears to have ripened into something as much like affection as could find a place in his selfish bosom. Soon after Sir William's death, he got his Irish livings, besides a considerable legacy; — and as she had a small independence of her own, it is obvious that there was nothing to prevent their honourable and immediate union. Some cold-blooded vanity or ambition, however, or some politic anticipation of his own possible inconstancy, deterred him from this onward and open course; and led him to an arrangement which was dishonourable and absurd in the beginning, and in the end productive of the most accumulated misery. He prevailed upon her to remove her residence from the bosom of her own family in England, to his immediate neighbourhood in Ireland, where she took lodgings with an elderly companion, of the name of Mrs. Dingley — avowedly for the sake of his society and protection, and on a footing of intimacy so very strange and unprecedented, that whenever he left his parsonage house for England or Dublin, these ladies immediately took possession, and occupied it till he came back. — A situation so extraordinary and undefined, was liable of course to a thousand misconstructions; and must have been felt as degrading by any woman of spirit and delicacy: and accordingly, though the master of this Platonic seraglio seems to have used all manner of paltry and insulting practices, to protect a reputation which he had no right to bring into question, — by never seeing her except in the presence of Mrs. Dingley, and never sleeping under the same roof with her, — it is certain both that the connection was regarded as indecorous by persons of her own sex, and that she herself felt it to be humiliating and improper. Accordingly, within two years after her settlement in Ireland, it appears that she encouraged the addresses of a clergyman of the name of Tisdall, between whom and Swift there was a considerable intimacy; and that she would have married him, and thus sacrificed her earliest attachment to her freedom and her honour, had she not been prevented by the private dissuasions of that false friend, who did not choose to give up his own claims to her, although he had not the heart or the honour to make her lawfully his own. She was then a blooming beauty, of little more than twenty, with fine black hair, delicate features, and a playful and affectionate character. It seems doubtful to us, whether she originally felt for Swift any thing that could properly be called love — and her willingness to marry another in the first days of their connection, seems almost decisive on the subject: but the ascendancy he had acquired over her mind, and her long habit of submitting her own judgment and inclinations to his, gave him at least an equal power over her, and moulded her pliant affections into too deep and exclusive a devotion. Even before his appointment to the Deanery of St. Patrick's, it is utterly impossible to devise any apology for his not marrying her, or allowing her to marry another; the only one that he ever appears to have stated himself, viz. the want of a sufficient fortune to sustain the expenses of matrimony, being palpably absurd in the mouth of a man born to nothing, and already more wealthy than nine-tenths of his order; but, after he obtained that additional preferment, and was thus ranked among the well beneficed dignitaries of the establishment, it was plainly an insult upon common sense to pretend that it was the want of money that prevented him from fulfilling his engagements. Stella was then twenty-six, and he near forty-five; and both had hitherto lived very far within an income that was now more than doubled. That she now expected to be made his wife, appears from the pains he takes in the Journal indirectly to destroy that expectation; and though the awe in which he habitually kept her, probably prevented her either from complaining, or inquiring into the cause, it is now certain that a new attachment, as heart-

less, as unprincipled, and as fatal in its consequences as either of the others, was at the bottom of this cruel and unpardonable proceeding.

During his residence in London, from 1710 to 1712, he had leisure, in the intervals of his political labours, to form the acquaintance of Miss Esther Vanhomrigh, whose unfortunate love he has recorded, with no great delicacy, under the name of Vanessa. This young lady, then only in her twentieth year, joined to all the attractions of youth, fashion, and elegance, the still more dangerous gifts of a lively imagination, a confiding temper, and a capacity of strong and permanent affection. Swift, regardless of the ties which bound him to Stella, allowed himself to be engaged by those qualities; and, without explaining the nature of those ties to his new idol, strove by his assiduites to obtain a return of affection—while he studiously concealed from the unhappy Stella the wrong he was conscious of doing her. We willingly borrow the words of his partial biographer, to tell the rest of a story, which, we are afraid, we should tell with little temper ourselves.

"While Vanessa was occupying much of his time, and much doubtless of his thoughts, she is never once mentioned in the Journal directly by name, and is only twice casually indicated by the title of Vanhomrigh's eldest daughter. There was, therefore, a consciousness on Swift's part, that his attachment to his younger pupil was of a nature which could not be gratifying to her predecessor, although he probably shut his own eyes to the consequences of an intimacy which he wished to conceal from those of Stella. Miss Vanhomrigh, in the mean while, conscious of the pleasure which Swift received from her society, and of the advantages of youth and fortune which she possessed, and ignorant of the peculiar circumstances in which he stood with respect to another, naturally, and surely without offence either to reason or virtue, gave way to the hope of forming an union with a man whose talents had first attracted her admiration, and whose attentions, in the course of their mutual studies, had, by degrees, gained her affections, and seemed to warrant his own. The friends continued to use the language of friendship, but with the assiduity and earnestness of a warmer passion, until Vanessa rent asunder the veil, by intimating to Swift the state of her affections; and in this, as she conceived, she was justified by his own favourite, though dangerous maxim, of doing that which seems in itself right, without respect to the common opinion of the world. We cannot doubt that he actually felt the 'shame, disappointment, guilt, surprise,' expressed in his celebrated poem, though he had not courage to take the open and manly course of avowing those engagements with Stella, or other impediments which prevented him from accepting the hand and fortune of her rival.—Without, therefore, making this painful but just confession, he answered the avowal of Vanessa's passion, at first in raillery, and afterwards by an offer of devoted and everlasting friendship, founded on the basis of virtuous esteem. Vanessa seems neither to have been contented nor silenced by the result of her declaration; but to the very close of her life persisted in endeavouring, by entreaties and arguments, to extort a more lively return to her passion, than this cold proffer was calculated to afford.

"The effect of his increasing intimacy with the fascinating Vanessa, may be plainly traced in the Journal to Stella, which, in the course of its progress, becomes more and more cold and indifferent,—breathes fewer of those aspirations after the quiet felicity of a life devoted to M.D. and the willows at Laracor, uses less frequently the affectionate jargon called the 'little language,' in which his fondness at first displays itself,—and, in short, exhibits all the symptoms of waning affection. Stella was neither blind to the altered style of his correspondence, nor deaf to the rumours which were wafted to Ireland. Her letters are not preserved; but from several passages of the Journal, it appears that they intimated displeasure and jealousy, which Swift endeavours to appease.

"Upon Swift's return to Ireland, we may guess at the disturbed state of his feelings, wounded at once by ungratified ambition, and harassed by his affection being divided between two objects, each worthy of his attachment, and each having great claims upon him, while neither was likely to remain contented with the limited return of friendship in exchange for love, and that friendship too divided with a rival. The claims of Stella were preferable in point of date; and, to a man of honour and good faith, in every respect irresistible. She had resigned her country, her friends, and even hazarded her character, in hopes of one day being united to Swift. But if Stella had made the greater sacrifice, Vanessa was the more important victim. She had youth, fortune, fashion; all the acquired accomplishments and information in which Stella was deficient; possessed at least as much wit, and certainly higher powers of imagination. That he had no intention to marry Vanessa, is evident from passages in his letters, which are inconsistent with such an arrangement; as, on the other hand, their whole tenor excludes that of the guilty intimacy.—On the other hand, his conduct, with respect to Stella, was equally dubious. So soon as he was settled in the Deanery-house, his first care was to secure lodgings for Mrs. Dingley and Stella, upon Ormond's Quay, on the other side of the Liffey; and to resume, with the same guarded caution, the intercourse which had formerly existed between them. But circumstances soon compelled him to give that connection a more definite character.

"Mrs. Vanhomrigh was now dead. Her two sons survived her but a short time; and the circumstances of the young ladies were so far embarrassed by inconsiderate expenses, as gave them a handsome excuse for retiring to Ireland, where their father had left a small property near Celbridge. The arrival of Vanessa in Dublin excited the apprehensions of Swift and the jealousy of Stella. However imprudently the Dean might have indulged himself and the unfortunate young lady, by frequenting her society during his residence in England, there is no doubt that he was alive to all the hazards that might accrue to the reputation and peace of both, by continuing the same intimacy in Dublin. But the means of avoiding it were no longer in his power, although his reiterated remonstrances assumed even the character of unkindness. She importuned him with complaints of neglect and cruelty; and it was obvious, that any decisive measure to break their correspondence, would be attended with some such tragic consequence, as, though late, at length concluded their story. Thus engaged in a labyrinth, where perseverance was wrong, and retreat seemed almost impossible, Swift resolved to temporise, in hopes, probably, that time, accident, the mutability incident to violent affections, might extricate himself and Vanessa from the snare in which his own culpable imprudence had involved them. Meanwhile, he continued to bestow on her those marks of regard which it was impossible to refuse to her feelings towards him, even if they had not been reciprocal. But the conduct which he adopted as kindest to Miss Vanhomrigh, was likely to prove fatal to Stella. His fears and affections were next awakened for that early favourite, whose suppressed grief and jealousy, acting upon a frame naturally delicate, menaced her health in an alarming manner. The feelings with which Swift beheld the wreck which his conduct had occasioned, will not bear description. Mrs. Johnson had forsaken her country, and clouded even her reputation, to become the sharer of his fortunes, when at their lowest; and the implied ties by which he was bound to make her compensation, were as strong as the most solemn promise, if indeed even promises of future marriage had not been actually exchanged between them. He employed Dr. St. George Ashe, bishop of Clogher, his tutor and early friend, to request the cause of her melancholy; and he received the answer which his conscience must have anticipated — it was her sensibility to his recent indifference, and to the discredit which her own character sustained from the long subsistence of the dubious and mysterious connection between them. To convince her of the constancy of his affection, and to remove her beyond the reach of calumny, there was but one remedy. To this communication Swift replied, that he had formed two resolutions concerning matrimony: — one, that he would not marry till possessed of a competent fortune; the other, that the event should take place at a time of life which gave him a reasonable prospect to see his children settled in the world. The independence proposed, he said, he had not yet achieved, being still embarrassed by debt; and, on the other hand, he was past that term of life after which he had determined never to marry. Yet he was ready to go through the ceremony for the ease of Mrs. Johnson's mind, providing it should remain a strict secret from the public, and that they should continue to live separately, and in the same guarded manner as formerly. To these hard terms Stella subscribed; they relieved her own mind at least from all scruples on the impropriety of their connection; and they soothed her jealousy, by rendering it impossible that Swift should ever give his hand to her rival. They were married in the garden of the deanery, by the bishop of Clogher, in the year 1716." — Vol. i. pp. 229—238.

Even admitting all the palliations that are here suggested, it is plain that Swift's conduct is utterly indefensible — and that his ingenious biographer thinks nearly as ill of it as we do. Supposing it possible that a man of his penetration should have inspired an innocent young girl with a violent passion, without being at all aware of it, what possible apology can there be for his not disclosing his engagements with Mrs. Johnson, and peremptorily breaking off all intercourse with her rejected rival? — He was bound to *her* by ties even more sacred than those of actual marriage — and was no more at liberty, under such circumstances, to disguise that connection than the other: — or if he had himself unconsciously imbibed an irresistible passion for his younger admirer, it would have been far less guilty or dishonourable to have avowed this to Stella, and followed the impulse of such a fatal attachment. In either of these ways, he would have spared at least one of his victims. But he had not the apology of any such passion; and, desirous apparently of saving himself the shock of any unpleasant disclosure, or wishing to secure to himself the gratification of both their attachments, he endeavoured basely to conceal from each the share which the other had in his affections, and sacrificed the peace of both to the indulgence of this mean and cold-blooded duplicity. The same disgusting selfishness is, if possible, still more apparent, in the mortifying and degrading conditions he annexed to his nominal marriage with Stella, for the concealment of which no reason can be assigned, to which it is possible to listen with patience, — at least after the death of Vanessa had removed all fear of its afflicting or irritating that un-

happy rival. This tragical event, of which Swift was as directly and as guiltily the cause, as if he had plunged a dagger into her heart, is described with much feeling by Mr. Scott, who has added a fuller account of her previous retirement than any former editor.

"About the year 1717, she retired from Dublin to her house and property near Celbridge, to nurse her hopeless passion in seclusion from the world. Swift seems to have foreseen and warned her against the consequences of this step. His letters uniformly exhort her to seek general society, to take exercise, and to divert, as much as possible, the current of her thoughts from the unfortunate subject which was preying upon her spirits. He even exhorts her to leave Ireland. Until the year 1720, he never appears to have visited her at Celbridge; they only met when she was occasionally in Dublin. But in that year, and down to the time of her death, Swift came repeatedly to Celbridge; and, from the information of a most obliging correspondent, I am enabled to give account of some minute particulars attending them.

"Marley Abbey, near Celbridge, where Miss Vanhomrigh resided, is built much in the form of a real cloister, especially in its external appearance. An aged man (upwards of ninety by his own account) showed the grounds to my correspondent. He was the son of Mrs. Vanhomrigh's gardener, and used to work with his father in the garden when a boy. He remembered the unfortunate Vanessa well, and his account of her corresponded with the usual description of her person, especially as to her *embonpoint.* He said she went seldom abroad, and saw little company: her constant amusement was reading, or walking in the garden. Yet, according to this authority, her society was courted by several families in the neighbourhood, who visited her, notwithstanding her seldom returning that attention, — and he added, that her manners interested every one who knew her. But she avoided company, and was always melancholy save when Dean Swift was there, and then she seemed happy. The garden was to an uncommon degree crowded with laurels. The old man said, that when Miss Vanhomrigh expected the Dean, she always planted, with her own hand, a laurel or two against his arrival. He showed her favourite seat, still called Vanessa's bower. Three or four trees, and some laurels, indicate the spot. They had formerly, according to the old man's information, been trained into a close harbour. There were two seats and a rude table within the bower, the opening of which commanded a view of the Liffey, which had a romantic effect; and there was a small cascade that murmured at some distance. In this sequestered spot, according to the old gardener's account, the Dean and Vanessa used often to sit, with books and writing materials on the table before them.

"Vanessa, besides musing over her unhappy attachment, had, during her residence in this solitude, the care of nursing the declining health of her younger sister, who at length died about 1720. This event, as it left her alone in the world, seems to have increased the energy of her fatal passion for Swift, while he, on the contrary, saw room for still greater reserve, when her situation became that of a solitary female, without the society or countenance of a female relation. But Miss Vanhomrigh, irritated at the situation in which she found herself, determined on bringing to a crisis those expectations of an union with the object of her affections, to the hope of which she had clung amid every vicissitude of his conduct towards her. The most probable bar was his undefined connection with Mrs. Johnson, which, as it must have been perfectly known to her, had, doubtless, long excited her secret jealousy: although only a single hint to that purpose is to be found in their correspondence, and that so early as 1713, when she writes to him, then in Ireland, 'If you are very happy, it is ill-natured of you not to tell me so, *except 'tis what is inconsistent with mine.*' Her silence and patience under this state of uncertainty for no less than eight years, must have been partly owing to her awe for Swift, and partly perhaps to the weak state of her rival's health, which, from year to year, seemed to announce speedy dissolution. At length, however, Vanessa's impatience prevailed; and she ventured on the decisive step of writing to Mrs. Johnson herself, requesting to know the nature of that connection. Stella, in reply, informed her of her marriage with the Dean; and, full of the highest resentment against Swift for having given another female such a right in him as Miss Vanhomrigh's inquiries implied, she sent to him her rival's letter of interrogation, and, without seeing him, or awaiting his reply, retired to the house of Mr. Ford, near Dublin. Every reader knows the consequence. Swift, in one of those paroxysms of fury to which he was liable, both from temper and disease, rode instantly to Marley Abbey. As he entered the apartment, the sternness of his countenance, which was peculiarly formed to express the fiercer passions, struck the unfortunate Vanessa with such terror, that she could scarce ask whether he would not sit down. He answered by flinging a letter on the table: and, instantly leaving the house, mounted his horse, and returned to Dublin. When Vanessa opened the packet, she only found her own letter to Stella. It was her death-warrant. She sunk at once under the disappointment of the delayed, yet cherished hopes, which had so long sickened her heart, and beneath the unrestrained wrath of him for whose sake she had indulged them. How long she survived this last interview, is uncertain, but the time does not seem to have exceeded a few weeks."— *Life*, vol. i. pp. 248—253.

Among the novelties of the present edition, is what is called a complete copy of the correspondence betwixt Swift and this unfortunate lady. To us it is manifest, that it is by no means a complete copy;—and, on the whole,

the parts that are now published for the first time, are of less moment than those that had been formerly printed. But it is altogether a very interesting and painful collection; and there is something to us inexpressibly touching in the innocent fondness, and almost childish gaiety, of Vanessa at its commencement, contrasted with the deep gloom into which she sinks in its later stages; while the ardour of affection which breathes through the whole, and the tone of devoted innocence and simplicity of character which are everywhere preserved, make us both hate and wonder at the man who could deliberately break a heart so made to be cherished. We cannot resist the temptation of extracting a little of the only part of this whole publication in which any thing like heart or tenderness is to be discovered. His first letter is written immediately after their first separation, and whilst she yet believed that his slowness in returning her passion arose, as he had given her ample warrant to suppose (see the whole of the poem of Cadmus and Vanessa, vol. xiv.), from nothing but a sense of the unsuitableness of their years and habits, which would give way to the continued proofs of its constancy and ardour. He had written her a cold note on his journey, to which she thus rapturously answers:—

"Now you are good beyond expression, in sending me that dear voluntary from St. Alban's. It gives me more happiness than you can imagine, or I describe, to find that your head is so much better already. I do assure you all my wishes are employed for the continuance of it. I hope the next will tell me they have been of force. Pray why did not you remember me at Dunstable, as well as Moll? Lord! what a monster is Moll grown since. But nothing of poor Hess; except that the mark will be in the same place of Davila where you left it. Indeed, it is not much advanced yet, for I have been studying of Rochefoucault to see if he described as much of love as I found in myself a Sunday, and I find he falls very short of it. I am very impatient to hear from you at Chester. It is impossible to tell you how often I have wished you a cup of coffee and an orange at your inn."—Vol. xix. pp. 403, 404.

Upon hearing of his arrival in Ireland, she writes again in the same spirit.

"Here is now three long weeks passed since you wrote to me. Oh! happy Dublin, that can employ all your thoughts, and happy Mrs. Emerson, that could hear from you the moment you landed. Had it not been for her, I should be yet more uneasy than I am. I really believe, before you leave Ireland, I shall give you just reason to wish I did not know my letters, or at least that I could not write: and I had rather you should wish so, than entirely forget me. Mr. Lewis has given me '*Les Dialogues des Morts*,' and I am so charmed with them, that I am resolved to quit my *body*, let the consequence be what it will, except you will talk to me, for I find no conversation on earth comparable to yours; so, if you care I should stay, do but talk, and you will keep me with pleasure."—Vol. xix. pp. 407—409.

There is a great deal more of this trifling of a heart at ease, and supported by enchanting hopes. It is miserable to think how sadly the style is changed, when she comes to know better the object on whom she had thus irretrievably lavished her affections. The following is the first letter that appears after she followed him to Ireland in 1714; and it appears to us infinitely more touching and pathetic, in the truth and simplicity of the wretchedness it expresses, than all the eloquent despair of all the heroines of romance. No man, with a heart, we think, could receive such letters and live.

"You bid me be easy; and you'd see me as often as you could: you had better have said as often as you could get the better of your inclinations so much; or as often as you remembered there was such a person in the world. If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long. 'Tis impossible to describe what I have suffered since I saw you last; I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing, killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more, but those resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long; for there is something in human nature that prompts one so to find relief in this world; I must give way to it, and beg you'd see me, and speak kindly to me! for I am sure you would not condemn any one to suffer what I have done, could you but know it. The reason I write to you is, because I cannot tell it you, should I see you; for when I begin to complain, then you are angry, and there is something in your look so awful, that it strikes me dumb. Oh! that you may but have so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity. I say as little as ever I can. Did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you. Forgive me, and believe I cannot help telling you this, and live."—Vol. xix. p. 421.

And a little after,

"I am, and cannot avoid being in the spleen to the last degree. Every thing combines to make me so. Yet this and all other disappointments in life I can bear with ease, but that of being neglected by . . . . Spleen I cannot help, so you must excuse it. I do all I can to get the better of it; but it is too strong for

me. I have read more since I saw Cad, than I did in a great while passed, and chose those books that required most attention, on purpose to engage my thoughts, but I find the more I think the more unhappy I am.

"I had once a mind not to have wrote to you, for fear of making you uneasy to find me so dull; but I could not keep to that resolution, for the pleasure of writing to you. The satisfaction I have in your remembering me when you read my letters, and the delight I have in expecting one from Cad, makes me rather choose to give you some uneasiness, than add to my own."—Vol. xix. pp. 431, 432.

As the correspondence draws to a close, her despair becomes more eloquent and agonizing. The following two letters are dated in 1720.

"Believe me, it is with the utmost regret that I now complain to you;—yet what can I do? I must either unload my heart, and tell you all its griefs, or sink under the inexpressible distress I now suffer by your prodigious neglect of me. 'Tis now ten long weeks since I saw you, and in all that time I have never received but one letter from you, and a little note with an excuse. Oh! how have you forgot me! You endeavour by severities to force me from you: Nor can I blame you; for with the utmost distress and confusion, I behold myself the cause of uneasy reflections to you, yet I cannot comfort you, but here declare, that 'tis not in the power of time or accident to lessen the inexpressible passion which I have for . . . .

"Put my passion under the utmost restraint,—send me as distant from you as the earth will allow,—yet you cannot banish those charming ideas which will ever stick by me whilst I have the use of memory. Nor is the love I bear you only seated in my soul, for there is not a single atom of my frame that is not blended with it. Therefore, don't flatter yourself that separation will ever change my sentiments; for I find myself unquiet in the midst of silence, and my heart is at once pierced with sorrow and love. For Heaven's sake, tell me what has caused this prodigious change on you, which I have found of late. If you have the least remains of pity for me left, tell me tenderly. No: don't; tell it so that it may cause my present death, and don't suffer me to live a life like a languishing death, which is the only life I can lead, if you have lost any of your tenderness for me."—Vol. xix. pp. 441, 442.

"Tell me sincerely, if you have once wished with earnestness to see me, since I wrote last to you. No, so far from that, you have not once pitied me, though I told you how I was distressed. Solitude is insupportable to a mind which is not at ease. I have worn on my days in sighing, and my nights with watching and thinking of . . . . who thinks not of me. How many letters must I send you before I shall receive an answer? Can you deny me in my misery the only comfort which I can expect at present? Oh! that I could hope to see you here, or that I could go to you! I was born with violent passions, which terminate all in one, that inexpressible passion I have for you. Consider the killing emotions which I feel from your neglect, and show some tenderness for me, or I shall lose my senses. Sure you cannot possibly be so much taken up, but you might command a moment to write to me, and force your inclination to do so great a charity. I firmly believe, could I know your thoughts, which no human creature is capable of guessing at (because never any one living thought like you), I should find you have often in a rage wished me religious, hoping then I should have paid my devotions to Heaven: but that would not spare you,—for was I an enthusiast, still you'd be the deity I should worship. What marks are there of a deity, but what you are to be known by?—you are present everywhere: your dear image is always before mine eyes. Sometimes you strike me with that prodigious awe, I tremble with fear; at other times a charming compassion shines through your countenance, which revives my soul. Is it not more reasonable to adore a radiant form one has seen, than one only described?"—Vol. xix. pp. 442, 443.

From this heart-breaking scene we turn to another, if possible, still more deplorable. Vanessa was now dead. The grave had heaped its tranquillising mould on her agitated heart, and given her tormentor assurance, that he should no more suffer from her reproaches on earth; and yet, though with her the last pretext was extinguished for refusing to acknowledge the wife he had so infamously abused, we find him, with this dreadful example before his eyes, persisting to withhold from his remaining victim, that late and imperfect justice to which her claim was so apparent, and from the denial of which she was sinking before his eyes in sickness and sorrow to the grave. It is utterly impossible to suggest any excuse or palliation for such cold-blooded barbarity. Even though we were to believe with Mr. Scott, that he had ceased to be a man, this would afford no apology for his acting like a beast! He might still have acknowledged his wife in public; and restored to her the comfort and the honour, of which he had robbed her without the excuse of violent passion, or thoughtless precipitation. He was rich, far beyond what either of them could have expected when their union was first contemplated; and had attained a name and a station in society, which made him independent of riches. Yet, for the sake of avoiding some small awkwardness or inconvenience to himself,—to be secured from the idle talking of those who might

wonder why, since they were to marry, they did not marry before—or perhaps merely to retain the object of his regard in more complete subjection and dependence, he could bear to see her pining, year after year, in solitude and degradation, and sinking at last into an untimely grave, prepared by his hard and unrelenting refusal to clear her honour to the world, even at her dying hour. There are two editions of this dying scene—one on the authority of Mr. Sheridan, the other on that of Mr. Theophilus Swift, who is said to have received it from Mrs. Whiteway. Mr. Scott, who is unable to discredit the former, and is inclined at the same time to prefer the least disreputable for his author, is reduced to the necessity of supposing, that both may be true, and that Mr. Sheridan's story may have related to an earlier period than that reported by Mrs. Whiteway. We shall lay both before our readers. Mr. Sheridan says,

"'A short time before her death, a scene passed between the Dean and her, an account of which I had from my father, and which I shall relate with reluctance, as it seems to bear more hard on Swift's humanity than any other part of his conduct in life. As she found her final dissolution approach, a few days before it happened, in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, she addressed Swift in the most earnest and pathetic terms to grant her dying request; "That, as the ceremony of marriage had passed between them, though for sundry considerations they had not cohabited in that state, in order to put it out of the power of slander to be busy with her fame after death, she adjured him by their friendship to let her have the satisfaction of dying at least, though she had not lived, his acknowledged wife."

"'Swift made no reply, but, turning on his heel, walked silently out of the room, nor ever saw her afterward during the few days she lived. This behaviour threw Mrs. Johnson into unspeakable agonies, and for a time she sunk under the weight of so cruel a disappointment. But soon after, roused by indignation, she inveighed against his cruelty in the bitterest terms; and, sending for a lawyer, made her will, bequeathing her fortune by her own name to charitable uses. This was done in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, whom she appointed one of her executors.'"—Vol. i. p. 357.

If this be true, Swift must have had the heart of a monster; and it is of little consequence, whether, when her death was nearer, he pretended to consent to what his unhappy victim herself then pathetically declared to be "too late;" and to what, at all events, certainly never was done. Mrs. Whiteway's statement is as follows:—

"'When Stella was in her last weak state, and one day had come in a chair to the Deanery, she was with difficulty brought into the parlour. The Dean had prepared some mulled wine, and kept it by the fire for her refreshment. After tasting it, she became very faint; but having recovered a little by degrees, when her breath (for she was asthmatic) was allowed her, she desired to lie down. She was carried up stairs, and laid on a bed; the Dean sitting by her, held her hand, and addressed her in the most affectionate manner. She drooped, however, very much. Mrs. Whiteway was the only third person present. After a short time, her politeness induced her to withdraw to the adjoining room; but it was necessary, on account of air, that the door should not be closed,—it was half shut: the rooms were close adjoining. Mrs. Whiteway had too much honour to listen, but could not avoid observing, that the Dean and Mrs. Johnson conversed together in a low tone; the latter, indeed, was too weak to raise her voice. Mrs. Whiteway paid no attention, having no idle curiosity, but at length she heard the Dean say, in an audible voice, '*Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned*,' to which Stella answered with a sigh, '*It is too late*.'"—Vol. i. pp. 355, 356.

With the consciousness of having thus barbarously destroyed all the women for whom he had ever professed affection, it is not wonderful that his latter days should have been overshadowed with gloom and dejection: but it was not the depression of late regret, or unavailing self-condemnation, that darkened his closing scene. It was but the rancour of disappointed ambition, and the bitterness of proud misanthropy: and we verily believe, that if his party had got again into power, and given him the preferment he expected, the pride and joy of his vindictive triumph would have been but little alloyed by the remembrance of the innocent and accomplished women of whom we have no hesitation to pronounce him the murderer. In the whole of his later writings, indeed, we shall look in vain for any traces of that penitential regret, which was due to the misery he had occasioned, even if it had arisen without his guilt, or even of that humble and solemn self-reproach, which is apt to beset thoughtful men in the decline of life and animation, even when their conduct has been generally blameless, and the judgment of the candid finds nothing in them to condemn: on the contrary, there is nowhere to be met with, a tone of more insolent re-

proach, and intolerant contempt to the rest of the world, or so direct a claim to the possession of sense and virtue, which that world was no longer worthy to employ.—Of women, too, it is very remarkable, that he speaks with unvaried rudeness and contempt, and rails indeed at the whole human race, as wretches with whom he thinks it an indignity to share a common nature. All this, we confess, appears to us intolerable; for, whether we look to the fortune or the conduct of this extraordinary person, we really recollect no individual who was less entitled to be either discontented or misanthropical — to complain of men or of accidents. Born almost a beggar, and neither very industrious nor very engaging in his early habits, he attained, almost with his first efforts, the very height of distinction, and was rewarded by appointments, which placed him in a state of independence and respectability for life. He was honoured with the acquaintance of all that was distinguished for rank, literature, or reputation; — and, if not very generally beloved, was, what he probably valued far more, admired and feared by most of those with whom he was acquainted. When his party was overthrown, neither his person nor his fortune suffered: — but he was indulged, through the whole of his life, in a licence of scurrility and abuse, which has never been permitted to any other writer, — and possessed the exclusive and devoted affection of the only two women to whom he wished to appear interesting. In this *history*, we confess, we see but little apology for discontent and lamentation; — and, in his *conduct*, there is assuredly still less for misanthropy. In public life, we do not know where we could have found any body half so profligate and unprincipled as himself, and the friends to whom he finally attached himself; — nor can we conceive that complaints of venality, and want of patriotism, could ever come with so ill a grace from any quarter, as from him who had openly deserted and libelled his original party, without the pretext of any other cause than the insufficiency of the rewards they bestowed upon him, — and joined himself with men, who were treacherous, not only to their first professions, but to their country and to each other, to all of whom he adhered, after their mutual hatred and villanies were detected. In private life, again, with what face could he erect himself into a rigid censor of morals, or pretend to complain of men in general, as unworthy of his notice, after breaking the hearts of two, if not three, amiable women, whose affections he had engaged by the most constant assiduities, — after savagely libelling almost all his early friends and benefactors, and exhibiting, in his daily life and conversation, a picture of domineering insolence and dogmatism, to which no parallel could be found, we believe, in the history of any other individual, and which rendered his society intolerable to all who were not subdued by their awe of him, or inured to it by long use? He had some right, perhaps, to look with disdain upon men of ordinary understandings; but for all that is the proper object of reproach, he should have looked only *within:* and whatever may be his merits as a writer, we do not hesitate to say, that he was despicable as a politician, and hateful as a man.

With these impressions of his personal character, perhaps it is not easy for us to judge quite fairly of his works. Yet we are far from being insensible to their great and very peculiar merits. Their chief peculiarity is, that they were almost all what may be called occasional productions — not written for fame or for posterity — from the fulness of the mind, or the desire of instructing mankind — but on the spur of the occasion — for promoting some temporary and immediate object, and producing a practical effect, in the attainment of which their whole importance centered. With the exception of the Tale of a Tub, Gulliver, the Polite Conversation, and about half a volume of poetry, this description will apply to almost all that is now before us; — and it is no small proof of the vigour and vivacity of his genius, that posterity should have been so anxious to preserve these careless and hasty productions, upon which their author appears to have set no other value than as means for the attainment of an end. The truth is, accordingly, that *they are* very extraordinary performances: and, considered with a view to the purposes for which they were intended, have probably never been equalled in any period of the world. They are written with great plainness, force, and intrepidity — advance at once to the matter in dispute — give battle to the strength of the enemy, and never seek any kind of advantage

from darkness or obscurity. Their distinguishing feature, however, is the force and the vehemence of the invective in which they abound; —the copiousness, the steadiness, the perseverance, and the dexterity with which abuse and ridicule are showered upon the adversary. This, we think, was, beyond all doubt, Swift's great talent, and the weapon by which he made himself formidable. He was, without exception, the greatest and most efficient *libeller* that ever exercised the trade; and possessed, in an eminent degree, all the qualifications which it requires: — a clear head — a cold heart — a vindictive temper — no admiration of noble qualities — no sympathy with suffering — not much conscience — not much consistency — a ready wit — a sarcastic humour — a thorough knowledge of the baser parts of human nature — and a complete familiarity with every thing that is low, homely, and familiar in language. These were his gifts; — and he soon felt for what ends they were given. Almost all his works are libels; generally upon individuals, sometimes upon sects and parties, sometimes upon human nature. Whatever be his end, however, personal abuse, direct, vehement, unsparing invective, is his means. It is his sword and his shield, his panoply and his chariot of war. In all his writings, accordingly, there is nothing to raise or exalt our notions of human nature, — but every thing to vilify and degrade. We may learn from them, perhaps, to dread the consequences of base actions, but never to love the feelings that lead to generous ones. There is no spirit, indeed, of love or of honour in any part of them; but an unvaried and harassing display of insolence and animosity in the writer, and villany and folly in those of whom he is writing. Though a great polemic, he makes no use of general principles, nor ever enlarges his views to a wide or comprehensive conclusion. Every thing is particular with him, and, for the most part, strictly personal. To make amends, however, we do think him quite without a competitor in personalities. With a quick and sagacious spirit, and a bold and popular manner, he joins an exact knowledge of all the strong and the weak parts of every cause he has to manage; and, without the least restraint from delicacy, either of taste or of feeling, he seems always to think the most effectual blows the most advisable, and no advantage unlawful that is likely to be successful for the moment. Disregarding all the laws of polished hostility, he uses, at one and the same moment, his sword and his poisoned dagger — his hands, and his teeth, and his envenomed breath, — and does not even scruple, upon occasion, to imitate his own yahoos, by discharging on his unhappy victims a shower of filth, from which neither courage nor dexterity can afford any protection. — Against such an antagonist, it was, of course, at no time very easy to make head; and accordingly his invective seems, for the most part, to have been as much dreaded, and as tremendous as the personal ridicule of Voltaire. Both were inexhaustible, well directed, and unsparing; but even when Voltaire drew blood, he did not mangle the victim, and was only mischievous when Swift was brutal. Any one who will compare the epigrams on M. Franc de Pompignan with those on Tighe or Bettesworth, will easily understand the distinction.

Of the few works which he wrote in the capacity of an author, and not of a party zealot or personal enemy, the Tale of a Tub was by far the earliest in point of time, and has, by many, been considered as the first in point of merit. We confess we are not of that opinion. It is by far too long and elaborate for a piece of pleasantry; — the humour sinks, in many places, into mere buffoonery and nonsense; — and there is a real and extreme tediousness arising from the too successful mimicry of tediousness and pedantry. All these defects are apparent enough even in the main story, in which the incidents are without the shadow of verisimilitude or interest, and by far too thinly scattered; but they become insufferable in the interludes or digressions, the greater part of which are to us utterly illegible, and seem to consist almost entirely of cold and forced conceits, and exaggerated representations of long exploded whims and absurdities. The style of this work, which appears to us greatly inferior to the History of John Bull or even of Martinus Scriblerus, is evidently more elaborate than that of Swift's other writings, — but has all its substantial characteristics. Its great merit seems to consist in the author's perfect familiarity with all sorts of common and idiomatical expressions, his unlimited command of established phrases, both

solemn and familiar, and the unrivalled profusion and propriety with which he heaps them up and applies them to the exposition of the most fantastic conceptions. To deliver absurd notions or incredible tales in the most authentic, honest, and direct terms that have been used for the communication of truth and reason, and to luxuriate in all the variations of that grave, plain, and perspicuous phraseology, which dull men use to express their homely opinions, seems to be the great art of this extraordinary humorist, and that which gives their character and their edge to his sly strokes of satire, his keen sarcasms, and bitter personalities.

The voyages of Captain Lemuel Gulliver is indisputably his greatest work. The idea of making fictitious travels the vehicle of satire as well as of amusement, is at least as old as Lucian; but has never been carried into execution with such success, spirit, and originality, as in this celebrated performance. The brevity, the minuteness, the homeliness, the unbroken seriousness of the narrative, all give a character of truth and simplicity to the work, which at once palliates the extravagance of the fiction, and enhances the effect of those weighty reflections, and cutting severities in which it abounds. Yet though it is probable enough, that without those touches of satire and observation the work would have appeared childish and preposterous, we are persuaded that it pleases chiefly by the novelty and vivacity of the extraordinary pictures it presents, and the entertainment we receive from following the fortunes of the traveller in his several extraordinary adventures. The greater part of the wisdom and satire at least appears to us to be extremely vulgar and common-place; and we have no idea that they could possibly appear either impressive or entertaining, if presented without these accompaniments. A considerable part of the pleasure we derive from the voyages of Gulliver, in short, is of the same description with that which we receive from those of Sinbad the Sailor; and is chiefly heightened, we believe, by the greater brevity and minuteness of the story, and the superior art that is employed to give it an appearance of truth and probability, in the very midst of its wonders. Among those arts, as Mr. Scott has judiciously observed, one of the most important is the exact adaptation of the narrative to the condition of its supposed author.

"The character of the imaginary traveller is exactly that of Dampier, or any other sturdy nautical wanderer of the period, endowed with courage and common sense, who sailed through distant seas, without losing a single English prejudice which he had brought from Portsmouth or Plymouth, and on his return gave a grave and simple narrative of what he had seen or heard in foreign countries. The character is perhaps strictly English, and can be hardly relished by a foreigner. The reflections and observations of Gulliver are never more refined or deeper than might be expected from a plain master of a merchantman, or surgeon in the Old Jewry; and there was such a reality given to his whole person, that one seaman is said to have sworn he knew Captain Gulliver very well, but he lived at Wapping, not at Rotherhithe. It is the contrast between the natural ease and simplicity of such a style, and the marvels which the volume contains, that forms one great charm of this memorable satire on the imperfections, follies, and vices of mankind. The exact calculations preserved in the first and second part, have also the effect of qualifying the extravagance of the fable. It is said that in natural objects where proportion is exactly preserved, the marvellous, whether the object be gigantic or diminutive, is lessened in the eyes of the spectator; and it is certain, in general, that proportion forms an essential attribute of truth, and consequently of verisimilitude, or that which renders a narration probable. If the reader is disposed to grant the traveller his postulates as to the existence of the strange people whom he visits, it would be difficult to detect any inconsistency in his narrative. On the contrary, it would seem that he and they conduct themselves towards each other, precisely as must necessarily have happened in the respective circumstances which the author has supposed. In this point of view, perhaps the highest praise that could have been bestowed on Gulliver's Travels, was the censure of a learned Irish prelate, who said the book contained *some* things which he could not prevail upon himself to believe." — Vol. i. pp. 340, 341.

That the interest does not arise from the satire but from the plausible description of physical wonders, seems to be farther proved by the fact, that the parts which please the least are those in which there is most satire and least of those wonders. In the voyage to Laputa, after the first description of the flying island, the attention is almost exclusively directed to intellectual absurdities; and every one is aware of the dulness that is the result. Even as a satire, indeed, this part is extremely poor and defective; nor can any thing show more clearly the author's incapacity for large

and comprehensive views than his signal failure in all those parts which invited him to such contemplations. In the multitude of his vulgar and farcical representations of particular errors in philosophy, he nowhere appears to have any sense of its true value or principles; but satisfies himself with collecting or imagining a number of fantastical quackeries, which tend to illustrate nothing but his contempt for human understanding. Even where his subject seems to invite him to something of a higher flight, he uniformly shrinks back from it, and takes shelter in common-place derision. What, for instance, can be poorer than the use he makes of the evocation of the illustrious dead — in which Hannibal is conjured up, just to say that he had not a drop of vinegar in his camp; and Aristotle, to ask two of his commentators, "whether the rest of the tribe were as great dunces as themselves?" The voyage to the Houyhnhmns is commonly supposed to displease by its vile and degrading representations of human nature; but if we do not strangely mistake our own feelings on the subject, the impression it produces is not so much that of disgust as of dulness. The picture is not only extravagant, but bald and tame in the highest degree; while the story is not enlivened by any of those numerous and uncommon incidents which are detailed in the first two parts, with such an inimitable air of probability as almost to persuade us of their reality. For the rest, we have observed already, that the scope of the whole work, and indeed of all his writings, is to degrade and vilify human nature; and though some of the images which occur in this part may be rather coarser than the others, we do not think the difference so considerable as to account for its admitted inferiority in the power of pleasing.

His only other considerable works in prose, are the "Polite Conversation," which we think admirable in its sort, and excessively entertaining; and the "Directions to Servants," which, though of a lower pitch, contains as much perhaps of his peculiar, vigorous, and racy humour, as any one of his productions. The Journal to Stella, which was certainly never intended for publication, is not to be judged of as a literary work at all — but to us it is the most interesting of all his productions — exhibiting not only a minute and masterly view of a very extraordinary political crisis, but a truer, and, upon the whole, a more favourable picture of his own mind, than can be gathered from all the rest of his writings — together with innumerable anecdotes characteristic not only of various eminent individuals, but of the private manners and public taste and morality of the times, more nakedly and surely authentic than any thing that can be derived from contemporary publications.

Of his Poetry, we do not think there is much to be said; for we cannot persuade ourselves that Swift was in any respect a poet. It would be proof enough, we think, just to observe, that, though a popular and most miscellaneous writer, he does not mention the name of Shakspeare above two or three times in any part of his works, and has nowhere said a word in his praise. His partial editor admits that he has produced nothing which can be called either sublime or pathetic; and we are of the same opinion as to the beautiful. The merit of correct rhymes and easy diction, we shall not deny him; but the diction is almost invariably that of the most ordinary prose, and the matter of his pieces no otherwise poetical, than that the Muses and some other persons of the Heathen mythology are occasionally mentioned. He has written lampoons and epigrams, and satirical ballads and abusive songs in great abundance, and with infinite success. But these things are not poetry; — and are better in verse than in prose, for no other reason than that the sting is more easily remembered, and the ridicule occasionally enhanced, by the hint of a ludicrous parody, or the drollery of an extraordinary rhyme. His witty verses, where they are not made up of mere filth and venom, seem mostly framed on the model of Hudibras; and are chiefly remarkable, like those of his original, for the easy and apt application of homely and familiar phrases, to illustrate ingenious sophistry or unexpected allusions. One or two of his imitations of Horace are executed with spirit and elegance, and are the best, we think, of his familiar pieces; unless we except the verses on his own death, in which, however, the great charm arises, as we have just stated, from the singular ease and exactness with which he has imitated the style of ordinary society, and the neatness with which he has brought together and reduced to metre such a number

of natural, characteristic, and common-place expressions. The Cadenus and Vanessa is, of itself, complete proof that he had in him none of the elements of poetry. It was written when his faculties were in their perfection, and his heart animated with all the tenderness of which it was ever capable — and yet it is as cold and as flat as the ice of Thulé. Though describing a real passion, and a real perplexity, there is not a spark of fire nor a throb of emotion in it from one end to the other. All the return he makes to the warm-hearted creature who had put her destiny into his hands, consists in a frigid mythological fiction, in which he sets forth, that Venus and the Graces lavished their gifts on her in her infancy, and moreover got Minerva, by a trick, to inspire her with wit and wisdom. The style is mere prose—or rather a string of familiar and vulgar phrases tacked together in rhyme, like the general tissue of his poetry. However, it has been called not only easy but elegant, by some indulgent critics — and therefore, as we take it for granted nobody reads it now-a-days, we shall extract a few lines at random, to abide the censure of the judicious. To us they seem to be about as much poetry as so many lines out of Coke upon Littleton.

"But in the poets we may find
A wholesome law, time out of mind,
Had been confirm'd by Fate's decree,
That gods, of whatsoe'er degree,
Resume not what themselves have given,
Or any brother god in Heaven:
Which keeps the peace among the gods,
Or they must always be at odds:
And Pallas, if she broke the laws,
Must yield her foe the stronger cause;
A shame to one so much ador'd
For wisdom at Jove's council board;
Besides, she fear'd the Queen of Love
Would meet with better friends above.
And though she must with grief reflect,
To see a mortal virgin deck'd
With graces hitherto unknown
To female breasts except her own.
Yet she would act as best became
A goddess of unspotted fame.
She knew by augury divine,
Venus would fail in her design:
She studied well the point, and found
Her foe's conclusions were not sound,
From premises erroneous brought;
And therefore the deduction's naught,
And must have contrary effects,
To what her treacherous foe expects."
Vol. xiv. pp. 448, 449.

The Rhapsody of Poetry, and the Legion Club, are the only two pieces in which there is the least glow of poetical animation; though, in the latter, it takes the shape of ferocious and almost frantic invective, and, in the former, shines out but by fits in the midst of the usual small wares of cant phrases and snappish misanthropy. In the Rhapsody, the following lines, for instance, near the beginning, are vigorous and energetic.

"Not empire to the rising sun
By valour, conduct, fortune won;
Not highest wisdom in debates
For framing laws to govern states;
Not skill in sciences profound
So large to grasp the circle round:
Such heavenly influence require,
As how to strike the Muse's lyre.
"Not beggar's brat on bulk begot;
Not bastard of a pedlar Scot;
Not boy brought up to cleaning shoes,
The spawn of bridewell or the stews;
Nor infants dropp'd, the spurious pledges
Of gypsies littering under hedges;
Are so disqualified by fate
To rise in church, or law, or state,
As he whom Phœbus in his ire
Has blasted with poetic fire."
Vol. xiv. pp. 310, 311.

Yet, immediately after this nervous and poetical line, he drops at once into the lowness of vulgar flippancy.

"What hope of custom in the fair,
While not a soul demands your ware?" &c.

There are undoubtedly many strong lines, and much cutting satire in this poem; but the staple is a mimicry of Hudibras, without the richness or compression of Butler; as, for example,

"And here a simile comes pat in:
Though chickens take a month to fatten,
The guests in less than half an hour
Will more than half a score devour.
So, after toiling twenty days
To earn a stock of pence and praise,
Thy labours, grown the critic's prey,
Are swallow'd o'er a dish of tea:
Gone to be never heard of more,
Gone where the chickens went before.
How shall a new attempter learn
Of different spirits to discern,
And how distinguish which is which,
The poet's vein, or scribbling itch?"
Vol. xiv. pp. 311, 312.

The Legion Club is a satire, or rather a tremendous invective on the Irish House of Commons, who had incurred the reverend author's displeasure for entertaining some propositions about alleviating the burden of the tithes in Ireland; and is chiefly remarkable, on the whole, as a proof of the extraordinary liberty of the press which was indulged to the disaffected in those days — no prosecution having been instituted, either by that Honourable House itself, or by any of the individual members, who are there attacked in a way in which no public men were ever attacked, before or since. It is also deserving of attention, as the most thoroughly animated, fierce, and energetic of all Swift's metrical compositions; and though the animation be altogether of a ferocious character, and seems occasionally to verge upon absolute insanity, there is still a force and a terror about it which redeems it from ridicule, and makes us shudder at the sort of demoniacal inspiration with which the malison is vented. The invective of Swift appears in this, and some other pieces, like the infernal fire of Milton's rebel angels, which

"Scorch'd and blasted and o'erthrew —"

and was launched even against the righteous with such impetuous fury,

"That whom it hit none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks — but down they fell
By thousands, angel on archangel rolled."

It is scarcely necessary to remark, however, that there is never the least approach to dignity or nobleness in the style of these terrible invectives; and that they do not even pretend to the tone of a high-minded disdain or generous impatience of unworthiness. They are honest, coarse, and violent effusions of furious anger and rancorous hatred; and their effect depends upon the force, heartiness, and apparent sincerity with which those feelings are expressed. The author's object is simply to vilify his opponent, — by no means to do honour to himself. If he can make his victim writhe, he cares not what may be thought of his tormentor; — or rather, he is contented, provided he can make *him* sufficiently disgusting, that a good share of the filth which he throws should stick to his own fingers; and that he should himself excite some of the loathing of which his enemy is the principal object. In the piece now before us, many of the personalities are too coarse and filthy to be quoted; but the very opening shows the spirit in which it is written.

"As I stroll the city oft I
See a building large and lofty,
Not a bow-shot from the college,
Half the globe from sense and knowledge!
By the prudent architect,
Placed against the church direct,
Making good my grandam's jest,
'Near the church' — you know the rest.
"Tell us what the pile contains?
Many a head that holds no brains.
These demoniacs let me dub
With the name of Legion Club.
Such assemblies, you might swear,
Meet when butchers bait a bear:
Such a noise and such haranguing,
When a brother thief is hanging:
Such a rout and such a rabble
Run to hear Jackpudding gabble:
Such a crowd their ordure throws
On a far less villain's nose.
"Could I from the building's top
Hear the rattling thunder drop,
While the devil upon the roof
(If the devil be thunder proof)
Should with poker fiery red
Crack the stones and melt the lead;
Drive them down on every scull,
When the den of thieves is full;
Quite destroy the harpies' nest;
How might then our isle be blest!
"Let them, when they once get in,
Sell the nation for a pin;
While they sit a picking straws,
Let them rave at making laws;
While they never hold their tongue,
Let them dabble in their dung;
Let them form a grand committee,
How to plague and starve the city;
Let them stare, and storm, and frown
When they see a clergy gown;
Let them, ere they crack a louse,
Call for th' orders of the House;
Let them, with their gosling quills,
Scribble senseless heads of bills;
We may, while they strain their throats,
Wipe our noses with their votes.
"Let Sir Tom, that rampant ass,
Stuff his guts with flax and grass;
But before the priest he fleeces,
Tear the Bible all to pieces:
At the parsons, Tom, halloo, boy!
Worthy offspring of a shoeboy,
Footman! traitor! vile seducer!
Perjur'd rebel! brib'd accuser!
Lay thy paltry privilege aside,
Sprung from Papists and a regicide!

Fall a working like a mole,
Raise the dirt about your hole!"
Vol. x. pp. 548—550.

This is strong enough, we suspect, for most readers; but we shall venture on a few lines more, to show the tone in which the leading characters in the country might be libelled by name and surname in those days.

"In the porch Briareus stands,
Shows a bribe in all his hands;
Briareus the secretary,
But we mortals call him Carey.
When the rogues their country fleece,
They may hope for pence a-piece.
"Clio, who had been so wise
To put on a fool's disguise,
To bespeak some approbation,
And be thought a near relation,
When she saw three hundred brutes
All involv'd in wild disputes,
Roaring till their lungs were spent,
PRIVILEGE OF PARLIAMENT,
Now a new misfortune feels,
Dreading to be laid by th' heels," &c.

"Keeper, show me where to fix
On the puppy pair of Dicks:
By their lantern jaws and leathern,
You might swear they both are brethren:
Dick Fitzbaker, Dick the player!
Old acquaintance, are you there?
Dear companions, hug and kiss,
Toast Old Glorious in your ——;
Tie them, keeper, in a tether,
Let them starve and stink together;
Both are apt to be unruly,
Lash them daily, lash them duly;
Though 'tis hopeless to reclaim them,
Scorpion rods, perhaps, may tame them."
Vol. x. pp. 553, 554.

Such were the libels which a Tory writer found it safe to publish under a Whig administration in 1736; and we do not find that any national disturbance arose from their impunity, — though the libeller was the most celebrated and by far the most popular writer of the age. Nor was it merely the exasperation of bad fortune that put that polite party upon the use of this discourteous style of discussion. In all situations, the Tories have been the great libellers — and, as is fitting, the great prosecutors of libels; and even in this early age of their glory, had themselves, when in power, encouraged the same licence of defamation, and in the same hands. It will scarcely be believed, that the following character of the Earl of Wharton, then actually Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was publicly printed and sold, with his Lordship's name and addition at full length, in 1710, and was one of the first productions by which the reverend penman bucklered the cause of the Tory ministry, and revenged himself on a parsimonious patron. We cannot afford to give it at full length — but this specimen will answer our purpose.

"Thomas, Earl of Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by the force of a wonderful constitution, has some years passed his grand climacteric, without any visible effects of old age, either on his body or his mind; and in spite of a continual prostitution to those vices which usually wear out both. His behaviour is in all the forms of a young man at five-and-twenty. Whether he walks, or whistles, or talks bawdy, or calls names, he acquits himself in each, beyond a templar of three years' standing.—He seems to be but an ill dissembler, and an ill liar, although they are the two talents he most practises, and most values himself upon. The ends he has gained by lying, appear to be more owing to the frequency, than the art of them: his lies being sometimes detected in an hour, often in a day, and always in a week. He tells them freely in mixed companies, although he knows half of those that hear him to be his enemies, and is sure they will discover them the moment they leave him. He swears solemnly he loves and will serve you; and your back is no sooner turned, but he tells those about him, you are a dog and a rascal. He goes constantly to prayers in the forms of his place, and will talk bawdy and blasphemy at the chapel-door. He is a presbyterian in politics, and an atheist in religion; but he choses at present to whore with a papist.—He has sunk his fortune by endeavouring to ruin one kingdom, and has raised it by going far in the ruin of another.

"He bears the gallantries of his lady with the indifference of a stoick; and thinks them well recompensed, by a return of children to support his family, without the fatigues of being a father.

"He has three predominant passions, which you will seldom find united in the same man, as arising from different dispositions of mind, and naturally thwarting each other: these are, love of power, love of money, and love of pleasure; they ride him sometimes by turns, sometimes all together. Since he went into Ireland, he seems most disposed to the second, and has met with great success; having gained by his government, of under two years, five-and-forty thousand pounds, by the most favourable computation, half in the regular way, and half in the prudential.

"He was never yet known to refuse, or keep a promise, as I remember he told a lady, but with an exception to the promise he then made (which was to get her a pension); yet he broke even that, and, I confess, deceived us both. But here I desire to dis-

tinguish between a promise and a bargain; for he will be sure to keep the latter, when he has the fairest offer."—Vol. iv. pp. 149—152.

We have not left ourselves room now to say much of Swift's style, or of the general character of his literary genius:—but our opinion may be collected from the remarks we have made on particular passages, and from our introductory observations on the school or class of authors with whom he must undoubtedly be rated. On the subjects to which he confines himself, he is unquestionably a strong, masculine, and perspicuous writer. He is never finical, fantastic, or absurd—takes advantage of no equivocations in argument—and puts on no tawdriness for ornament. Dealing always with particulars, he is safe from all great and systematic mistakes; and, in fact, reasons mostly in a series of small and minute propositions, in the handling of which, dexterity is more requisite than genius; and practical good sense, with an exact knowledge of transactions, of far more importance than profound and high-reaching judgment. He did not write history or philosophy, but party pamphlets and journals;—not satire, but particular lampoons;—not pleasantries for all mankind, but jokes for a particular circle. Even in his pamphlets, the broader questions of party are always waved, to make way for discussions of personal or immediate interest. His object is not to show that the Tories have better principles of government than the Whigs,—but to prove Lord Oxford an angel, and Lord Somers a fiend, to convict the Duke of Marlborough of avarice, or Sir Richard Steele of insolvency;—not to point out the wrongs of Ireland, in the depression of her Catholic population, her want of education, or the discouragement of her industry; but to raise an outcry against an amendment of the copper or the gold coin, or against a parliamentary proposition for remitting the tithe of *agistment*. For those ends, it cannot be denied that he chose his means judiciously, and used them with incomparable skill and spirit. But to choose such ends, we humbly conceive, was not the part either of a high intellect or a high character; and his genius must share in the disparagement which ought perhaps to be confined to the impetuosity and vindictiveness of his temper.

Of his style, it has been usual to speak with great, and, we think, exaggerated praise. It is less mellow than Dryden's—less elegant than Pope's or Addison's—less free and noble than Lord Bolingbroke's—and utterly without the glow and loftiness which belonged to our earlier masters. It is radically a low and homely style—without grace and without affectation; and chiefly remarkable for a great choice and profusion of *common* words and expressions. Other writers, who have used a plain and direct style, have been for the most part jejune and limited in their diction, and generally give us an impression of the poverty as well as the tameness of their language; but Swift, without ever trespassing into figured or poetical expressions, or ever employing a word that can be called fine, or pedantic, has a prodigious variety of good set phrases always at his command, and displays a sort of homely richness, like the plenty of an old English dinner, or the wardrobe of a wealthy burgess. This taste for the plain and substantial was fatal to his poetry, which subsists not on such elements; but was in the highest degree favourable to the effect of his humour, very much of which depends on the imposing gravity with which it is delivered, and on the various turns and heightenings it may receive from a rapidly shifting and always appropriate expression. Almost all his works, after the Tale of a Tub, seem to have been written very fast, and with very little minute care of the diction. For his own ease, therefore, it is probable they were all pitched on a low key, and set about on the ordinary tone of a familiar letter or conversation; as that from which there was little hazard of falling, even in moments of negligence, and from which any rise that could be effected, must always be easy and conspicuous. A man fully possessed of his subject, indeed, and confident of his cause, may almost always write with vigour and effect, if he can get over the temptation of writing finely, and really confine himself to the strong and clear exposition of the matter he has to bring forward. Half of the affectation and offensive pretension we meet with in authors, arises from a want of matter,—and the other half, from a paltry ambition of being eloquent and ingenious out of place. Swift had complete confidence in himself;

and had too much real business on his hands to be at leisure to intrigue for the fame of a fine writer; — in consequence of which, his writings are more admired by the judicious than if he had bestowed all his attention on their style. He was so much a man of business, indeed, and so much accustomed to consider his writings merely as means for the attainment of a practical end — whether that end was the strengthening of a party, or the wounding a foe — that he not only disdained the reputation of a composer of pretty sentences, but seems to have been thoroughly indifferent to all sorts of literary fame. He enjoyed the notoriety and influence which he had procured by his writings; but it was the glory of having carried his point, and not of having written well, that he valued. As soon as his publications had served their turn, they seem to have been entirely forgotten by their author; — and, desirous as he was of being richer, he appears to have thought as little of making money as immortality by means of them. He mentions somewhere, that except 300*l.* which he got for Gulliver, he never made a farthing by any of his writings. Pope understood his trade better, — and not only made knowing bargains for his own works, but occasionally borrowed his friends' pieces, and pocketed the price of the whole. This was notoriously the case with three volumes of Miscellanies, of which the greater part were from the pen of Swift.

In humour and in irony, and in the talent of debasing and defiling what he hated, we join with all the world in thinking the Dean of St. Patrick's without a rival. His humour, though sufficiently marked and peculiar, is not to be easily defined. The nearest description we can give of it, would make it consist in expressing sentiments the most absurd and ridiculous — the most shocking and atrocious — or sometimes the most energetic and original — in a sort of composed, calm, and unconscious way, as if they were plain, undeniable, common-place truths, which no person could dispute, or expect to gain credit by announcing — and in maintaining them, always in the gravest and most familiar language, with a consistency which somewhat palliates their extravagance, and a kind of perverted ingenuity, which seems to give pledge for their sincerity. The secret, in short, seems to consist in employing the language of humble good sense, and simple undoubting conviction, to express, in their honest nakedness, sentiments which it is usually thought necessary to disguise under a thousand pretences — or truths which are usually introduced with a thousand apologies. The basis of the art is the personating a character of great simplicity and openness, for whom the conventional or artificial distinctions of society are supposed to have no existence; and making use of this character as an instrument to strip vice and folly of their disguises, and expose guilt in all its deformity, and truth in all its terrors. Independent of the moral or satire, of which they may thus be the vehicle, a great part of the entertainment to be derived from works of humour, arises from the contrast between the grave, unsuspecting indifference of the character personated, and the ordinary feelings of the world on the subjects which he discusses. This contrast it is easy to heighten, by all sorts of imputed absurdities: in which case, the humour degenerates into mere farce and buffoonery. Swift has yielded a little to this temptation in the Tale of a Tub; but scarcely at all in Gulliver, or any of his later writings in the same style. Of his talent for reviling, we have already said at least enough, in some of the preceding pages.

MADAME DU DEFFAND.

(Jan. 1810.)

Correspondance inédite de Madame du Deffand, *avec D'Alembert, Montesquieu, le Président Henault, La Duchesse du Maine, Mesdames de Choiseul, De Staël, &c. &c.* 8 tomes, 12mo. Paris: 1809.

Lettres de Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, *écrites depuis l'Année* 1773 *jusqu'à l'Année* 1776, &c. 3 tomes, 12mo. Paris: 1809.

The popular works of La Harpe and Marmontel have made the names at least of these ladies pretty well known in this country; and we have been induced to place their correspondence under one article, both because their history is in some measure connected, and because, though extremely unlike each other, they both form a decided contrast to our own national character, and, taken together, go

far to exhaust what was peculiar in that of France.

Most of our readers probably remember what La Harpe and Marmontel have said of these two distinguished women; and, at all events, it is not necessary for our purpose to give more than a very superficial account of them. Madame du Deffand was left a widow with a moderate fortune, and a great reputation for wit, about 1750; and soon after gave up her hotel, and retired to apartments in the *couvent* de St. Joseph, where she continued to receive, almost every evening, whatever was most distinguished in Paris for rank, talent, or accomplishment. Having become almost blind in a few years thereafter, she found she required the attendance of some intelligent young woman, who might read and write for her, and assist in doing the honours of her *conversazioni.* For this purpose she cast her eyes on Mademoiselle Lespinasse, the illegitimate daughter of a man of rank, who had been boarded in the same convent, and was for some time delighted with her election. By and by, however, she found that her young companion began to engross more of the notice of her visitors than she thought suitable; and parted from her with violent, ungenerous, and implacable displeasure. Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, however, carried with her the admiration of the greater part of her patroness's circle; and having obtained a small pension from government, opened her own doors to a society not less brilliant than that into which she had been initiated under Madame du Deffand. The fatigue, however, which she had undergone in reading the old Marchioness asleep, had irreparably injured her health, which was still more impaired by the agitations of her own inflammable and ambitious spirit; and she died before she had attained middle age, about 1776,—leaving on the minds of almost all the eminent men in France, an impression of talent, and of ardour of imagination, which seems to have been considered as without example. Madame du Deffand continued to preside in her circle till a period of extreme old age; and died in 1780, in full possession of her faculties.

Where the letters that are now given to the world have been secreted for the last thirty years, or by whom they are at last published, we are not informed in either of the works before us. That they are authentic, we conceive, is demonstrated by internal evidence; though, if more of them are extant, the selection that has been made appears to us to be a little capricious. The correspondence of Madame du Deffand reaches from the years 1738 to 1764;—that of Mademoiselle de Lespinasse extends only from 1773 to 1776. The two works, therefore, relate to different periods; and, being entirely of different characters, seem naturally to call for a separate consideration. We begin with the correspondence of Madame du Deffand, both out of respect to her seniority, and because the variety which it exhibits seems to afford room for more observation.

As this lady's house was for fifty years the resort of every thing brilliant in Paris, it is natural to suppose, that she herself must have possessed no ordinary attraction—and to feel an eager curiosity to be introduced even to that shadow of her conversation which we may expect to meet with in her correspondence. Though the greater part of the letters are addressed to her by various correspondents, yet the few which she does write are strongly marked with the traces of her peculiar character and talent; and the whole taken together give a very lively idea of the structure and occupations of the best French society, in the days of its greatest splendour. Laying out of view the grêater constitutional gaiety of our neighbours, it appears to us, that this society was distinguished from any that has ever existed in England, by three circumstances chiefly:—in the first place, by the exclusion of all low-bred persons; secondly, by the superior intelligence and cultivation of the women; and, finally, by the want of political avocations, and the absence of political antipathies.

By the first of these circumstances, the old Parisian society was rendered considerably more refined, and infinitely more easy and natural. The general and peremptory proscription of the *bourgeois*, excluded, no doubt, a good deal of vulgarity and coarseness; but it had a still better effect in excluding those feelings of mutual jealousy and contempt, and that conflict of family pride and consequential opulence, which can only be prevented from disturbing a more promiscuous assembly, by means of universal and systematic reserve. Where all are noble, all are equal;—there is

no room for ostentation or pretension of any sort; — every one is in his place every where; and the same manners being familiar to the whole society from their childhood, manners cease in a great measure to be an object of attention. Nobody apprehends any imputation of vulgarity; and nobody values himself on being free from it. The little peculiarities by which individuals are distinguished, are ascribed, not to ignorance or awkwardness, but to caprice merely, or to peculiarity of disposition; and not being checked by contempt or derision, are indulged, for the most part, as caprice or disposition may dictate; and thus the very highest society is brought back, and by the same causes, to much of the freedom and simplicity of the lowest.

In England, we have never had this arrangement. The great wealth of the mercantile classes, and the privilege which every man here possesses of aspiring to every situation, has always prevented any such complete separation of the high and the low-born, even in ordinary society, and made all large assemblages of people to a certain degree promiscuous. Great wealth, or great talents, being sufficient to raise a man to power and eminence, are necessarily received as a sufficient passport into private company; and fill it, on the large scale, with such motley and discordant characters, as visibly to endanger either its ease or its tranquillity. The pride of purse, and of rank, and of manners, mutually provoke each other; and vanities which were undiscovered while they were universal, soon become visible in the light of opposite vanities. With us, therefore, society, when it passes beyond select clubs and associations, is apt either to be distracted with little jealousies and divisions, or finally to settle into constraint, insipidity, and reserve. People meeting from all the extremes of life, are afraid of being misconstrued, and despair of being understood. Conversation is left to a few professed talkers; and all the rest are satisfied to hold their tongues, and despise each other in their hearts.

The superior cultivation of French Women, however, was productive of still more substantial advantages. Ever since Europe became civilised, the females of that country have stood more on an intellectual level with the men than in any other,—and have taken their share in the politics and literature, and public controversies of the day, far more largely than in any other nation with which we are acquainted. For more than two centuries, they have been the umpires of polite letters, and the depositaries and the agents of those intrigues by which the functions of government are usually forwarded or impeded. They could talk, therefore, of every thing that men could wish to talk about; and general conversation, consequently, assumed a tone, both less frivolous and less uniform, than it has ever attained in our country.

The grand source, however, of the difference between the good society of France and of England, is, that, in the former country, men had nothing but society to attend to; whereas, in the latter, almost all who are considerable for rank or for talents, are continually engrossed with politics. They have no leisure, therefore, for society, in the first place: in the second place, if they do enter it at all, they are apt to regard it as a scene rather of relaxation than exertion; and, finally, they naturally acquire those habits of thinking and of talking, which are better adapted to carry on business and debate, than to enliven people assembled for amusement. In England, men of condition have still to perform the high duties of citizens and statesmen, and can only rise to eminence by dedicating their days and nights to the study of business and affairs — to the arts of influencing those with whom, and by whom, they are to act — and to the actual management of those strenuous contentions by which the government of a free state is perpetually embarrassed and preserved. In France, on the contrary, under the old monarchy, men of the first rank had no political functions to discharge — no control to exercise over the government — and no rights to assert, either for themselves or their fellow-subjects. They were either left, therefore, to solace their idleness with the frivolous enchantments of polished society, or, if they had any object of public ambition, were driven to pursue it by the mediation of those favourites or mistresses who were most likely to be won by the charms of an elegant address, or the assiduities of a skilful flatterer.

It is to this lamentable inferiority in the government and constitution of their country,

that the French are indebted for the superiority of their polite assemblies. Their saloons are better filled than ours, because they have no senate to fill out of their population; and their conversation is more sprightly, and their society more animated than ours, because there is no other outlet for the talent and ingenuity of the nation but society and conversation. Our parties of pleasure, on the other hand, are mostly left to beardless youths and superannuated idlers — not because our men want talents or taste to adorn them, but because their ambition, and their sense of public duty, have dedicated them to a higher service. When we lose our constitution — when the houses of parliament are shut up, our assemblies, we have no doubt, will be far more animated and rational. It would be easy to have splendid gardens and parterres, if we would only give up our corn-fields and our pastures: nor should we want for magnificent fountains and ornamental canals, if we were contented to drain the whole surrounding country of the rills that maintain its fertility and beauty.

But, while it is impossible to deny that the French enjoyed, in the agreeable constitution of their higher society, no slight compensation for the want of a free government, it is curious, and not unsatisfactory, to be able to trace the operation of this same compensating principle through all the departments we have alluded to. It is obviously to our free government, and to nothing else, that we owe that mixture of ranks and of characters, which certainly renders our large society less amiable, and less unconstrained, than that of the old French nobility. Men, possessed of wealth and political power, must be associated with by all with whom they choose to associate, and to whom their friendship or support is material. A trader who has bought his borough but yesterday, will not give his influence to any set of noblemen or ministers, who will not receive him and his family into their society, and agree to treat them as their equals. The same principle extends downwards by imperceptible gradations; — and the whole community is mingled in private life, it must be owned with some little discomfort, by the ultimate action of the same principles which combine them, to their incalculable benefit, in public.

Even the backwardness or the ignorance of our women may be referred to the same noble origin. Women have no legal or direct political functions in any country in the universe. In the arbitrary governments of Europe, however, they exert a personal influence over those in power and authority, which raises them into consequence, familiarizes them in some degree with business and affairs, and leads them to study the character and the dispositions of the most eminent persons of their day. In free states, again, where the personal inclination of any individual can go but a little way, and where every thing must be canvassed and sanctioned by its legitimate censors, this influence is very inconsiderable; and women are excluded almost entirely from any concern in those affairs, with which the leading spirits of the country are necessarily occupied. They come, therefore, almost unavoidably to be considered as of a lower order of intellect, and to act, and to be treated upon that apprehension. The chief cause of their inferiority, however, arises from the circumstances that have been already stated. Most of the men of talent in upper life are engaged in pursuits from which women are necessarily excluded, and have no leisure to join in those pursuits which might occupy them in common. Being thus abandoned in a good degree to the society of the frivolous of our sex, it is impossible that they should not be frivolous in their turn. In old France, on the contrary, the men of talents in upper life had little to do but to please and be pleased with the women; and they naturally came to acquire that knowledge and those accomplishments which fitted them for such society.

The last distinction between good French and good English society, arises from the different position which was occupied in each by the men of letters. In France, certainly, they mingled much more extensively with the polite world, — incalculably to the benefit both of that world, and of themselves. In England, our great scholars and authors have commonly lived in their studies, or in the society of a few learned friends or dependants; and their life has been so generally gloomy, laborious, and inelegant, that literature and intellectual eminence have lost some of their honours, and much of their attraction. With us, when a

man takes to authorship, he is commonly looked upon as having renounced both the gay and busy world; and the consequence is, that the gay are extremely frivolous, and the active rash and superficial; while the man of genius is admired by posterity, and finishes his days rather dismally, without knowing or caring for any other denomination of men, than authors, booksellers, and critics.

This distinction too, we think, arises out of the difference of government, or out of some of its more immediate consequences. Our politicians are too busy to mix with men of study; and our idlers are too weak and too frivolous. The studious, therefore, are driven in a great measure to herd with each other, and to form a little world of their own, in which all their peculiarities are aggravated, their vanity encouraged, and their awkwardness confirmed. In Paris, where talent and idleness met together, a society grew up, both more inviting and more accessible to men of thought and erudition. What they communicated to this society rendered it more intelligent and respectable; and what they learned from it, made them much more reasonable, amiable, and happy. They learned, in short, the true value of knowledge and of wisdom, by seeing exactly how much they could contribute to the government or the embellishment of life; and discovered, that there were sources both of pride and of happiness, far more important and abundant than thinking, writing, or reading.

It is curious, accordingly, to trace in the volumes before us, the more intimate and private life of some of those distinguished men whom *we* find it difficult to represent to ourselves under any other aspect, than that of the authors of their learned publications. D'Alembert, Montesquieu, Henault, and several others, all appear in those letters in their true and habitual character, of cheerful and careless men of the world—whose thoughts ran mostly on the little exertions and amusements of their daily society; who valued even their greatest works chiefly as the means of amusing their leisure, or of entitling them to the admiration of their acquaintances; and occupied themselves about posterity far less than posterity will be occupied about them. It will probably scandalize a good part of *our* men of learning and science (though we think it will be consolatory to some) to be told, that there is great reason for suspecting that the most profound of those authors looked upon learning chiefly as a sort of tranquil and innocent amusement; to which it was very well to have recourse when more lively occupations were not at hand, but which it was wise and meritorious, at all times, to postpone to pleasant parties, and the natural play, either of the imagination or of the affections. It appears, accordingly, not only that they talked easily and familiarly of all their works to their female friends, but that they gave themselves very little anxiety either about their sale, or their notoriety out of the sphere of their own acquaintances, and made and invited all sorts of jokes upon them with unfeigned gaiety and indifference. The lives of our learned men would be much happier, and their learning much more useful and amiable, if they could be persuaded to see things in the same light. It is more than time, however, to introduce the reader to the characters in the volumes before us.

Madame du Deffand's correspondence consists of letters from Montesquieu, D'Alembert, Henault, D'Argens, Formont, Bernstorff, Scheffer, &c. among the men,—and Mesdames de Staël, de Choiseul, &c. among the women. Her own letters, as we have already intimated, form but a very inconsiderable part of the collection;—and, as these distinguished names naturally excite, in persons out of Paris, more interest than that of any witty marchioness whatsoever, we shall begin with some specimens of the intimate and private style of those eminent individuals, who are already so well known for the value and the beauty of their public instructions.

Of these, the oldest and the most popularly known, was Montesquieu,—an author who frequently appears profound when he is only paradoxical, and seems to have studied with great success the art of hiding a desultory and fantastical style of reasoning in imposing aphorisms, and epigrams of considerable effect It is impossible to read the *Esprit des Loix*, without feeling that it is the work of an indolent and very ingenious person, who had fits of thoughtfulness and ambition; and had meditated the different points which it comprehends at long intervals, and then connected them as he best could, by insinuations, metaphors, and

vague verbal distinctions. There is but little of him in this collection; but what there is, is extremely characteristic. D'Alembert had proposed that he should write the articles *Democracy* and *Despotism*, for the Encyclopédie; to which proposal he answers with much *naïveté*, as follows: —

"Quant à mon introduction dans l'Encyclopédie, c'est un beau palais où je serais bien glorieux de mettre les pieds; mais pour les deux articles *Démocratie* et *Despotisme*, je ne voudrais pas prendre ceux-là; j'ai tiré, sur ces articles, de mon cerveau tout ce qui y était. *L'esprit que j'ai est un moule; on n'en tire jamais que les mêmes portraits:* ainsi je ne vous dirais que ce que j'ai dit, et peut-être plus mal que je ne l'ai dit. Ainsi, si vous voulez de moi, laissez à mon esprit le choix de quelques articles; et si vous voulez ce choix, ce fera chez madame du Deffand avec du marasquin. Le père Castel dit qu'il ne peut pas se corriger, parce qu'en corrigeant son ouvrage, il en fait un autre; et moi je ne puis pas me corriger, parce que je chante toujours la même chose. Il me vient dans l'esprit que je pourrais prendre peut-être l'article *Goût*, et je prouverai bien que *difficile est propriè communia dicere.*" — Vol. i. pp. 30, 31.

There is likewise another very pleasing letter to M. de Henault, and a gay copy of verses to Madame de Mirepoix; — but we hasten on to a personage still more engaging. Of all the men of genius that ever existed, D'Alembert perhaps is the most amiable and truly respectable. The great extent and variety of his learning, his vast attainments and discoveries in the mathematical sciences, and the beauty and eloquence of his literary compositions, are known to all the world: but the simplicity and openness of his character — his perpetual gentleness and gaiety in society — the unostentatious independence of his sentiments and conduct — his natural and cheerful superiority to all feelings of worldly ambition, jealousy, or envy — and that air of perpetual youth and unassuming kindness, which made him so delightful and so happy in the society of women, — are traits which we scarcely expect to find in combination with those splendid qualifications; and compose altogether a character of which we should have been tempted to question the reality, were we not fortunate enough to be familiar with its counterpart, in one living individual.*

It is not possible, perhaps, to give a better idea of the character of D'Alembert, than merely to state the fact, and the reason of his having refused to go to Berlin, to preside over the academy founded there by Frederic. In answer to a most flattering and urgent application from that sovereign, he writes thus to M. D'Argens.*

"La situation où je suis seroit peut-être, monsieur, un motif suffisant pour bien d'autres, de renoncer à leur pays. Ma fortune est au-dessous du médiocre; 1700 liv. de rente font tout mon revenu: entièrement indépendant et maître de mes volontés, je n'ai point de famille qui s'y oppose; oublié du gouvernement comme tant de gens le sont de la Providence, persécuté même autant qu'on peut l'être quand on évite de donner trop d'advantages sur soi à la méchanceté des hommes; je n'ai aucune part aux récompenses qui pleuvent ici sur les gens de lettres, avec plus de profusion que de lumières. Malgré tout cela, monsieur, la tranquillité dont je jouis est si parfaite et si douce, que je ne puis me résoudre à lui faire courir le moindre risque." — "Supérieur à la mauvaise fortune, les épreuves de toute espèce que j'ai essuyées dans ce genre, m'ont endurci à l'indigence et au malheur, et ne m'ont laissé de sensibilité que pour ceux qui me ressemblent. A force de privations, je me suis accoutumé sans effort à me contenter du plus étroit nécessaire, et je serois même en état de partager mon peu de fortune avec d'honnêtes gens plus pauvres que moi. J'ai commencé, comme les autres hommes, par désirer les places et les richesses, j'ai fini par y renoncer absolument; et de jour en jour je m'en trouve mieux. La vie retirée et assez obscure que je mène est parfaitement conforme à mon caractère, à mon amour extrême pour l'indépendance, et peut-être même à un peu d'éloignement que les évènemens de ma vie m'ont inspiré pour les hommes. La retraite ou le régime que me prescrivent mon état et mon goût m'ont procuré la santé la plus parfaite et la plus égale — c'est-à-dire, le premier bien d'un philosophe; enfin j'ai le bonheur de jouir d'un petit nombre d'amis, dont le commerce et la confiance font la consolation et le charme de ma vie. Jugez maintenant vous-même, monsieur, s'il m'est possible de renoncer à ces avantages, et de changer un bonheur sûr pour une situation toujours incertaine, quelque brillante qu'elle puisse être. Je ne doute nullement des bontés du roi, et de tout ce qu'il peut faire pour me rendre agréable mon nouvel

* It cannot *now* offend the modesty of any living reader, if I explain that the person here alluded to was my excellent and amiable friend, the late Professor Playfair.

* This learned person writes in a very affected and *précieuse* style. He ends one of his letters to D'Alembert with the following eloquent expression: — "Ma santé s'effoiblit tous les jours de plus en plus; et je *me dispose à aller faire bientôt mes révérences au père éternel:* mais tandis que je resterai dans ce monde je serai le plus zélé de vos admirateurs."

état; mais, malheureusement pour moi, toutes les circonstances essentielles à mon bonheur ne sont pas en son pouvoir. Si ma santé venoit à s'altérer, ce qui ne seroit que trop à craindre, que deviendrois-je alors? Incapable de me rendre utile au roi, je me verrois forcé à aller finir mes jours loin de lui, et à reprendre dans ma patrie, ou ailleurs, mon ancien état, qui auroit perdu ses premiers charmes. Peut-être même n'aurois-je plus la consolation de retrouver en France les amis que j'y aurois laissés et à qui je percerois le cœur par mon départ. Je vous avoue, monsieur, que cette dernière raison seule peut tout sur moi.

"Enfin (et je vous prie d'être persuadé que je ne cherche point à me parer ici d'une fausse modestie) je doute que je fusse aussi propre à cette place que S. M. veut bien le croire. Livré dès mon enfance à des études continuelles, je n'ai que dans la théorie la connoissance des hommes, qui est si nécessaire dans la pratique quand on a affaire à eux. La tranquillité et, si je l'ose dire, *l'oisiveté* du cabinet, m'ont rendu absolument incapable des détails auxquels le chef d'un corps doit se livrer. D'ailleurs, dans les différens objets dont l'Académie s'occupe, il en est qui me sont entièrement inconnus, comme la chimie, l'histoire naturelle, et plusieurs autres, sur lesquels par conséquent je ne pourrois être aussi utile que je le désirerois. Enfin une place aussi brillante que celle dont le roi veut m'honorer, oblige à une sorte de représentation tout-à-fait éloignée du train de vie que j'ai pris jusqu'ici; elle engage à un grand nombre de devoirs: et les devoirs sont les entraves d'un homme libre."—Vol. ii. pp. 73—78.

This whole transaction was kept quite secret for many months; and, when it began to take air, he speaks of it to Madame du Deffand, in the following natural manner.

"Après tout, que cela se répande ou ne se répande pas, je n'en suis ni fâché ni bien-aise. Je garderai au roi de Prusse son secret, même lorsqu'il ne l'exige plus, et vous verrez aisément que mes lettres n'ont pas été faites pour être vues du ministère de France; je suis bien résolu de ne lui pas demander plus de grâces qu'aux ministres du roi de Congo; et je me contenterai que la postérité lise sur mon tombeau; *il fut estimé des honnêtes gens, et est mort pauvre, parce qu'il l'a bien voulu.* Voilà, madame, de quelle manière je pense. Je ne veux braver ni aussi flatter les gens qui m'ont fait du mal, ou qui sont dans la disposition de m'en faire; mais je me conduirai de manière que je les réduirai seulement à ne pas faire du bien."—Vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.

Upon publishing his Mélanges, he was furiously attacked by a variety of acrimonious writers; and all his revenge was to retire to his geometry, and to write such letters as the following to Madame du Deffand.

"Me voilà claquemuré pour long-temps, et vraisemblablement pour toujours, dans ma triste, mais très-chère et très-paisible Géométrie! Je suis fort content de trouver un prétexte pour ne plus rien faire, dans le déchaînement que mon livre a excité contre moi. Je n'ai pourtant ni attaqué personne, ni même désigné qui que ce soit, plus que n'ai fait l'auteur du Méchant, et vingt autres, contres lesquels personne ne s'est déchaîné. Mais il n'y a qu'heur et malheur. Je n'ai besoin ni de l'amitié de tous ces gens-là, puisque assurément je ne veux rien leur demander, ni de leur estime, puisque j'ai bien résolu de ne jamais vivre avec eux: aussi je les mets à pis faire.

"Adieu, Madame; hâtez votre retour. Que ne savez-vous de la géométrie! qu'avec elle on se passe de bien des choses!"—Vol. i. pp. 104, 105.

"Mon ouvrage est publié; il s'est un peu vendu; les frais de l'impression sont retirés; les éloges, les critiques et l'argent viendront quand ils voudront."—"Je n'ai encore rien touché. Je vous manderai ce que je gagnerai: il n'y a pas d'apparence que cela se monte fort haut; il n'y a pas d'apparence non plus que je continue à travailler dans ce genre. *Je ferai de la géométrie, et je lirai Tacite!* Il me semble qu'on a grande envie que je me taise, et en vérité je ne demande pas mieux. Quand ma petite fortune ne suffira plus à ma subsistence, je me retirerai dans quelque endroit où je puisse vivre et mourir à bon marché. Adieu, Madame. Estimez, comme moi, les hommes ce qu'ils valent, et il ne vous manquera rien pour être heureuse. On dit Voltaire raccommodé avec le roi de Prusse, et Maupertuis retombé. Ma foi, les hommes sont bien foux, à commencer par les sages."—Vol. ii. pp. 50, 51.

"Eh bien! vous ne voulez donc pas, ni Formont non plus, que je me claquemure dans ma géométrie? J'en suis pourtant bien tenté. Si vous saviez combien cette géométrie est une retraite douce à la paresse! et puis les sots ne vous lisent point, et par conséquent ne vous blâment ni ne vous louent: et comptez-vous cet avantage-là pour rien? En toute cas, j'ai de la géométrie pour un an, tout au moins. Ah! que je fais à présent de belles choses que personne ne lira!

"J'ai bien quelques morceaux de littérature à traiter, qui seroient peut-être assez agréables; mais je chasse tout cela de ma tête, comme mauvais train. La géométrie est ma femme, et je me suis remis en ménage.

"Avec cela, j'ai plus d'argent devant moi que je n'en puis dépenser. Ma foi, on est bien fou de se tant tourmenter pour des choses qui ne rendent pas plus heureux: on a bien plutôt fait de dire: Ne pourrois-je pas me passer de cela? Et c'est la recette dont j'use depuis long-temps."—Vol. ii. pp. 52, 53.

With all this softness and carelessness of character, nothing could be more firm and inflexible when truth and justice were in question. The President Henault was the oldest and first favourite of Madame du Deffand; and, at the time of publishing the Encyclopædia, Madame du Deffand had more power over D'Alembert than any other per-

son. She wished very much that something flattering should be said of her favourite in the Introductory Discourse, which took a review of the progress of the arts and sciences; but D'Alembert resisted, with heroic courage, all the entreaties that were addressed to him on this subject. The following may serve as specimens of the tone which he maintained on the occasion.

"Je suis devenu cent fois plus amoureux de la retraite et de la solitude, que je ne l'étois quand vous avez quitté Paris. Je dîne et soupe chez moi tous les jours, ou presque tous les jours, et je me trouve très-bien de cette manière de vivre. Je vous verrai donc quand vous n'aurez personne, et aux heures où je pourrai espérer de vous trouver seule: dans d'autres temps, j'y rencontrerois votre président, qui m'embarrasseroit, parce qu'il croiroit avoir des reproches à me faire, que je ne crois point en mériter, et que je ne veux pas être dans le cas de le désobliger, en me justifiant auprès de lui. Ce que vous me demandez pour lui est impossible, et je puis vous assurer qu'il est bien impossible, puisque je ne fais pas cela pour vous. En premier lieu, le Discours préliminaire est imprimé, il y a plus de six semaines: ainsi je ne pourrois pas l'y fourrer aujourd'hui, même quand je le voudrois. En second lieu pensez-vous de bonne foi, madame, que dans un ouvrage destiné à célébrer les grands génies de la nation et les ouvrages qui ont véritablement contribué aux progrès des lettres et des sciences, je doive parler de l'Abrégé chronologique? C'est un ouvrage utile, j'en conviens, et assez commode: mais voilà tout en vérité: c'est là ce que les gens de lettres en pensent, c'est là ce qu'on en dira quand le président ne sera plus: et quant je ne serai plus moi, je suis jaloux qu'on ne me reproche pas d'avoir donné d'éloges excessifs à personne."—Vol. ii. pp. 35, 36.

"J'ai une confession à vous faire: j'ai parlé de lui dans l'Encyclopédie, non pas à *Chronologie*, car cela est pour Newton, Petau et Scaliger, mais à *Chronologique*. J'y dis que nous avons, en notre langue, plusieurs bons abrégés chronologiques: le sien, un autre qui vaut pour le moins autant, et un troisième qui vaut mieux. Cela n'est pas dit si crûment, ainsi ne vous fâchez pas. Il trouvera la louange bien mince, surtout la partageant avec d'autres; mais Dieu et vous, et même vous toute seule, ne me feroient pas changer de langage."—"Il fera sur l'Académie tout ce qui lui plaira; ma conduite prouve que je ne désire point d'en être, et en vérité je ne serois sans lui, si j'en avois bien envie; mais le plaisir de dire la vérité librement quand on n'outrage ni n'attaque personne, vaut mieux que toutes les Académies du monde, depuis la Françoise, jusqu'à celle de Dugast."—"Puisque je suis déjà d'une Académie, c'est un petit agrément de plus que d'être des autres; mais si j'avois mon expérience, et quinze ans de moins, je vous réponds que je ne serois d'aucune."—Vol. ii. pp. 56—94.

We may now take a peep at the female correspondents,—in the first rank of whom we must place Madame de Staël, so well known to most of our readers by her charming Memoirs. This lady was attached to the court of the Duchess of Maine; and her letters, independent of the wit and penetration they display, are exceedingly interesting, from the near and humiliating view they afford of the miserable ennui, the selfishness and paltry jealousies which brood in the atmosphere of a court,—and abundantly avenge the lowly for the outward superiority that is assumed by its inhabitants. There are few things more instructive, or more compassionable, than the picture which Madame de Staël has drawn, in the following passages, of her poor princess, dragging herself about in the rain and the burning sun, in the vain hope of escaping from the load of her own inanity,—seeking relief in the multitude of her visitors, from the sad vacuity of friendship and animation around her,—and poorly trying to revenge herself for her own unhappiness, by making every body near her uncomfortable.

"Je lus avant-hier votre lettre, ma reine, à S. A. Elle était dans un accès de frayeur du tonnerre, qui ne fit pas valoir vos galanteries. J'aurai soin une autre fois de ne vous pas exposer à l'orage. Nous nageons ces jours passés dans la joie; nous nageons à présent dans la pluie. Nos idées, devenues douces et agréables, vont reprendre toute leur noirceur. Pardessus cela est arrivé, depuis deux jours, à notre princesse un rhume, avec de la fièvre: ce nonobstant et malgré le temps diabolique, la promenade va toujours son train. Il semble que la Providence prenne soin de construire pour les princes des corps à l'usage de leurs fantaisies, sans quoi ils ne pourraient attraper âge d'homme."—Vol. i. pp. 161, 162.

"En dépit d'une troisième orage plus violent que les deux précédens, nous arrivons d'une chasse: nous avons essuyé la bordée au beau milieu de la forêt. J'espérais éviter comme à l'ordinaire cette belle partie; mais on a adroitement tiré parti des raisons que j'avais alléguées pour m'en dispenser; ce qui m'a mis hors d'état de reculer. C'est dommage qu'un art si ingénieux soit employé à désoler les gens."—Vol. i. p. 164.

"Je suis très fâché que vous manquiez d'amusemens: c'est un médicament nécessaire à la santé; notre princesse le pense bien; car étant véritablement malade, elle va sans fin, sans cesse, quelque temps qu'il fasse."—Vol. i. p. 168.

"Nous faisons, nous disons toujours les mêmes choses: les promenades, les observations sur le vent, le cavagnole, les remarques sur la perte et le gain, les mesures pour tenir les portes fermées quelque chaud

qu'il fasse, la désolation de ce qu'on appelle les étouffés, au nombre desquels je suis, et dont vous n'êtes pas, qualité qui redouble le désir de votre société."—Vol. i. p. 197.

"Rien n'est égal à la surprise et au chagrin ou l'on est, ma reine, d'avoir appris que vous avez été chez Madame la Duchesse de Modène. Un amant bien passionné et bien jaloux supporte plus tranquillement les démarches les plus suspectes, qu'on n'endure celle-ci de votre part. 'Vous allez vous dévouer là, abandonner tout le reste; voilà à quoi on étoit réservé: c'est une destinée bien cruelle!' &c. J'ai dit ce qu'il y avoit à dire pour ramener le calme; on n'a voulu rien entendre. Quoique je ne doive plus m'étonner, cette scène a encore trouvé moyen de me surprendre. Venez, je vous conjure, ma reine, nous rassurer contre cette alarme: ne louez point la personne dont il s'agit, et surtout ne parlez pas de son affliction; car cela seroit pris pour un reproche." — Vol. ii. pp. 22, 23.

All this is miserable: but such are the necessary consequences of being bred up among flatterers and dependants. A prince has more chance to escape this heartlessness and insignificance; because he has high and active duties to discharge, which necessarily occupy his time and exercise his understanding; but the education of a princess is a work of as great difficulty as it may come to be of importance. We must make another extract or two from Madame de Staël, before taking leave of her.

"Madame du Châtelet et Voltaire, qui s'étaient annoncés pour aujourd'hui et qu'on avait perdus de vue, parurent hier, sur le minuit, comme deux spectres, avec une odeur de corps embaumés qu'ils semblaient avoir apportée de leurs tombeaux. On sortait de table. C'étaient pourtant des spectres affamés: il leur fallut un souper, et qui plus est, des lits, qui n'étaient pas préparés. La concierge, déjà couchée, se leva à grande hâte. Gaya, qui avait offert son logement pour les cas pressans, fut forcé de le céder dans celui-ci, déménagea avec autant de précipitation et de déplaisir qu'une armée surprise dans son camp, laissant une partie de son bagage au pouvoir de l'ennemi. Voltaire s'est bien trouvé du gîte: cela n'a point du tout consolé Gaya. Pour la dame, son lit ne s'est pas trouvé bien fait: il a fallu la déloger aujourd'hui. Notez que ce lit elle l'avait fait ellemême, faute de gens, et avait trouvé un défaut de . . . . dans les matelas, ce qui, je crois, a plus blessé son esprit exact que son corps peu délicat." — "Nos revenans ne se montrent point de jour, ils apparurent hier à dix heures du soir: je ne pense pas qu'on les voie guère plus tôt aujourd'hui; l'un est à décrire de hauts faits, l'autre à commenter Newton; ils ne veulent ni jouer ni se promener: ce sont bien des non-valeurs dans une société, où leurs doctes écrits ne sont d'aucun rapport." — "Madame du Châtelet est d'hier à son troisième logement: elle ne pouvait plus supporter celui qu'elle avait choisi; il y avait du bruit, de la fumée sans feu (il me semble que c'est son emblême). Le bruit, ce n'est pas la nuit qu'il l'incommode, à ce qu'elle m'a dit, mais le jour, au fort de son travail: cela dérange ses idées. Elle fait actuellement la revue de ses principes! c'est une exercice qu'elle réitère chaque année, sans quoi ils pourraient s'échapper, et peut-être s'en aller si loin qu'elle n'en retrouverait pas un seul. Je crois bien que sa tête est pour eux une maison de force, et non pas le lieu de leur naissance; c'est le cas de veiller soigneusement à leur garde. Elle préfère le bon air de cette occupation à tout amusement, et persiste à ne se montrer qu'à la nuit close. Voltaire a fait des vers galans, qui réparent un peu le mauvais effet de leur conduite inusitée." — Vol. i. pp. 178, 179, 182, 185, 186.

After all this experience of the follies of the great and the learned, this lively little woman concludes in the true tone of French practical philosophy.

"O ma reine! que les hommes et leurs femelles sont de plaisans animaux! Je ris de leurs manœuvres, le jour que j'ai bien dormi; quand le sommeil me manque, je suis prête à les assommer. Cette variété de mes dispositions me fait voir que je ne degénère pas de mon espèce. Moquons-nous des autres, et qu'il se moquent de nous; c'est bien fait de toute part!" — Vol. i. p. 181.

Among the lady writers in these volumes, we do not know if there be any entitled to take precedence of la Duchesse de Choiseul, who writes thus learnedly on the subject of ennui to Madame du Deffand.

"Savez-vous pourquoi vous vous ennuyez tant, ma chère enfant? C'est justement par la peine que vous prenez *d'éviter, de prévoir, de combattre* l'ennui. Vivez au jour la journée; prenez le temps comme il vient; profitez de tous les momens, et avec cela vous verrez que vous ne vous ennuierez pas: si les circonstances vous sont contraires, cédez au torrent et ne prétendez pas y résister."—

"Je m'aperçois, ma chère enfant, que je vous dis des choses bien communes; mais accoutumez-vous à les supporter, 1°, parce que je ne suis pas en état de vous en dire d'autres; 2°, parce qu'en morale elles sont toujours les plus vraies, parce qu'elles tiennent à la nature. Après avoir bien exercé son esprit, le philosophe le plus éclairé sera obligé d'en revenir, à cet égard, à l'axiome du plus grand sot, de même qu'il partage avec lui l'air qu'il respire." — "Les préjugés se multiplient, les arts s'accroissent, les sciences s'approfondissent: mais la morale est toujours la même, parce que la nature ne change pas; elle est toujours réduite à ces deux points: être juste pour être bon,

être sage pour être heureux. Sadi, poëte Persan, dit *que la sagesse est de jouir, la bonté de faire jouir*: j'y ajoute la justice."—

"Il y a trois choses dont vous dites que les femmes ne conviennent jamais: l'une d'entre elles est de s'ennuyer. Je n'en conviens pas non plus ici: malgré vos soupçons, je vois mes ouvriers, je crois conduire leurs ouvrages. A ma toilette, j'ai cette petite Corbie qui est laide, mais fraîche comme une pêche, folle comme un jeune chien; qui chante, qui rit, qui joue du clavecin, qui danse, qui saute au lieu de marcher, qui ne sait ce qu'elle fait, et fait tout avec grâce, qui ne sait ce qu'elle dit, et dit tout avec esprit, et surtout une naïveté charmante. La nuit je dors, le jour je rêve, et ces plaisirs si doux, si passifs, si bêtes, sont précisément ceux qui me conviennent le mieux." — Vol. ii. pp. 134, 135.

It is time now that we should come to Madame du Deffand herself: — the wittiest, the most selfish, and the most *ennuyée* of the whole party. Her wit, to be sure, is very enviable and very entertaining; but it is really consolatory to common mortals, to find how little it could amuse its possessor. This did not proceed in her, however, from the fastidiousness which is sometimes supposed to arise from a long familiarity with excellence, so much as from a long habit of selfishness, or rather from a radical want of heart or affection. La Harpe says of her, "Qu'il étoit difficile d'avoir moins de sensibilité, et plus d'égoïsme." With all this, she was greatly given to gallantry in her youth; though her attachments, it would seem, were of a kind not very likely to interfere with her peace of mind. The very evening her first lover died, after an intimacy of twenty years, La Harpe assures us, "Qu'elle vint souper en grande compagnie chez Madame de Marchais, où j'étais; et on lui parla de la perte qu'elle venait de faire. *Hélas! il est mort ce soir à six heures; sans cela, vous ne me verriez pas ici.* Ce furent ses propres paroles; et elle soupa comme à son ordinaire, c'est-à-dire fort bien; car elle était très-gourmande." (Pref. p. xvi.) She is also recorded to have frequently declared, that she could never bring herself to love any thing,— though, in order to take every possible chance, she had several times attempted to become *devote* — with no great success. This, we have no doubt, is the secret of her ennui; and a fine example it is of the utter worthlessness of all talent, accomplishment, and glory, when disconnected from those feelings of kindness and generosity, which are of themselves sufficient for happiness. Madame du Deffand, however, must have been delightful to those who sought only for amusement. Her tone is admirable; her wit flowing and natural; and though a little given to detraction, and not a little importunate and *exigeante* towards those on whose complaisance she had claims, there is always an air of politeness in her raillery, and of knowledge of the world in her murmurs, that prevents them from being either wearisome or offensive.

Almost all the letters of her writing which are published in these volumes, seem to have been written in the month of July 1742, when she spent a few weeks at the waters of *Forges*, and wrote almost daily to the President Henault at Paris. This close correspondence of theirs fills one of these volumes; and, considering the rapidity and carelessness with which both parties must have written, must give, we should think, a very correct, and certainly a very favourable idea of the style of their ordinary conversation. We shall give a few extracts very much at random. She had made the journey along with a Madame de Péquigni, of whom she gives thè following account.

"Mais venons à un article bien plus intéressant, c'est ma compagne. O mon Dieu! qu'elle me déplaît! Elle est radicalement folle; elle ne connoit point d'heure pour ses repas; elle a déjeuné à Gisors à huit heures du matin, avec du veau froid; à Gournay, elle a mangé du pain trempé dans le pot, pour nourrir un Limousin, ensuite un morceau de brioche, et puis trois assez grands biscuits. Nous arrivons, il n'est que deux heures et demie, et elle veut du riz et une capilotade; elle mange comme un singe; ses mains ressemblent à leurs pattes; elle ne cesse de bavarder. Sa prétention est d'avoir de l'imagination, et de voir toutes choses sous des faces singulières, et comme la nouveauté des idées lui manque, elle y supplée par la bizarrerie de l'expression, sous prétexte qu'elle est naturelle. Elle me déclare toutes ses fantaisies, en m'assurant qu'elle ne veut que ce qui me convient; mais je crains d'être forcé à être sa complaisante; cependant je compte bien que cela ne s'étendra pas sur ce qui intéressera mon régime. Elle comptoit tout à l'heure s'établir dans ma chambre pour y faire ses repas, mais je lui ai dit que j'allois écrire: je l'ai priée de faire dire à Madame Laroche les heures où elle vouloit manger et ce qu'elle voudroit manger, et où elle vouloit manger; et que, pour moi, je comptois avoir la même liberté: en conséquence je mangerai du riz et un poulet à huit heures du soir." — Vol. ii. pp. 191, 192.

After a few days she returns again to this unfortunate companion.

"La Péquigni n'est d'aucune ressource, et son esprit est comme l'espace: il y a étendue, profondeur, et peut-être toutes les autres dimensions que je ne saurais dire, parce que je ne les sais pas; mais cela n'est que *du vide* pour l'usage. Elle a tout senti, tout jugé, tout éprouvé, tout choisi, tout rejeté; elle est, dit-elle, d'une difficulté singulière en compagnie, et cependant elle est toute la journée avec toutes nos petites madames à jaboter comme une pie. Mais ce n'est pas cela qui me déplaît en elle: cela m'est commode dès aujourd'hui, et cela me sera très-agréable sitôt que Formont sera arrivé. Ce qui m'est insupportable, c'est le dîner; elle a l'air d'une folle en mangeant; elle dépèce une poularde dans le plat où on la sert, ensuite elle la met dans un autre, se fait rapporter du bouillon pour mettre dessus, tout semblable à celui qu'elle rend, et puis elle prend un haut d'aile, ensuite le corps dont elle ne mange que la moitié; et puis elle ne veut pas que l'on retourne le veau pour couper un os, de peur qu'on n'amollisse la peau: elle coupe un os avec toute la peine possible, elle le ronge à demi, puis retourne à sa poularde; après elle pèle tout le dessus du veau, ensuite elle revient à ronger sa poularde: cela dure deux heures. Elle a sur son assiette des morceaux d'os rongées, du peaux succées, et pendant ce temps, ou je m'ennuie à la mort, ou je mange plus qu'il ne faudrait. C'est une curiosité de lui voir manger un biscuit; cela dure une demi-heure, et le total, c'est qu'elle mange comme un loup: il est vrai qu'elle fait un exercice enragé. Je suis fâchée que vous ayez de commun avec elle l'impossibilité de rester une minute en repos."—Vol. iii. pp. 39—41.

The rest of her company do not come any better off. The lady she praises most, seems to come near to the English character.

"Madame de Bancour a trente ans; elle n'est pas vilaine; elle est très douce et très polie, et ce n'est pas sa faute de n'être pas plus amusante; c'est faute d'avoir rien vu: car elle a du bon sens, n'a nulle prétention et est fort naturelle: son ton de voix est doux, naïf et même un peu niais, dans le goût de Jeliot; si elle avait vécu dans le monde, elle serait aimable: je lui fais conter sa vie; elle est occupée de ses devoirs, sans austérité ni ostentation; si elle ne m'ennuyait pas, elle me plairait assez."— Vol. iii. p. 26.

Here are some wailings over her banishment.

"Il me prend des étonnemens funestes d'être ici: c'est comme la pensée de la mort; si je ne m'en distrayais, j'en mourrais réellement. Vous ne sauriez vous figurer la tristesse de ce séjour; mais si fait, puisque vous êtes à Plombières: mais non; c'est que ce n'est point le lieu, c'est la compagnie dont il est impossible de faire aucun usage. Heureusement depuis que je suis ici, j'ai un certain hébêtement qui ferait que je n'entendrais pas le plus petit raisonnement: je végète." — "Je ne crois pas qu'aucun remède puisse être bon lorsqu'on s'ennuie autant que je fais: ce n'est pas que je supporte mon mal patiemment; mais jamais je ne suis bien-aise, et ce n'est que parce que je végète que je suis tranquille: quand dix heures arrivent je suis ravie, je vois la fin de la journée avec délices. Si je n'avais pas mon lit et mon fauteuil, je serais cent fois plus malheureuse." — Vol. iii. pp. 96—98.

The following, though short, is a good specimen of the tone in which she treats her lover.

"Je crois que vous me regrettez, c'est-à-dire, que vous pensez beaucoup à moi. Mais (comme de raison) vous vous divertissez fort bien: vous êtes comme les quiétistes, vous faites tout en moi, pour moi et par moi; mais le fait est que vous faites tout sans moi et que vos journées se passent gaiement, que vous jouissez d'une certaine liberté qui vous plaît, et vous êtes fort aise que pendant ce temps-là je travaille à me bien porter. Mes nuits ne sont pas trop bonnes, et je crois que c'est que je mange un peu trop: hier je me suis retranché le bœuf, aujourd'hui je compte réformer la quantité de pain." — "N'allez point vous corriger sur rien, j'aime que vous me parliez ormeaux, ruisseaux, moineaux, etc., et ce m'est une occasion très-agréable de vous donner des démentis, de vous confondre, de vous tourmenter, c'est je crois ce qui contribue le plus à me faire passer mes eaux."— Vol. iii. pp. 126, 127. 129.

We have scarcely room left to give any of the gentleman's part of this correspondence. It is very pleasingly and gaily sustained by him, — though he deals mostly in the tittle-tattle of Paris, and appears a little vain of his own currency and distinction. We extract the following paragraphs, just as they turn up to us.

"Je ne crois pas que l'on puisse être heureux en province quand on a passé sa vie à Paris; mais heureux qui n'a jamais connu Paris, et qui n'ajoute pas nécessairement à cette vie les maux chimériques, qui sont les plus grands! car on peut guérir un seigneur qui gémit de ce qu'il a été grêlé, en lui faisant voir qu'il se trompe, et que sa vigne est couverte de raisin; mais la grêlé métaphysique ne peut être combattue La nature ou la providence n'est pas si injuste qu'on le veut dire; n'y mettons rien du nôtre, et nous serons moins à plaindre; et puis regardons le terme qui approche, le marteau qui va frapper l'heure, et pensons que tout cela va disparaître.

"Ah! l'inconcevable Pont de Veyle! il vient de donner une parade chez M. le duc d'Orléans: cette scène que vous connaissez du vendeur d'orviétan. Au lieu du Forcalquier, c'était le petit Gauffin qui faisait le Giles; et Pont de Veyle a distribué au moins deux cents boîtes avec un couplet pour tout le monde: il est plus jeune que quand vous l'avez vu la première fois; *il s'amuse de tout; n'aime rien:* et n'a conservé de la mémoire de la défunte que la haine pour la musique française." — Vol. i. pp. 110, 111.

At the end of the letters, there are placed a variety of *portraits*, or characters of the most distinguished persons in Madame du Deffand's society, written by each other — sometimes with great freedom, and sometimes with much flattery — but almost always with wit and penetration. We give the following by Madame du Deffand as a specimen, chiefly because it is shorter than most of the others

"Madame la Duchesse d'Aiguillon a la bouche enfoncé, le nez de travers, le regard fol et hardi, — et malgré cela elle est belle. L'éclat de son teint l'emporte sur l'irrégularité de ces traits.

"Sa taille est grossière, sa gorge, ses bras sont énormes; cependant elle n'a point l'air pesant ni épais: la force supplée en elle à la légèreté.

"Son esprit a beaucoup de rapport à sa figure: il est pour ainsi dire aussi mal dessiné que son visage, et aussi éclatant: l'abondance, l'activité, l'impetuosité en sont les qualités dominantes. Sans goût, sans grace, et sans justesse, elle étonne, elle surprend, mais elle ne plaît ni n'intéresse.

"On pourrait comparer Madame la Duchesse d'Aiguillon à ces statues faites pour le cintre, et qui paraissent monstrueuses étant dans le parvis. Sa figure ni son esprit ne veulent point être vus ni examinés de trop près; une certaine distance est nécessaire à sa beauté: des juges peu éclairés et peu délicats sont les seuls qui puissent être favorables à son esprit.

"Semblable à la trompette du jugement, elle est faite pour resusciter les morts: ce sont les impuissans qui doivent l'aimer, ce sont les sourds qui doivent l'entendre." — Vol. iii. pp. 154—156.

There are three characters of Madame du Deffand herself, all very flattering. That by the President Henault is the least so. It ends as follows.

"Cependant, pour ne pas marquer trop de prévention et obtenir plus de croyance, j'ajouterai que l'âge, sans lui ôter ses talens, l'avait rendue jalouse et méfiante, cédant à ses premiers mouvemens, maladroite pour conduire les hommes dont elle disposait naturellement: enfin de l'humeur inégale, injuste, ne cessant d'être aimable qu'aux yeux des personnes auxquelles il lui importait de plaire, et, pour finir, la personne par laquelle j'ai été le plus heureux et le plus malheureux, parce qu'elle est ce que j'ai le plus aimé." — Vol. iii. p. 188.

He is infinitely more partial to a Madame de Flamarens, whose character he begins with great elegance as follows.

"Madame de Flamarens a le visage le plus touchant et le plus modeste qui fut jamais; c'est un genre de beauté que la nature n'a attrapé qu'une fois: il y a dans ses traits quelque chose de rare et de mystérieux, qui aurait fait dire, dans les temps fabuleux, qu'une immortelle, sous cette forme, ne s'était pas assez déguisée!" — Vol. iii. p. 196.

We take our leave now of these volumes: and of the brilliant circle and brilliant days of Madame du Deffand. Such a society probably never will exist again in the world; — nor can we say we are very sorry for it. It was not very moral, we are afraid; and we have seen, that the most distinguished members of it were not very happy. When we say that it must have been in the highest degree delightful to those who sought only for amusement, we wish it to be understood, not only that amusement does not constitute happiness, but that it can afford very little pleasure to those who have not other sources of happiness. The great extent of the accomplished society of Paris, and the familiarity of its intercourse, seems to have gradually brought almost all its members to spend their whole lives in public. They had no notion, therefore, of domestic enjoyments; and their affections being dissipated among so many competitors, and distracted by such an incessant variety of small occupations, came naturally to be weakened and exhausted: and a certain heartless gaiety to be extended indiscriminately to the follies and the misfortunes of their associates. Bating some little fits of gallantry, therefore, there could be no devotedness of attachment; and no profound sympathy for the sufferings of the most intimate friends. Every thing, we find, accordingly, was made a subject for epigrams; and those who did not make jests at their friends' calamities, were glad, at any rate, to forget them in the society of those who did. When we recollect, too, that the desertion of all the high duties of patriots and statesmen, and the insulting and systematic degradation of the great body of the people, were necessary conditions of the excellence of this society, we cannot hesitate in saying, that its brilliancy was maintained at far too great a cost; and that the fuel which was wasted in its support, would have been infinitely better applied in diffusing a gentler light, and a more genial heat, through the private dwellings of the land.

We have occupied ourselves so long with Madame du Deffand and her associates, that we can afford but a small portion of our attention for Mademoiselle de Lespinasse. A very

extraordinary person we will allow her to have been; and a most extraordinary publication she has left us to consider. On a former occasion, we took some notice of the account which Marmontel had given of her character and conduct, and expressed our surprise that any one, who had acted the unprincipled and selfish part which he imputes to her, should be thought worthy, either of the admiration he expresses, or of the friendship and patronage of so many distinguished characters, or of the devoted attachment of such a man as D'Alembert. After reading these letters, we see much reason to doubt of the accuracy of Marmontel's representation; but, at the same time, find great difficulty in settling our own opinion of the author. Marmontel describes her as having *first* made a vain attempt upon the heart of M. de Guibert, the celebrated author of the Tactics, — and *then* endeavoured to indemnify herself by making a conquest of M. de Mora, the son of the Spanish ambassador, upon whose death she is stated to have died of mortification; and, in both cases, she is represented as having been actuated more by a selfish and paltry ambition, than by any feeling of affection. The dates, and the tenour of the letters before us, enable us to detect many inaccuracies in this statement; while they throw us into new perplexity as to the true character of the writer. They begin in 1773, after M. de Mora had been recalled to Spain by his relations, and when her whole soul seems to be occupied with anguish for this separation; and they are all addressed to M. de Guibert, who had then recently recommended himself to her, by the tender interest he took in her affliction. From the very beginning, however, there is more of love in them, than we can well reconcile with the subsistence of her first engrossing passion; and long before the death of M. Mora, she expresses the most vehement, unequivocal, and passionate attachment to M. Guibert. Sometimes she has fits of remorse for this; but, for the most part, she seems quite unconscious, either of inconsistency or impropriety; and M. Guibert is, in the same letter, addressed in terms of the most passionate adoration, and made the confidant of her unspeakable, devoted, and unalterable love for M. Mora. So she goes on, — most furiously and outrageously in love with them both at the same time, — till the death of M. Mora, in 1774. This event, however, makes no difference in her feelings or expressions; she continues to love his memory, just as ardently as his living successor in her affection; and her letters are divided, as before, between expressions of heart-rending grief and unbounded attachment — between her *besoin de mourir* for M. Mora, and her delight in living for M. Guibert. There are still more inexplicable things in those letters. None of Guibert's letters are given, — so that we cannot see how he responded to all these raptures; but, from the very first, or almost from the first, she complains bitterly of his coldness and dissipation; laments that he has a heart incapable of tenderness; and that he feels nothing but gratitude or compassion for a being whom he had fascinated, exalted, and possessed with the most ardent and unbounded passion. We cannot say that we see any clear traces of her ever having hoped, or even wished that he should marry her. On the contrary, she recommends several wives to him; and at last he takes one, with her approbation and consent, while the correspondence goes on in the same tone as before. The vehemence and excess of her passion continue to the last of the letters here published, which come down to within a few weeks of her death, in 1776.

The account which we have here given appears ridiculous: and there are people, and wise people, who, even after looking into the book, will think Mademoiselle de Lespinasse deserving of nothing but ridicule, and consign her and her ravings to immeasurable contempt. Gentle spirits, however, will judge more gently; and there are few, we believe, who feel interest enough in the work to read it through, who will not lay it down with emotions of admiration and profound compassion. Even if we did not know that she was the chosen companion of D'Alembert, and the respected friend of Turgôt, Condillac, Condorcet, and the first characters in France, there are, in the strange book before us, such traces of a powerful, generous, and ardent mind, as necessarily to command the respect even of those who may be provoked with her inconsistencies, and wearied out with the vehemence of her sorrow. There is something so natural too, so eloquent, and so pathetic in her expression — a tone of ardour and enthusiasm so infectious, and so

much of the true and agonizing voice of heart-struck wretchedness, that it burdens us with something of the weight of a real sorrow; and we are glad to make ourselves angry at her unaccountableness, in order to get rid of the oppression. It ought to be recollected also, that during the whole course of the correspondence, this poor young woman was dying of a painful and irritating disease. Tortured with sickness, or agitated with opium, her blood never seems in all that time to have flowed peaceably in her veins, and her nerves and her passions seem to have re-acted upon each other in a series of cruel agitations. Why she is so very wretched, and so very angry, we do not indeed always understand; but there is no mistaking the language of real emotion; and while there is something wearisome, perhaps, in the uniformity of a vehemence of which we do not clearly see the cause, there is something truly *déchirant* in the natural and piteous iteration of her eloquent complainings, and something captivating and noble in the fire and rapidity with which she pours out her emotions. The style is as original and extraordinary as the character of its author. It is quite natural, and even negligent—altogether without gaiety or assumed dignity — and yet full of elegance and spirit, and burning with the flames of a heart abandoned to passion, and an imagination exalted by enthusiasm. It is not easy to fall into the measure of such a composer, in running over a miscellany of amusement; but we cannot avoid adding a few extracts, if it were only to make what we have been saying intelligible, to some at least of our readers.

"Je me sentois une répugnance mortelle à ouvrir votre lettre: si je n'avois craint de vous offenser, j'allois vous la renvoyer. Quelque chose me disoit qu'elle irriteroit mes maux, et je voulois me ménager. La souffrance continuelle de mon corps affaisse mon ame: j'ai encore eu la fièvre; je n'ai pas fermé l'œil; je n'en puis plus. De grace, par pitié, ne tourmentez plus une vie qui s'éteint, et dont tous les instans sont dévoués à la douleur et aux regrets. Je ne vous accuse point, je n'exige rien, vous ne me devez rien: car, en effet, je n'ai pas eu un mouvement, pas un sentiment auquel j'ai consenti; et quand j'ai eu le malheur d'y céder, j'ai toujours détesté la force, ou la foiblesse, qui m'entraînoit. Vous voyez que vous ne me devez aucune reconnaissance, et que je n'ai le droit de vous faire aucun reproche. Soyez donc libre, retournez à ce que vous aimez, et à ce qui vous convient plus que vous ne croyez peut-être. Laissez-moi à ma douleur; laissez-moi m'occuper sans distraction du seul objet que j'ai adoré, et dont le souvenir m'est plus cher que tout ce qui reste dans la nature. Mon Dieu! je ne devrois pas le pleurer; j'aurois dû le suivre: c'est vous qui me faites vivre, qui faites le tourment d'un créature que la douleur consume, et qui emploie ce qui lui reste de forces à invoquer la mort. Ah! vous en faites trop, et pas assez pour moi. Je vous le disois bien il y a huit jours, vous me rendez difficile, exigeante: en donnant tout, on veut obtenir quelque chose. Mais, encore une fois, je vous pardonne, et je ne vous haïs point: ce n'est pas par générosité que je vous pardonne, ce n'est pas par bonté que je ne vous haïs pas; c'est que mon ame est lasse, qu'elle meurt de fatigue. Ah! mon ami, laissez-moi, ne me dites plus que vous m'aimez: ce baume devient du poison; vous calmez et déchirez ma plaie tour à tour. Oh! que vous me faites mal! que la vie me pèse! que je vous aime pourtant, et que je serois désolée de mettre de la tristesse dans votre ame! Mon ami, elle est trop partagée, trop dissipée, pour que le vrai plaisir y puisse pénétrer. Vous voulez que je vous voie ce soir; et bien, venez donc!"—Vol. ii. pp. 206—208.

"Combien de fois aurois-je pu me plaindre; combien de fois vous ai-je caché mes larmes! Ah! je le vois trop bien: on ne sauroit ni retenir, ni ramener un cœur qui est entraîné par un autre penchant; je me le dis sans cesse, quelquefois je me crois guérie; vous paroissez, est tout est détruit. La réflexion, mes résolutions, le malheur, tout perd sa force au premier mot que vous prononcez. Je ne vois plus d'asile que la mort, et jamais aucun malheureux ne l'a invoquée avec plus d'ardeur. Je retiens la moitié de mon ame: sa chaleur, son mouvement vous importuneroit, et vous éteindroit tout-à-fait; le feu qui n'échauffe pas, incommode. Ah! si vous saviez, si vous lisiez comme j'ai fait jouir une ame forte et passionnée, du plaisir d'être aimée! *Il* comparoit ce qui l'avoit aimé, ce qui l'aimoit encore, et il me disoit sans cesse: 'Oh! elles ne sont pas dignes d'être vos écolières; votre ame a été chauffée par le soleil de Lima, et mes compatriotes semblent être nées sous les glaces de la Laponie.' Et c'étoit de Madrid qu'il me mandoit cela! Mon ami, il ne me louoit pas; il jouissoit; et je ne crois point me louer, quand je vous dis qu'en vous aimant à la folie, je ne vous donne que ce que je ne puis pas garder ou retenir."—Vol. ii. pp. 215—217.

"Oh, mon Dieu! que l'on vit *fort* lorsqu'on est mort à tout, excepté à un objet qui est l'univers pour nous, et qui s'empare tellement de toutes nos facultés, qu'il n'est plus possible de vivre dans d'autres temps que dans le moment où l'on est! Eh! comment voulez-vous que je vous dise si je vous aimerai dans *trois mois?* Comment pourrois-je, avec ma pensée, me distraire de mon sentiment? Vous voudriez que, lorsque je vous vois, lorsque votre présence charme mes sens et mon ame, je pusse vous rendre compte de l'effet que je recevrai de votre mariage; mon ami, je n'en sais rien, — mais rien du tout. S'il me guérissoit, je vous le dirois, et vous êtes assez juste pour ne m'en

pas blâmer. Si, au contraire, il portoit le désespoir dans mon ame, je ne me plaindrois pas, et je souffrirois bien peu de temps. Alors vous seriez assez sensible et assez délicat pour approuver un parti qui ne vous coûteroit que des regrets passagers, et dont votre nouvelle situation vous distrairoit bien vîte; et je vous assure que cette pensée est consolante pour moi: je m'en sens plus libre. Ne me demandez donc plus ce que je ferai lorsque vous aurez engagé votre vie à une autre. Si je n'avois que de la vanité et de l'amour-propre, je serois bien plus éclairée sur ce que j'éprouverai alors. Il n'y a guère de méprise aux calculs de l'amour-propre; il prévoit assez juste: la passion n'a point d'avenir; ainsi en vous disant: je vous aime, je vous dis tout ce que je sais et tout ce que je sens. — Oh! mon ami, je me sens capable de tout, excepté de plier: j'aurois la force d'un martyr, pour satisfaire ma passion ou celle de la personne qui m'aimeroit: mais je ne trouve rien en moi qui me réponde de pouvoir jamais faire le sacrifice de mon sentiment. La vie n'est rien en comparaison, et vous verrez si ce ne sont là que les discours d'une tête exaltée. Oui, peut-être ce sont là les pensées d'un ame exaltée, mais à laquelle appartiennent les actions fortes. Seroit-ce à la raison qui est si prévoyante, si foible dans ses vues, et même si impuissante dans ses moyens, que ces pensées pourroient appartenir? Mon ami, je ne suis point raisonnable, et c'est peut-être à force d'être passionée que j'ai mis toute ma vie tant de raison à tout ce qui est soumis au jugement et à l'opinion des indifférens. Combien j'ai usurpé d'éloges sur ma modération, sur ma noblesse d'ame, sur mon désintéressement, sur les sacrifices prétendus que je faisois à une mémoire respectable et chère, et à la maison d'Alb.... ! Voilà comme le monde juge, comme il voit! Eh, bon Dieu! sots que vous êtes, je ne mérite pas vos louanges: mon ame n'étoit pas faite pour les petits intérêts qui vous occupent; toute entière au bonheur d'aimer et d'être aimée, il ne m'a fallu ni force, ni honnêteté pour supporter la pauvreté, er pour dédaigner les avantages de la vanité. J'ai tant joui, j'ai si bien senti le prix de la vie, que s'il falloit recommencer, je voudrois que ce fût aux mêmes conditions. Aimer et souffrir, — le ciel, l'enfer, — voilà à quoi je me dévouerois, voilà ce que je voudrois sentir, voilà le climat que je voudrois habiter; et non cet état tempéré dans lequel vivent tous les sots et tous les automates dont nous sommes environnés." — Vol. ii. pp. 228—233.

All this is raving no doubt; but it is the raving of real passion, and of a lofty and powerful spirit. It is the eloquent raving of the heart; and, when we think that this extraordinary woman wrote all this, not in the days of impatient youth, when the heart is strong for suffering, and takes a strange delight in the vehemence even of its painful emotions, but after years of misery, and with death before her eyes — advancing by gradual but visible steps, it is impossible not to feel an indescribable emotion of pity, resentment, and admiration. One little word more.

"Oh! que vous pesez sur mon cœur, lorsque vous voulez me prouver qu'il doit être content du vôtre! Je ne me plaindrois jamais, mais vous me forcez souvent à crier, tant le mal que vous me faites est aigu et profond! Mon ami, j'ai été aimée, je le suis encore, et je meurs de regret en pensant que ce n'est pas de vous. J'ai beau me dire que je ne méritai jamais le bonheur que je regrette; mon cœur cette fois fait taire mon amour-propre: il me dit que, si je dus jamais être aimée, c'étoit de celui qui auroit assez de charme à mes yeux, pour me distraire de M. de M...., et pour me retenir à la vie, après l'avoir perdu. Je n'ai fait que languir depuis votre départ; je n'ai pas été une heure sans souffrance: le mal de mon ame passe à mon corps; j'ai tous les jours la fièvre, et mon médecin, qui n'est pas le plus habile de tous les hommes, me répète sans cesse que je suis consumée de chagrin, que mon pouls, que ma respiration annoncent une douleur active; et il s'en va toujours en me disant: *nous n'avons point de remède pour l'ame.* Il n'y en a plus pour moi: ce n'est pas guérir que je voudrois, mais me calmer, mais retrouver quelques momens de repos pour me conduire à celui que la nature m'accordera bientôt."—Vol. iii. pp. 146, 147.

"Je n'ai plus assez de force pour mon ame — elle me tue. Vous ne pouvez plus rien sur moi, que me faire souffrir. Ne tachez donc plus à me consoler, et cessez de vouloir me faire le victime de votre *morale,* après m'avoir fait celle de votre légèreté.—Vous ne m'avez pas vue, parce que la journée n'a que douze heures, et que vous aviez de quoi les remplir par des intérêts et des plaisirs qui vous sont, et qui doivent vous être plus chers que mon malheur. Je ne réclame rien, je n'exige rien, et je me dis sans cesse que la source de mon bonheur et de mon plaisir est perdue pour jamais."—Vol. iii. p. 59.

We cannot leave our readers with these painful impressions; and shall add just one word or two of what is gayest in these desolating volumes.

"M. Grimm est de retour; je l'ai accablé de questions. Il peint la Czarine, non pas comme une souveraine, mais comme une femme aimable, pleine d'esprit, de saillies, et de tout ce qui peut séduire et charmer. Mais dans tout ce qu'il me disoit, je reconnoissois plutôt cet art charmant d'une courtisane grecque, que la dignité et l'éclat de l'Impératrice d'un grand empire."—Vol. ii. p. 105.

"Avant dîner je vais voir rue de Cléry des automates; qui sont prodigieux, à ce qu'on dit. Quand j'allois dans le monde, je n'aurois pas eu cette curiosité: deux ou trois soupers en donnent satiété; mais ceux de la rue de Cléry valent mieux: ils agissent et ne parlent point. Venez-y, en allant au Marais, et je vous dirai là si j'ai la loge de M. le

duc d'Aumont. Madame de Ch.... ne vous croît point coupable de négligence: elle m'a demandé aujourd'hui si votre retraite duroit encore. Ce que les femmes veulent seulement, c'est d'être préférées. Presque personne n'a besoin d'être aimé, et cela est bien heureux; car c'est ce qui se fait le plus mal à Paris. Ils osent dire qu'ils aiment; et ils sont calmes et dissipés! c'est assurément bien connoître le sentiment et la passion. Pauvres gens! il faut les louer comme les Liliputiens: ils sont bien jolis, bien gentils, bien aimables. Adieu, mon ami."—Vol. ii. pp. 197, 198.

We have left ourselves no room to make any reflections; except, only, that the French fashion of living, and almost of dying, in public, is nowhere so strikingly exemplified, as in the letters of this victim of passion and of fancy. While her heart is torn with the most agonizing passions, and her thoughts turned hourly on suicide, she dines out, and makes visits every day; and, when she is visibly within a few weeks of her end, and is wasted with coughs and spasms, she still has her *salon* filled twice a day with company, and drags herself out to supper with all the countesses of her acquaintance. There is a great deal of French character, indeed, in both the works of which we now take our leave; — a great deal to admire, and to wonder at — but very little, we think, to envy.

GOETHE.

(August, 1825.)

Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship: a Novel. From the German of Goethe. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 1030. Edinburgh: 1824.

There are few things that at first sight appear more capricious and unaccountable, than the diversities of national taste; and yet there are not many, that, to a certain extent at least, admit of a clearer explanation. They form evidently a section in the great chapter of National Character: and, proceeding on the assumption, that human nature is everywhere fundamentally the same, it is not perhaps very difficult to indicate, in a general way, the circumstances which have distinguished it into so many local varieties.

These may be divided into two great classes, — the one embracing all that relates to the newness or antiquity of the society to which they belong, or, in other words, to the stage which any particular nation has attained in that great progress from rudeness to refinement, in which all are engaged; — the other comprehending what may be termed the accidental causes by which the character and condition of communities may be affected; such as their government, their relative position as to power and civilisation to neighbouring countries, their prevailing occupations, determined in some degree by the capabilities of their soil and climate, and more than all perhaps, as to the question of taste, the still more accidental circumstances of the character of their first models of excellence, or the kind of merit by which their admiration and national vanity had first been excited.

It is needless to illustrate these obvious sources of peculiarity at any considerable length. It is not more certain, that all primitive communities proceed to civilisation by nearly the same stages, than that the progress of taste is marked by corresponding gradations, and may, in most cases, be distinguished into periods, the order and succession of which is nearly as uniform and determined. If tribes of savage men always proceed, under ordinary circumstances, from the occupation of hunting to that of pasturage, from that to agriculture, and from that to commerce and manufactures, the sequence is scarcely less invariable in the history of letters and art. In the former, verse is uniformly antecedent to prose — marvellous legends to correct history — exaggerated sentiments to just representations of nature. Invention, in short, regularly comes before judgment, warmth of feeling before correct reasoning — and splendid declamation and broad humour before delicate simplicity or refined wit. In the arts again, their progress is strictly analogous — from mere monstrosity to ostentatious displays of labour and design, first in massive formality, and next in fantastical minuteness, variety, and flutter of parts; — and then, through the gradations of startling contrasts and overwrought expression, to the repose and simplicity of graceful nature.

These considerations alone explain much of that contrariety of taste by which different nations are distinguished. They not only start in the great career of improvement at different times, but they advance in it with different

velocities — some lingering longer in one stage than another — some obstructed and some helped forward, by circumstances operating on them from within or from without. It is the unavoidable consequence, however, of their being in any one particular position, that they will judge of their own productions and those of their neighbours, according to that standard of taste which belongs to the place they then hold in this great circle; — and that a whole people will look on their neighbours with wonder and scorn, for admiring what their own grandfathers looked on with equal admiration, — while they themselves are scorned and vilified in return, for tastes which will infallibly be adopted by the grandchildren of those who despise them.

What we have termed the accidental causes of great differences in beings of the same nature, do not of course admit of quite so simple an exposition. But it is not in reality more difficult to prove their existence and explain their operation. Where great and degrading despotisms have been early established, either by the aid of superstition or of mere force, as in most of the states of Asia, or where small tribes of mixed descent have been engaged in perpetual contention for freedom and superiority, as in ancient Greece—where the ambition and faculties of individuals have been chained up by the institution of castes and indelible separations, as in India and Egypt, or where all men practise all occupations and aspire to all honours, as in Germany or Britain — where the sole occupation of the people has been war, as in infant Rome, or where a vast pacific population has been for ages inured to mechanical drudgery, as in China — it is needless to say, that very opposite notions of what conduces to delight and amusement must necessarily prevail; and that the Taste of the nation must be affected both by the sentiments which it has been taught to cultivate, and the capacities it has been led to unfold.

The influence of early models, however, is perhaps the most considerable of any; and may be easily enough understood. When men have been accustomed to any particular kind of excellence, they naturally become good judges of it, and account certain considerable degrees of it indispensable, — while they are comparatively blind to the merit of other good qualities to which they had been less habituated, and are neither offended by their absence, nor at all skilful in their estimation. Thus those nations who, like the English and the Dutch, have been long accustomed to great cleanliness and order in their persons and dwellings, naturally look with admiration on the higher displays of those qualities, and are proportionally disgusted by their neglect; while they are apt to undervalue mere pomp and stateliness, when destitute of these recommendations: and thus also the Italians and Sicilians, bred in the midst of dirt and magnificence, are curiously alive to the beauties of architecture and sculpture, and make but little account of the more homely comforts which are so highly prized by the others. In the same way, if a few of the first successful adventurers in art should have excelled in any particular qualities, the taste of their nation will naturally be moulded on that standard — will regard those qualities almost exclusively as entitled to admiration, and will not only consider the want of them as fatal to all pretensions to excellence, but will unduly despise and undervalue other qualities, in themselves not less valuable, but with which their national models had not happened to make them timeously familiar. If, for example, the first great writers in any country should have distinguished themselves by a pompous and severe regularity, and a certain elaborate simplicity of design and execution, it will naturally follow, that the national taste will not only become critical and rigorous as to those particulars, but will be proportionally deadened to the merit of vivacity, nature, and invention, when combined with irregularity, homeliness, or confusion. While, if the great patriarchs of letters had excelled in variety and rapidity of invention, and boldness and truth of sentiment, though poured out with considerable disorder and incongruity of manner, those qualities would quickly come to be the national criterion of merit, and the correctness and decorum of the other school be despised, as mere recipes for monotony and tameness.

These, we think, are the plain and certain effects of the peculiar character of the first great popular writers of all countries. But still we do not conceive that they depend altogether on any thing so purely accidental as

the temperament or early history of a few individuals. No doubt the national taste of France and of England would at this moment have been different, had *Shakspeare* been a Frenchman, and Boileau and Racine written in English. But then, we do not think that Shakspeare *could* have been a Frenchman; and we conceive that his character, and that of other original writers, though no doubt to be considered on the whole as casual, must yet have been modified to a great extent by the circumstances of the countries in which they were bred. It is plain that no original force of genius could have enabled Shakspeare to write as he had done, if he had been born and bred among the Chinese or the Peruvians. Neither do we think that he could have done so, in any other country but England — free, sociable, discursive, reformed, familiar England — whose motley and mingling population not only presented "every change of many-coloured life" to his eye, but taught and permitted every class, from the highest to the lowest, to know and to estimate the feelings and the habits of all the others — and thus enabled the gifted observer, not only to deduce the true character of human nature from this infinite variety of experiments and examples, but to speak to the sense and the hearts of each, with that truly universal tongue, which every one feels to be peculiar, and all enjoy as common.

We have said enough, however, or rather too much, on these general views of the subject — which in truth is sufficiently clear in those extreme cases, where the contrariety is great and universal, and is only perplexing when there is a pretty general conformity both in the causes which influence taste and in the results. Thus, we are not at all surprised to find the taste of the Japanese or the Iroquois very different from our own — and have no difficulty in both admitting that our human nature and human capacities are substantially the same, and in referring this discrepancy to the contrast that exists in the whole state of society, and the knowledge, and the opposite qualities of the objects to which we have been respectively accustomed to give our admiration. That nations living in times or places altogether remote, should disagree in taste, as in every thing else, seems to us quite natural. They are only the nearer cases that puzzle. And, that great European countries, peopled by the same mixed races, educated in the admiration of the same classical models — venerating the same remains of antiquity — engaged substantially in the same occupations — communicating every day, on business, letters, and society — bound up, in short, in one great commonwealth, as against the inferior and barbarous parts of the world, should yet differ so widely—not only as to the comparative excellence of their respective productions, but as to the constituents of excellence in all works of genius or skill, does indeed sound like a paradox, the solution of which every one may not be able to deduce from the preceding observations.

The great practical equation on which we in this country have been hitherto most frequently employed, has been between our own standard of taste and that which is recognized among our neighbours of France: — and certainly, though feelings of rivalry have somewhat aggravated its *apparent*, beyond its real amount, *there is* a great and substantial difference to be accounted for, — in the way we have suggested — or in some other way. Stating that difference as generally as possible, we would say, that the French, compared with ourselves, are more sensitive to faults, and less transported with beauties — more enamoured of art, and less indulgent to nature — more charmed with overcoming difficulties, than with that power which makes us unconscious of their existence — more averse to strong emotions, or at least less covetous of them in their intensity — more students of taste, in short, than adorers of genius — and far more disposed than any other people, except perhaps the Chinese, to circumscribe the rules of taste to such as they themselves have been able to practise, and to limit the legitimate empire of genius to the provinces they have explored. There has been a good deal of discussion of late years, in the face of literary Europe, on these debatable grounds; and we cannot but think that the result has been favourable, on the whole, to the English, and that the French have been compelled to recede considerably from many of their exclusive pretensions — a result which we are inclined to ascribe, less to the arguments of our native champions, than to those

circumstances in the recent history of Europe, which have compelled our ingenious neighbours to mingle more than they had ever done before with the surrounding nations — and thus to become better acquainted with the diversified forms which genius and talent may assume.

But while we are thus fairly in the way of settling our differences with France, we are little more than beginning them, we fear, with Germany; and the perusal of the extraordinary volumes before us, which has suggested all the preceding reflections, has given us, at the same time, an impression of such radical, and apparently irreconcileable disagreement as to principles, as we can scarcely hope either to remove by our reasonings, or even very satisfactorily to account for by our suggestions.

This is allowed, by the general consent of all Germany, to be the very greatest work of their very greatest writer. The most original, the most varied and inventive, — the most characteristic, in short, of the author and of his country. We receive it as such accordingly, with implicit faith and suitable respect; and have perused it in consequence with very great attention and no common curiosity. We have perused it, indeed, only in the translation of which we have prefixed the title: but it is a translation by a professed admirer; and by one who is proved by his Preface to be a person of talents, and by every part of the work to be no ordinary master, as least of one of the languages with which he has to deal. We need scarcely say, that we profess to judge of the work only according to our own principles of judgment and habits of feeling: and, meaning nothing less than to dictate to the readers or the critics of Germany what they should think of their favourite authors, propose only to let them know, in all plainness and modesty, what we, and we really believe most of our countrymen, actually think of this *chef d'œuvre* of Teutonic genius.

We must say, then, at once, that we cannot enter into the spirit of this German idolatry; nor at all comprehend upon what grounds the work before us could ever be considered as an admirable or even a commendable performance. To us it certainly appears, after the most deliberate consideration, to be eminently absurd, puerile, incongruous, vulgar, and affected; — and, though redeemed by considerable power of invention, and some traits of vivacity, to be so far from perfection, as to be, almost from beginning to end, one flagrant offence against every principle of taste, and every just rule of composition. Though indicating, in many places, a mind capable both of acute and profound reflection, it is full of mere silliness and childish affectation; — and though evidently the work of one who had seen and observed much, it is throughout altogether unnatural, and not so properly improbable, as affectedly fantastic and absurd — kept, as it were, studiously aloof from general or ordinary nature — never once bringing us into contact with real life or genuine character — and, where not occupied with the professional squabbles, paltry jargon, and scenical profligacy of strolling players, tumblers, and mummers (which may be said to form its staple), is conversant only with incomprehensible mystics and vulgar men of whim, with whom, if it were at all possible to understand them, it would be a baseness to be acquainted. Every thing, and every body we meet with, is a riddle and an oddity; and though the tissue of the story is sufficiently coarse, and the manners and sentiments infected with a strong tinge of vulgarity, it is all kept in the air, like a piece of machinery at the minor theatres, and never allowed to touch the solid ground, or to give an impression of reality, by the disclosure of known or living features. In the midst of all this, however, there are, every now and then, outbreakings of a fine speculation, and gleams of a warm and sprightly imagination — an occasional wild and exotic glow of fancy and poetry — a vigorous heaping up of incidents, and touches of bright and powerful description.

It is not very easy certainly to account for these incongruities, or to suggest an intelligible theory for so strange a practice. But in so far as we can guess, these peculiarities of German taste are to be referred, in part, to the comparative newness of original composition among that ingenious people, and to the state of European literature when they first ventured on the experiment — and in part to the state of society in that great country itself,

and the comparatively humble condition of the greater part of those who write, or to whom writing is there addressed.

The Germans, though undoubtedly an imaginative and even enthusiastic race, had neglected their native literature for two hundred years — and were chiefly known for their learning and industry. They wrote huge Latin treatises on Law and Theology — and put forth bulky editions and great tomes of annotations on the classics. At last, however, they grew tired of being respected as the learned drudges of Europe, and reproached with their consonants and commentators; and determined, about fifty years ago, to show what metal they were made of, and to give the world a taste of their quality, as men of genius and invention. In this attempt the first thing to be effected was at all events to avoid the imputation of being scholastic imitators of the classics. *That* would have smelt too much, they thought, of the old shop; and in order to prove their claims to originality, it was necessary to go a little into the opposite extreme, — to venture on something decidedly modern, and to show at once their independence on their old masters, and their superiority to the pedantic rules of antiquity. With this view some of them betook themselves to the French models — set seriously to study how to be gay—*apprendre à être vif* — and composed a variety of *petites pièces*, and novels of polite gallantry, in a style — of which we shall at present say nothing. This manner, however, ran too much counter to the general character of the nation to be very much followed — and undoubtedly the greater and better part of their writers turned rather to us, for hints and lessons to guide them in their ambitious career. There was a greater original affinity in the temper and genius of the two nations — and, in addition to that consideration, our great authors were indisputably at once more original and less classical than those of France. England, however, we are sorry to say, could furnish abundance of bad as well as of good models — and even the best were perilous enough for rash imitators. As it happened, however, the worst were most generally selected — and the worst parts of the good. Shakspeare was admired—but more for his flights of fancy, his daring improprieties, his trespasses on the borders of absurdity, than for the infinite sagacity and rectifying good sense by which he redeemed those extravagancies, or even the profound tenderness and simple pathos which alternated with the lofty soaring or dazzling imagery of his style. Altogether, however, Shakspeare was beyond their rivalry; and although Schiller has dared, and not ingloriously, to emulate his miracles, it was plainly to other merits and other rivalries that the body of his ingenious countrymen aspired. The ostentatious absurdity — the affected oddity — the pert familiarity — the broken style, and exaggerated sentiment of Tristram Shandy — the mawkish morality, dawdling details, and interminable agonies of Richardson — the vulgar adventures, and homely, though, at the same time, fantastical speculations of John Buncle and others of his forgotten class, found far more favour in their eyes. They were original, startling, unclassical, and puzzling. They excited curiosity by not being altogether intelligible — effectually excluded monotony by the rapidity and violence of their transitions, and promised to rouse the most torpid sensibility, by the violence and perseverance with which they thundered at the heart. They were the very things, in short, which the German originals were in search of; — and they were not slow, therefore, in adopting and improving on them. In order to make them thoroughly their own, they had only to exaggerate their peculiarities — to mix up with them a certain allowance of their old visionary philosophy, misty metaphysics, and superstitious visions — and to introduce a few crazy sententious theorists, to sprinkle over the whole a seasoning of rash speculation on morality and the fine arts.

The style was also to be relieved by a variety of odd comparisons and unaccountable similes — borrowed, for the most part, from low and revolting objects, and all the better if they did not exactly fit the subject, or even introduced new perplexity into that which they professed to illustrate.

This goes far, we think, to explain the absurdity, incongruity, and affectation of the works of which we are speaking. But there is yet another distinguishing quality for which we have not accounted — and that is a peculiar kind of vulgarity which pervades all their

varieties, and constitutes, perhaps, their most repulsive characteristic. We do not know very well how to describe this unfortunate peculiarity, except by saying that it is the vulgarity of pacific comfortable burghers, occupied with stuffing, cooking, and providing for their coarse personal accommodations. There certainly never were any men of genius who condescended to attend so minutely to the *non-naturals* of their heroes and heroines as the novelists of modern Germany. Their works smell, as it were, of groceries — of brown papers filled with greasy cakes and slices of bacon, — and fryings in frowsy back parlours. All the interesting recollections of childhood turn on remembered titbits and plunderings of savoury store-rooms. In the midst of their most passionate scenes, there is always a serious and affectionate notice of the substantial pleasures of eating and drinking. The raptures of a *tête-à-tête* are not complete without a bottle of nice wine and a "trim collation." Their very sages deliver their oracles over a glass of punch; and the enchanted lover finds new apologies for his idolatry in taking a survey of his mistress's "combs, soap, and towels, with the traces of their use." These baser necessities of our nature, in short, which all other writers who have aimed at raising the imagination or touching the heart, have kept studiously out of view, are ostentatiously brought forward, and fondly dwelt on by the pathetic authors of Germany.

We really cannot well account for this extraordinary taste. But we suspect it is owing to the importance that is really attached to those solid comforts and supplies of necessaries, by the greater part of the readers and writers of that country. Though there is a great deal of freedom in Germany, it operates less by raising the mass of the people to a potential equality with the nobles, than by securing to them their inferior and plebeian privileges; and consists rather in the immunities of their incorporated tradesmen, which may enable them to become rich as such, than in any general participation of national rights, by which they may aspire to dignity and elegance, as well as opulence and comfort. Now, the writers, as well as the readers in that country, belong almost entirely to the plebeian and vulgar class. Their learned men are almost all wofully poor and dependent; and the comfortable burghers, who buy entertaining books by the thousand at the Frankfort fair, probably agree with their authors in nothing so much as the value they set on those homely comforts to which their ambition is mutually limited by their condition; and enter into no part of them so heartily as those which set forth their paramount and continual importance.

It is time, however, that we should proceed to give some more particular account of the work which has given occasion to all these observations. Nor indeed have we any thing more of a general nature to premise, except that we really cannot join in the censure which we have found so generally bestowed on it for its alleged grossness and immorality. It is coarse, certainly, in its examples, and by no means very rigorous in its ethical precepts. But it is not worse in those respects than many works on which we pride ourselves at home — Tom Jones, for example, or Roderick Random. There are passages, no doubt, that would shock a delicate young lady; but to the bulk of male readers, for whom we suppose it was chiefly intended, we do not apprehend that it will either do any great harm, or give any great offence.

Wilhelm Meister is the son of a plodding merchant, in one of the middling towns of Germany, who, before he is out of his apprenticeship, takes a passion for play-going; which he very naturally follows up by engaging in an intrigue with a little pert actress, who performed young officers and other male parts with great success. The book opens with a supper at her lodgings; where he tells her a long silly story of his passion for puppet-shows in his childhood — how he stole a set of puppets out of a pantry of his mother's, into which he had slipped to filch sugar plums — how he fitted up a puppet-show of his own, in a garret of his father's house, and enacted David and Goliah, to the wonder and delight of the whole family, and various complaisant neighbours, who condescended to enact audience — how a half-pay lieutenant assisted him in painting the figures and nailing up the boards — and how out of all this arose his early taste for playhouses and actresses. This goodly

stuff extends through fifty mortal pages — all serious, solemn, and silly, far beyond the pitch of the worst gilt thing ever published by Mr. Newberry. As this is one of the most characteristic parts of the work, we must verify the account we have ventured to give of it by a few extracts. Wilhelm is describing the dress of the prophet Samuel in his Punch's Opera of Goliah, and telling "how the taffeta of the cassock had been taken from a gown of his grandmother's," when a noise is heard in the street, and the old maid Barbara informs them that

"The disturbance arose from a set of jolly companions who were just then sallying out of the Italian Tavern, hard by, where they had been busy discussing *fresh oysters*, a cargo of which had just arrived, and by no means sparing their champaign. 'Pity,' Mariana said, 'that we did not think of it in time; we might have had some entertainment to ourselves.' 'It is not yet too late,' said Wilhelm, giving Barbara a louis d'or: 'get us what we want; then come and take a share with us.' The old dame made speedy work; ere long a trimly covered table, with a neat collation, stood before the lovers. They made Barbara sit with them; *they ate and drank*, and enjoyed themselves. On such occasions, there is never want of enough to say. Mariana soon took up little Jonathan again, and the old dame turned the conversation upon Wilhelm's favorite topic. 'You were telling us,' she said, 'about the first exhibition of a puppet-show on Christmas-eve: I remember you were interrupted, just as the ballet was going to begin.' 'I assure you,' said Wilhelm, 'it went off quite well. And certainly the strange caperings of these Moors and Mooresses, these shepherds and shepherdesses, these dwarfs and dwarfesses, will never altogether leave my recollection while I live.' " &c. &c.

We spare our readers some dozen pages of doll-dressing and joinery, and come to the following choice passage.

"'In well adjusted and regulated houses,' continued Wilhelm, 'children have a feeling not unlike what I conceive rats and mice to have; they keep a sharp eye on all crevices and holes, where they may come at *any forbidden dainty;* they enjoy it also with a fearful, stolen satisfaction, which forms no small part of the happiness of childhood. More than any other of the young ones, I was in the habit of looking out attentively to see if I could notice *any cupboard left open*, or key standing in its lock. The more reverence I bore in my heart for those closed doors, on the outside of which I had to pass by for weeks and months, catching only a furtive glance when our mother now and then opened the consecrated place to take something from it,—the quicker was I to make use of any opportunities which the forgetfulness of our housekeepers at times afforded me. Among all the doors, that of the *store-room* was, of course, the one I watched most narrowly. Few of the joyful anticipations in life can equal the feeling which I used to have, when my mother happened to call me, that I might help her to carry out any thing, after which I might pick up a few dried plums, either with her kind permission, or by help of my own dexterity. The accumulated treasures of this chamber took hold of my imagination by their magnitude; the very fragrance exhaled by so multifarious a collection of sweet-smelling *spices* produced such a craving effect on me, that I never failed, when passing near, to linger for a little, and regale myself at least on the unbolted atmosphere. At length, one Sunday morning, my mother, being hurried by the ringing of the church-bells, forgot to take this precious key with her on shutting the door, and went away leaving all the house in a deep sabbath stillness. No sooner had I marked this oversight, than gliding softly once or twice to and from the place, I at last approached very gingerly, opened the door, and felt myself, after a single step, in immediate contact with these manifold and long-wished-for means of happiness. I glanced over *glasses*, *chests*, and *bags*, and *drawers*, and *boxes*, with a quick and doubtful eye, considering what I ought to take; turned finally to my dear withered plums, provided myself also with a few *dried apples*, and completed the forage with an orange-chip. I was quietly retreating with my plunder, when some little chests, lying piled over one another, caught my attention; the more so, as I noticed a wire with hooks at the end of it, sticking through the joint of the lid in one of them. Full of eager hopes, I opened this singular package; and judge of my emotions, when I found my glad world of heroes all sleeping safe within! I meant to pick out the topmost, and, having examined them, to pull up those below; but in this attempt, the wire got very soon entangled, and I fell into a fright and flutter, more particularly as the *cook* just then began making some stir in *the kitchen, which lay close by;* so that I had nothing for it but to squeeze the whole together, the best way I could, and to shut the chest, having stolen from it nothing but a little written book, which happened to be lying above, and contained the whole drama of Goliah and David. With this booty I made good my retreat into the garret.' "—Pp. 20—22.

This, we suppose, will be received as a sufficient specimen of the true German taste for comfits, cooking, and cockering. If any one should wish for a sample of pure childishness, or mere folly, there are pages on pages like the following.

"'It was natural that the operas, with their manifold adventures and vicissitudes, should attract me more than any thing beside. In these compositions, I found stormy seas; gods descending in chariots of cloud; and, what most of all delighted me, abundance

of thunder and lightning. I did my best with pasteboard, paint, and paper: I could make night very prettily; my lightning was fearful to behold; only my thunder did not always prosper, which however was of less importance. In operas, moreover, I found frequent opportunities of introducing my David and Goliah, persons whom the regular drama would hardly admit. Daily I felt more attachment for the hampered spot where I enjoyed so many pleasures; and, I must confess, *the fragrance* which the puppets had acquired from *the store-room* added not a little to my satisfaction.

"'The decorations of my theatre were now in a tolerable state of completeness. I had always had the knack of drawing with compasses, and clipping pasteboard, and colouring figures; and here it served me in good stead. But the more sorry was I, on the other hand, when, as frequently happened, my stock of actors would not suffice for representing great affairs.—My sisters dressing and undressing their dolls, awoke in me the project of furnishing my heroes by and by with garments, which might also be put off and on. Accordingly, I slit the scraps of cloth from off their bodies; tacked the fragments together as well as possible; saved a particle of money to buy new ribbons and lace; begged many a rag of taffeta; and so formed, by degrees, a full theatrical wardrobe, in which hoop-petticoats for the ladies were especially remembered.—My troop was now fairly provided with dresses for the most important piece, and you might have expected that henceforth one exhibition would follow close upon the heels of another. But it happened with me, as it often happens with children; they embrace wide plans, make mighty preparations, then a few trials, and the whole undertaking is abandoned. I was guilty of this fault,'" &c. &c.

But we must get on with our story. While he is lulling his little actress to sleep by these edifying discourses, and projecting to go on the stage along with her, our mercantile hero is suddenly sent off by his father, to collect debts from their country customers. The ingenious author, however, cannot possibly let him go, without presenting his readers with an elaborate character of the worthy old trader and his partner. Old Meister, it seems, had

"A peculiar inclination for magnificence, for whatever catches the eye and possesses at the same time real worth and durability. In his house, he would have all things solid and massive; his stores must be copious and rich, all his plate must be heavy, the furniture of his table must be costly. On the other hand, his guests were seldom invited; for *every dinner* was a festival, which, both for its expense and for its inconvenience, could not often be repeated. The economy of his house went on at a settled uniform rate, and every thing that moved or had a place in it was just what yielded no one any real enjoyment.

"The elder Werner, in his dark and hampered house, led quite another sort of life. The business of the day, in his narrow counting-room, at his ancient desk, once done, Werner liked *to eat well* and if possible *to drink better*. Nor could he fully enjoy *good things* in solitude; with his family he must always see at table his friends and any stranger that had the slightest connection with his house. *His chairs* were of unknown age and antic fashion, but he daily invited some *to sit on them. The dainty victuals* arrested the attention of his guests, and none remarked that they were served up in common ware. His cellar held no great stock of wine; but the emptied niches were usually filled by more of a superior sort."—Pp. 56, 57.

This must be admitted not to be the very best exemplification of the style noble. Nor is the outfit of the hero himself described in a vein more lofty.

"'He must prepare,' said Meister, 'and set forth as soon as possible. Where shall we get a horse for him to suit this business?—We shall not seek far. The shopkeeper in H——, *who owes us somewhat*, but is withal a good man, has offered me a horse instead of payment. My son knows it, and tells me it is a serviceable beast. He may fetch it himself; let him go with the diligence; the day after to-morrow he is back again betimes; we have *his saddle-bags* and letters made ready in the mean time; he can set out Monday morning.'"

The following passage, however, is a fairer sample of the average merit of the work; and exhibits some traits of vivacity and eloquence, though debased by that affectation of singularity, and that predominating and characteristic vulgarity, of which we have already said so much. He is describing his hero's hours of fascination, in the playhouse, and elsewhere.

"For hours he would stand by the sooty light frame, inhaling the vapour of tallow lamps, looking out at his mistress; and when she returned and cast a kindly glance upon him, he was himself lost in ecstacy, and, though close upon laths and bare spars, he seemed transported into paradise. The stuffed bunches of wool denominated lambs, the waterfalls of tin, the paper roses, and the one-sided huts of straw, awoke in him fair poetic visions of an old pastoral world. Nay, the very dancing girls, ugly as they were when seen at hand, did not always inspire him with disgust. They trod the same floor with Mariana. So true is it, that love, which alone can give their full charm to rose-bowers, myrtle-groves, and moonshine, can also communicate, even to shavings of wood and paper clippings, the aspect of animated nature. It is so *strong a spice*, that *tasteless*, or even *nauseous soups*, are by it rendered palatable!

"So potent a spice was certainly required to render tolerable, nay at last agreeable, the state in which he

usually found her chamber, not to say herself.—Brought up in a substantial burgher's house, cleanliness and order were the element in which he breathed; and inheriting as he did a portion of his father's taste for finery, it had always been his care, in boyhood, to furnish up his chamber, which he regarded as his little kingdom, in the stateliest fashion. He had got himself a carpet for the middle of his chamber, and a finer one for his table. He had also a white cap, which he wore straight up like a turban! And the sleeves of his night-gown he had caused to be cut short, in the mode of the Orientals. As a reason for this, he pretended, that long wide sleeves encumbered him in writing.

"In those times, how happy did he think the players, whom he saw possessed of so many splendid garments, trappings, and arms; and in the constant practice of a lofty demeanour, the spirit of which seemed to hold up a mirror of whatever, in the opinions, relations, and passions of men, was stateliest and most magnificent. Of a piece with this, thought Wilhelm, is also the player's domestic life; a series of dignified transactions and employments, whereof their appearance on the stage is but the outmost portion! Like as a mass of silver, long simmering about in the purifying furnace, at length gleams with a bright and beautiful tinge in the eye of the refiner, and shows him, at the same time, that the metal now is cleansed of all foreign mixture.

"Great, accordingly, was his surprise at first, when he found himself beside his mistress, and looked down, through the cloud that environed him, on tables, stools, and floor. The wrecks of a transient, light, and false decoration lay, like the glittering coat *of a skinned fish*, dispersed in wild disorder. The implements of personal cleanliness, combs, soap, *towels*, with *the traces of their use!* were not concealed. Music, portions of plays and pairs of shoes, washes and Italian flowers, pincushions, *hair-skewers*, *rouge-pots* and ribbons, books and straw hats; no article despised the neighbourhood of another; all were united by a common element, powder and dust. Yet as Wilhelm scarcely noticed in her presence aught except herself; nay, as all that had belonged to her, that she had touched, was dear to him, he came at last to feel, in this chaotic housekeeping, a charm which the proud pomp of his own habitation never had communicated. When, on this hand, he lifted aside her boddice, to get at the harpsichord; on that, threw her gown upon the bed, that he might find a seat; when she herself, with careless freedom, did not seek to hide from him *many a natural office! which, out of respect for the presence of a second person, is usually concealed:* he felt as if by all this he was coming nearer to her every moment, as if the communion betwixt them was fastening by invisible ties!"

In the midst of all these raptures, and just after he had been gallantly serenading her with the trumpets of a travelling showman, he detects his frail fair one in an intrigue with a rival; and falls into the most horrible agonies, the nature and violence of which the ingenious author illustrates by the following very obvious and dignified simile.

"As when by chance, in the preparation of *some artificial fireworks*, any part of the composition kindles before its time, and the skilfully bored and loaded barrels,—which, arranged, and burning after a settled plan, would have painted in the air a magnificently varying series of flaming images,—now hissing and roaring, promiscuously explode with a confused and dangerous crash; so, in our hero's case, did happiness and hope, pleasure and joys, realities and dreams, clash together with destructive tumult, all at once in his bosom."

He sets off, however, on his journey, and speedily gets into those more extensive theatrical connections, from which he can scarcely be said to escape till the end of the work. Nothing, indeed, can be more ludicrously unnatural than the luck he has in meeting with nothing but players, and persons connected with playhouses. On his very first sally, he falls in with a player who had run away with a young lady, whom he had captivated from the stage—and has scarcely had time to admire the mountain scenery among which he has to pass his first evening, when he is surprised to learn that the work-people in the adjacent village are about to act a play!—the whole process of which is described with as solemn a tediousness as his own original puppet-show. In the first town to which he descends, he meets first with a seducing company of tumblers and rope-dancers, reinforced by the valuable addition of a *Strong Man;* and in half an hour after makes acquaintance with a gay and bewitching damsel—who sends across the street to beg a nosegay she sees in his hands—and turns out, by the happiest accident in the world, to be a strolling actress, waiting there for the chance of employment. To give our readers an idea of the sort of descriptions with which the great writers in Germany now electrify their readers, we copy the following simple and impressive account of the procession of the tumbling party.

"Preceded by a drum, the manager advanced on horseback; he was followed by a female dancer mounted on a corresponding hack, and holding a child before her, all bedizened with ribbons and spangles. Next came the remainder of the troop on foot; some of them carrying children on their shoul-

ders in dangerous postures, yet smoothly and lightly; among these the young, dark, black-haired figure again attracted Wilhelm's notice.—Pickleherring ran gaily up and down the crowded multitude, distributing his hand-bills with much practical fun; here smacking the lips of a girl, there breeching a boy, and awakening generally among the people an invincible desire to know more of him.—On the painted flags, the manifold science of the company was visibly delineated."

The new actress, to whom he is introduced by another of the fraternity whom he finds at his inn, is named Philina; and her character is sketched and sustained throughout the book with far more talent than could be expected from any thing we have hitherto cited. She is gay, forward, graceful, false, and good-natured; with a daring and capricious pleasantry, which, if it often strikes us as unnatural, is frequently original and effective. Her debut, however, we must say, is in the author's most characteristic manner.

"She came out from her room in a pair of *tight* little slippers *with high heels*, to give them welcome. She had thrown a black mantle over her, above a white negligee, *not indeed superstitiously clean*, but which, for that very reason, gave her a more frank and *domestic air!* Her short dress did not hide a pair of the prettiest feet and ancles in the world.—'You are welcome,' she cried to Wilhelm, 'and I thank you for your charming flowers.' She led him into her chamber with the one hand, pressing the nosegay to her breast with the other. Being all seated, and got into a pleasant train of general talk, to which she had the art of giving a delightful turn, Laertes threw a handful of *gingerbread nuts* into her lap, and she immediately *began to eat them.* 'Look what a child this young gallant is!' she said: 'He wants to persuade you that I am fond of such confectionary; and it is himself that cannot live without *licking his lips* over something of this kind.'—'Let us confess,' replied Laertes, 'that, in this point, as in others, you and I go hand in hand. For example,' he continued, 'the weather is delightful to-day: what if we should take a drive into the country, and *eat our dinner* at the Mill?'"—Vol. i. pp. 143, 144.

Even at the mill they are fortunate enough to meet with a dramatic representation—some miners in the neighbourhood having, by great good luck, taken it into their heads to set forth the utility of their craft in a sort of recitative dispute with some unbelieving countrymen, and to sing through a part of Werner's Lectures on Mineralogy—upon which very natural and probable occurrence our apprentice comments, in this incredible manner.

"'In this little dialogue,' said Wilhelm, when seated at table, 'we have a lively proof how *useful* the theatre might be to all ranks; what advantage even *the State* might procure from it, if the occupations *trades*, and undertakings of men were all brought upon *the stage!* and presented on their praiseworthy side, in that point of view in which the State itself should honour and protect them! As matters stand, we exhibit only the ridiculous side of men.—Might it not be a worthy and pleasing task for a statesman to survey the natural and reciprocal influence of all classes on each other, and to guide some poet gifted with sufficient humour, in such labours as these? In this way, I am persuaded, many very entertaining, both agreeable and *useful* pieces, might be executed.'"

Such is the true sublime of German speculation! and it is by writing such sheer nonsense as this that men in that country acquire the reputation of great genius—and of uniting with pleasant inventions the most profound suggestions of political wisdom! Can we be wrong in maintaining, after this, that there are diversities of national taste that can never be reconciled, and scarcely ever accounted for?

On another day they go in a boat, and agree, by way of pastime, to "extemporise a Play," by each taking an ideal character, and attempting to sustain it—and this, "because it forces each to strain his fancy and his wit to the uttermost," is pronounced to be a most "comfortable occupation,"—and is thus moralized upon by a reverend clergyman who had joined their party, and enacted a country parson with great success.

"'I think this practice very useful among actors, and even in the company of friends and acquaintances. It is the best mode of drawing men out of themselves, and leading them, by a circuitous path, back into themselves again.'"

Their evening occupation is not less intellectual and dramatic; though it ends, we must own, with rather too much animation. They all meet to read a new play; and

—"between the third and fourth act, *the punch* arrived, in an ample bowl; and there being much fighting and drinking in the piece itself, nothing was more *natural* than that, on every such occurrence, the company should transport themselves into the situation of the heroes, should flourish and strike along with them, and *drink* long life to their favourites among the *dramatis personæ*.

"Each individual of the party was inflamed with the most noble fire of national spirit. How it gratified this German company to be poetically entertained, according to their own character, *on stuff of their own manufacture!* In particular, the vaults and caverns,

the ruined castles, the moss and hollow trees; but above all the nocturnal Gipsey-scenes, and the Secret Tribunal, produced a quite incredible effect.

"Towards the fifth act the approbation became more impetuous and louder; and at last, when the hero actually trampled down his oppressor, and the tyrant met his doom, the ecstacy increased to such a height, that all averred they had never passed such happy moments. Melina, whom *the liquor* had inspired, was the noisiest; and when the second bowl was empty, and midnight near, Laertes swore through thick and thin, that no living mortal was worthy ever more to put these glasses to his lips; and, so swearing, he pitched his own right over his head, through a window-pane, out into the street. The rest followed his example; and notwithstanding the protestations of the landlord, who came running in at the noise, *the punch-bowl itself*, never after this festivity to be polluted by unholy drink, was dashed into a thousand shreds. Philina, whose exhilaration was the least noticed, the other two girls by that time having laid themselves upon the sofa in no very elegant positions, maliciously encouraged her companions in their tumult.

"Meanwhile the town-guard had arrived, and were demanding admission to the house. Wilhelm, much heated by his reading, though he had drank but little, had enough to do with the landlord's help to content these people by money and good words, and afterwards to get the various members of his party sent home in that unseemly case."

Most of our readers probably think they have had enough of this goodly matter. But we cannot spare them a taste of the manner of courtship and flirtation that prevailed among these merry people. Philina one day made a garland of flowers for her own hair—and then another, which she placed on the brows of our hero.

"'And I, it appears, must go empty!' said Laertes.—'Not by any means; you shall not have reason to complain,' replied Philina, taking off the garland from her own head, and putting it on his.—'If we were rivals,' said Laertes, 'we might now dispute very warmly which of us stood higher in thy favour.'—'And the more fools you,' said she, whilst she bent herself towards him, and offered him *her lips to kiss*: and then immediately turned round, threw her arm about Wilhelm, and bestowed a kind salute on him also. 'Which of them *tastes best*?' said she, archly.—'Surprisingly!' exclaimed Laertes: 'it seems as if nothing else had ever such a tang of wormwood in it.'—'As little wormwood,' she replied, 'as any gift that a man may enjoy without envy and without conceit. But now,' cried she, 'I should like to have an hour's dancing, and after that we must look to our vaulters.'"

Another evening, as Wilhelm was sitting pensively on the bench at the inn door,—

"Philina came singing and skipping along through the front door. She sat down by him; nay, we might almost say, *on* him, so close did she press herself towards him; she leant upon his shoulders, began playing with his hair, patted him, and gave him the best words in the world. She begged of him to stay with them, and not leave her alone in that company, or she must die of *ennui*: she could not live any longer in the same house with Melina, and had come over to lodge in the other inn for that very reason.—He tried in vain to satisfy her with denials: to make her understand that he neither could nor would remain any longer. She did not cease her entreaties; nay, suddenly she threw her arm about his neck, and *kissed him* with the liveliest expression of fondness.—'Are you mad, Philina?' cried Wilhelm, endeavouring to disengage himself; 'to make *the open street* the scene of such caresses, which I nowise merit! Let me go; I cannot and I will not stay.'—'And I will hold thee fast,' said she, 'and kiss thee here on the open street, and kiss thee till thou promise what I want. I shall die of laughing,' she continued: 'By this familiarity the good people here must take me for thy wife of four weeks standing; and husbands that witness this touching scene will commend me to their wives as a pattern of childlike simple tenderness.'—Some persons were just then going by; she caressed him in the most graceful way; and he, to avoid giving scandal, was constrained to play the part of the patient husband. Then she made faces at the people, when their backs were turned; and, in the wildest humour, continued to commit all sorts of improprieties, till at last he was obliged to promise that he would not go that day, or the morrow, or the next day.—'You are a true clod,' said she, quitting him; 'and I am but a fool to spend so much kindness on you.'"—Vol. i. pp. 208, 209.

But we are tired of extracting so much trash, and must look out for something better. Would any one believe, that the same work which contains all these *platitudes* of vulgarity should have furnished our great novelist with one of his most fantastical characters, and Lord Byron with one of the most beautiful passages in his poetry? Yet so it is. The character of Fenella, in Peveril of the Peak, is borrowed almost entire from the Mignon of the work before us—and the prelude to the Bride of Abydos, beginning, "O know you the land where the cypress and myrtle?" is taken, with no improvement, from a little wild air which she sings. It is introduced here, too, with more propriety and effect than in the work of the noble author; for she is represented as having been stolen from Italy; and the song in this its original form, shadows out her desire to be restored to that delightful land and the

stately halls of her ancestors, — retracing her way by the wild passes of the Alps. It is but fair to the poetical powers of Goethe to give this beautiful song, as it is here, apparently, very ably translated.

"Know'st thou the land where the lemon-trees bloom?
Where the gold orange glows in the deep thicket's gloom?
Where a wind ever soft from the blue heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel and myrtle and rose?
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
My dearest and kindest, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the house, with its turreted walls,
Where the chambers are glancing, and vast are the halls?
Where the figures of marble look on me so mild,
As if thinking:-'Why thus did they use thee, poor child?'
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
My guide and my guardian, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the mountain, its cloud-cover'd arch,
Where the mules among mist o'er the wild torrent march?
In the clefts of it, dragons lie coil'd with their brood;
The rent crag rushes down, and above it the flood.
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
Our way leadeth: Father! O come let us go!"
Vol. i. p. 229.

The mystery that hangs over the original condition of Fenella in Rushin Castle, is discarded, indeed, as to Mignon, from the first; for she is first exhibited to us as *actually tumbling!* — and is rescued by our hero from the scourge of the master tumbler, who was dissatisfied with her performance. But the *fonds* of the character is the same. She is beautiful and dwarfish, unaccountable, and full of sensibility, and is secretly in love with her protector, who feels for her nothing but common kindness and compassion. She comes at last, to be sure, to be rather more mad than Fenella, and dies the victim of her hopeless passion. The following is the description, something overworked perhaps, and not quite intelligible, but, on the whole, most powerful and impressive, of this fairy creature's first indication of her love to her youthful deliverer.

"Nothing is more touching than the first disclosure of a love which has been nursed in silence, of a faith grown strong in secret, and which at last comes forth in the hour of need, and reveals itself to him who formerly has reckoned it of small account. The bud, which had been closed so long and firmly, was now ripe to burst its swathings, and Wilhelm's heart could never have been readier to welcome the impressions of affection.

"She stood before him, and noticed his disquietude. 'Master!' she cried, 'if thou art unhappy, what will become of Mignon?' 'Dear little creature,' said he, taking her hands, 'thou too art part of my anxieties. I must go.' She looked at his eyes, glistening with restrained tears, and knelt down with vehemence before him. He kept her hands; she laid her head upon his knees, and remained quite still. He played with her hair, patted her, and spoke kindly to her. She continued motionless for a considerable time. At last he felt a sort of palpitating movement in her, which began very softly, and then by degrees with increasing violence diffused itself over all her frame. 'What ails thee, Mignon?' cried he; 'what ails thee?' She raised up her little head, looked at him, and all at once laid her hand upon her heart, with the countenance of one repressing the utterance of pain. He raised her up, and she fell upon his breast; he pressed her towards him, and kissed her. She replied not by any pressure of the hand, by any motion whatever. She held firmly against her heart; and all at once gave a cry, which was accompanied by spasmodic movements of the body. She started up, and immediately fell down before him, as if broken in every joint. It was an excruciating moment! 'My child!' cried he, raising her up, and clasping her fast; 'My child, what ails thee?' The palpitations continued, spreading from the heart over all the lax and powerless limbs; she was merely hanging in his arms! All at once she again became quite stiff, like one enduring the sharpest corporeal agony; and soon with a new vehemence all her frame once more became alive; and she threw herself about his neck, like a bent spring that is closing; while in her soul as it were a strong rent took place, and at the same moment a stream of tears flowed from her shut eyes into his bosom. He held her fast. She wept! and no tongue can express the force of these tears. Her long hair had loosened, and was hanging down before her; it seemed as if her whole being was melting incessantly into a brook of tears! Her rigid limbs were again become relaxed; her inmost soul was pouring itself forth! In the wild confusion of the moment, Wilhelm was afraid she would dissolve in his arms, and leave nothing there for him to grasp. He held her faster and faster. 'My child!' cried he, 'my child!' Her tears continued flowing. At last she raised herself; a faint gladness shone upon her face. 'My father!' cried she, 'thou wilt not forsake me? Wilt be my father? I am thy child.'"

We cannot better illustrate the strange inconsistency of our author's manner, than by subjoining to this highly passionate and really

beautiful scene, his account of the *egg dance*, which this little creature performs a few days after, for her friend's entertainment.

"She came into his room one evening carrying a little carpet below her arm, which she spread out upon the floor. She then brought four candles, and placed one upon each corner of the carpet. A little basket of eggs, which she next carried in, made her purpose clearer. Carefully measuring her steps, she then walked to and fro on the carpet, spreading out the eggs in certain figures and positions; which done, she called in a man that was waiting in the house, and could play on the violin. He retired with his instrument into a corner; she tied a band about her eyes, gave a signal, and, like a piece of wheel-work set a-going, she began moving the same instant as the music, accompanying her beats and the notes of the tune with the strokes of a pair of castanets.

"Lightly, nimbly, quickly, and with hairsbreadth accuracy, she carried on the dance. She skipped so sharply and surely along between the eggs, and trode so closely down besides them, that you would have thought every instant she must trample one of them in pieces, or kick the rest away in her rapid turns. By no means! She touched no one of them, though winding herself through their mazes with all kinds of steps, wide and narrow, nay even with leaps, and at last half kneeling.—Constant as the movement of a clock, she ran her course; and the strange music at each repetition of the tune gave a new impulse to the dance, recommencing and again rushing off as at first.

"The dance being ended, she rolled the eggs together softly with her foot into a little heap, left none behind, harmed none; then placed herself beside it, taking the bandage from her eyes, and concluding her performance with a little bow."

Soon after this, the whole player party are taken to the castle of a wealthy Count, to assist him in entertaining a great Prince and his numerous attendants, from whom he was expecting a visit. Our hero is prevailed on to go also, and takes Mignon along with him—and though treated with some indignity, and very ill lodged and attended, condescends to compose a complimentary piece in honour of the illustrious stranger, and to superintend, as well as to take a part in, all the private theatricals. By degrees, however, he steals into the favour of the more distinguished guests—is employed to read to the Countess, and at last is completely fascinated with her elegance and beauty—while, as it turns out, he has unconsciously made some impression on her innocent heart. He is not a little assisted in his designs, whatever they may have been, by a certain intriguing Baroness, who dresses him out, on one occasion, in the Count's clothes, when that worthy person was from home, intended to send the Countess in upon him, by telling her that her lord was suddenly returned. But this scheme is broken up by the unexpected verification of her fable: for the Count actually returns at the moment; and on stepping into his dressing-room, is so much terrified at seeing *himself* sitting quietly in an arm-chair by the fire, that he runs out in a great fright, and soon after becomes a visionary, and joins the insane flock of Swedenborg. A critical scene, however, is at last brought on accidentally—and though the transaction recorded is by no means quite correct, we cannot help inserting the account of it, as a very favourable specimen of the author's most animated and most natural style. Wilhelm had been engaged in reading, as usual, to the Countess and her female party, when they are interrupted by the approach of visitors. The Baroness goes out to receive them:

"And the Countess, while about to shut her writing-desk, which was standing open, took up her casket, and put some other rings upon her finger. 'We are soon to part,' said she, keeping her eyes upon the casket: 'accept a memorial of a true friend, who wishes nothing more earnestly, than that you may always prosper.' She then took out a ring, which, underneath a crystal, bore a little plait of woven hair, beautifully set with diamonds. She held it out to Wilhelm, who, on taking it, knew neither what to say nor do, but stood as if rooted to the ground. The Countess shut her desk, and sat down upon the sofa. 'And I must go empty?' said Philina, kneeling down at the Countess's right hand. 'Do but look at the man! he carries such a store of words in his mouth, when no one wants to hear them; and now he cannot stammer out the poorest syllable of thanks. Quick, sir! Express your services, by way of pantomime at least; and if to-day you can invent nothing; then, for Heaven's sake, be my imitator!' Philina seized the right hand of the Countess, and kissed it warmly. Wilhelm sank upon his knee, laid hold of the left, and pressed it to his lips. The Countess seemed embarrassed, yet without displeasure. 'Ah!' cried Philina; 'so much splendor of attire I may have seen before; but never one so fit to wear it. What bracelets, but also what a hand! What a neck-dress, but also what a bosom!' 'Peace, little cozener!' said the Countess. 'Is this his Lordship then?' said Philina, pointing to a rich medallion, which the Countess wore on her left side, by a particular chain 'He is painted in his bridal dress,' replied the Countess. 'Was he then so young?' inquired Philina; 'I know it is but a year or two since you were married.' 'His

youth must be placed to the artist's account,' replied the lady. 'He is a handsome man,' observed Philina. 'But was there never,' she continued, placing her hand upon the Countess's heart, 'never any other image that found its way in secret hither?' 'Thou art very bold, Philina,' cried she; 'I have spoiled thee. Let me never hear such another speech.' 'If you are angry, then am I unhappy,' said Philina, springing up and hastening from the room.

"Wilhelm still held that lovely hand in both of his. His eyes were fixed upon the bracelet-clasp; he noticed, with extreme surprise, that his initials were traced on it, in lines of brilliants. 'Have I then,' he modestly inquired, 'your own hair in this precious ring?' 'Yes,' replied she in a faint voice; then suddenly collecting herelf, she said, and pressed his hand: 'Arise, and fare you well!' 'Here is my name,' cried he, 'by the most curious chance!' He pointed to the bracelet-clasp. 'How?' cried the Countess: 'it is the cipher of a female friend!' 'They are the initials of my name. Forget me not. Your image is engraven on my heart, and will never be effaced. Farewell! I must be gone.' He kissed her hand, and meant to rise; but as in dreams, some strange thing fades and changes into something stranger, and the succeeding wonder takes us by surprise; so, without knowing how it happened, he found the Countess in his arms! Her lips were resting upon his, and their warm mutual kisses were yielding them that blessedness which mortals sip from the topmost sparkling foam on the freshly poured cup of love!

"Her head lay upon his shoulder; the disordered ringlets and ruffles were forgotten. She had thrown her arm around him; he clasped her with vivacity; and pressed her again and again to his breast. O that such a moment could but last for ever! And wo to envious fate that shortened even this brief moment to our friends! How terrified was Wilhelm, how astounded did he start from this happy dream, when the Countess, with a shriek, on a sudden tore herself away, and hastily pressed her hand against her heart. He stood confounded before her; she held the other hand upon her eyes, and, after a moment's pause, exclaimed: 'Away! leave me! delay not!' He continued standing. 'Leave me!' she cried; and taking off her hand from her eyes, she looked at him with an indescribable expression of countenance; and added, in the most tender and affectionate voice: 'Fly, if you love me.' Wilhelm was out of the chamber, and again in his room, before he knew what he was doing. Unhappy creatures! What singular warning of chance or of destiny tore them asunder."

These questionable doings are followed up by long speculations on the art of playing, and the proper studies and exercises of actors. But in the end of these, which are mystical and prosing enough, we come suddenly upon what we do not hesitate to pronounce the most able, eloquent, and profound exposition of the character of Hamlet, as conceived by our great dramatist, that has ever been given to the world. In justice to the author, we shall give a part of this admirable critique. He first delineates him as he was before the calamities of his family.

"'Soft, and from a noble stem, this royal flower had sprung up under the immediate influences of majesty: the idea of moral rectitude with that of princely elevation, the feeling of the good and dignified with the consciousness of high birth, had in him been unfolded simultaneously. He was a prince, by birth a prince; and he wished to reign, only that good men might be good without obstruction. Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth and the joy of the world.

"'Without any prominent passion, his love for Ophelia was a still presentiment of sweet wants. His zeal in knightly accomplishments was not entirely his own; it needed to be quickened and inflamed by praise bestowed on others for excelling in them. He was calm in his temper, artless in his conduct, neither pleased with idleness, nor too violently eager for employment. The routine of a university he seemed to continue when at court. He possessed more mirth of humour than of heart; he was a good companion, pliant, courteous, discreet, and able to forget and forgive an injury; yet never able to unite himself with those who overstept the limits of the right, the good, and the becoming.'"

He then considers the effects of the misfortunes of his house on such a disposition. The first is the death of his father, by which his fair hopes of succession are disappointed.

"'He is now poor in goods and favour, and a stranger in the scene which from youth he had looked upon as his inheritance. His temper here assumes its first mournful tinge. He feels that now he is not more, that he is less, than a private nobleman; he offers himself as the servant of every one; he is not courteous and condescending, he is needy and degraded.

"'The second stroke that came upon him wounded deeper, bowed still more. It was the marriage of his mother. The faithful tender son had yet a mother, when his father passed away. He hoped, in the company of his surviving and noble-minded parent, to reverence the heroic form of the departed; but his mother too he loses! and it is something worse than death that robs him of her. The trustful image, which a good child loves to form of his parents, is gone. With the dead there is no help—on the living no hold! She also is a woman, and her name is Frailty, like that of all her sex.

"'Figure to yourselves this youth,' cried he, 'this son of princes; conceive him vividly, bring his state before your eyes, and then observe him when he learns that his father's spirit walks! Stand by him in the terrors of the night, when the venerable ghost itself

appears before him. A horrid shudder passes over him; he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him, he follows it, and hears. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge, and the piercing oft-repeated prayer, Remember me!

"'And when the ghost has vanished, *who* is it that stands before us? A young hero panting for vengeance? A prince by birth, rejoicing to be called to punish the usurper of his crown? No! Trouble and astonishment take hold of the solitary young man: he grows bitter against smiling villains, swears that he will not forget the spirit, and concludes with the expressive ejaculation:

The time is out of joint: O! cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!

"'In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet's whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakspeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul *unfit* for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. An oak-tree is planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered! A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils; is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind.'"

There is nothing so good as this in any of our own commentators — nothing at once so poetical, so feeling, and so just. It is inconceivable that it should have been written by the chronicler of puppet-shows and gluttonous vulgarities.

The players, with our hero at their head, now travel across the country, rehearsing, lecturing, squabbling, and kissing as usual. There is war however on their track; and when seated pleasantly at dinner in a wood on their journey, they are attacked by some armed marauders, robbed of their goods, and poor Wilhelm left wounded and senseless on the field. What follows, though not very original in conception, is described with effect and vivacity.

"On again opening his eyes, he found himself in the strangest posture. The first thing that pierced the dimness which yet swam before his vision, was Philina's face bent down over his. He felt himself weak; and making a movement to rise, he discovered that he was in Philina's lap; into which, indeed, he again sank down. She was sitting on the sward. She had softly pressed towards her the head of the fallen young man; and made for him an easy couch as far as this was in her power. Mignon was kneeling with dishevelled and bloody hair at his feet, which she embraced with many tears. Philina let him know that this true-hearted creature, seeing her friend wounded, and in the hurry of the instant, being able to think of nothing which would staunch the blood, had taken her own hair that was flowing round her head, and tried to stop the wounds with it; but had soon been obliged to give up the vain attempt; that afterwards they had bound with moss and dried mushrooms, Philina herself giving up her neck-kerchief for that purpose.

"After a few moments, a young lady issued from the thickets, riding on a gray courser, and accompanied by an elderly gentleman and some cavaliers. Grooms, servants, and a troop of hussars closed up the rear. Philina stared at this phenomenon, and was about to call, and entreat the Amazon for help; when the latter, turning her astonished eyes on the group, instantly checked her horse, rode up to them, and halted. She inquired eagerly about the wounded man, whose posture in the lap of this light-minded Samaritan seemed to strike her as peculiarly strange. 'Is it your husband?' she inquired of Philina. 'Only a friend,' replied the other, with a tone that Wilhelm liked extremely ill. He had fixed his eyes upon the soft, elevated, calm, sympathising features of the stranger: he thought he had never seen aught nobler or more lovely. Her shape he could not see: it was hid by a man's great coat, which she seemed to have borrowed from some of her attendants, to screen her from the chill evening air." — Vol. ii. pp. 38—43.

A surgeon in this compassionate party examines his wounds, and the lovely young woman, after some time

— "turned to the old gentleman, and said, 'Dear uncle, may I be generous at your expense?' She took off the great coat, with the visible intention to give it to the stript and wounded youth.

"Wilhelm, whom the healing look of her eyes had hitherto held fixed, was now, as the surtout fell away, astonished at her lovely figure. She came near, and softly laid the coat above him. At this moment, as he tried to open his mouth and stammer out some words of gratitude, the lively impression of her presence worked so strongly on his senses, already caught and bewildered, that all at once it appeared to him as if her head were encircled with rays; and a glancing light seemed by degrees to spread itself over all her form! At this moment the surgeon, endeavouring to extract the ball from his wound, gave him a sharper twinge: the angel faded away from the eyes of the fainting patient: he lost all consciousness; and, on returning to himself, the horsemen and coaches, the

fair one with her attendants, had vanished like a dream.

"He, meanwhile, wrapt up in his warm surtout, was lying peacefully upon the litter. An electric warmth seemed to flow from the fine wool into his body: in short, he felt himself in the most delightful frame of mind. The lovely being, whom this garment lately covered, had affected him to the very heart. He still saw the coat falling down from her shoulders; saw that noble form, begirt with radiance, stand beside him; and his soul hied over rocks and forests, on the footsteps of his departed benefactress." — Vol. ii. pp. 45—47.

The party afterwards settles in a large town, under the charge of a regular manager. There are endless squabbles and intrigues, and interminable dissertations on acting. Our hero performs Hamlet with great applause, and gets tipsy with the whole company at a riotous supper after it — the rehearsals, the acting, and the said supper being all described with great spirit and animation. We may extract the end of the latter.

"Amid the pleasures of the entertainment, it had not been noticed that the children and the Harper were away. Ere long they made their entrance, and were blithely welcomed by the company. They came in together, very strangely decked; Felix was beating a triangle, Mignon a tambourine; the old man had his large harp hung round his neck, and was playing on it whilst he carried it before him. They marched round and round the table, and sang a multitude of songs. *Eatables* were handed to them; and the guests believed they could not do a greater kindness to the children, than by giving them as much *sweet wine* as they chose to drink. For the company themselves had not by any means neglected a stock *of savory flasks*, presented by the two amateurs, which had arrived this evening in baskets. The children tripped about and sang; Mignon in particular was frolicsome beyond what any one had ever seen her. She beat the tambourine with the greatest liveliness and grace: now, with her finger pressed against the parchment, she hummed across it quickly to and fro; now rattled on it with her knuckles, now with the back of her hand; nay sometimes, with alternating rhythm, she struck it first against her knee and then against her head; and anon twirling it in her hand, she made the shells jingle by themselves; and thus, from the simplest instrument, elicited a great variety of tones. The company, much as they had laughed at her at first, were in fine obliged to curb her. But persuasion was of small avail; for she now sprang up, and raved, and shook her tambourine, and capered round the table. With her hair flying out behind her, with her head thrown back, and her limbs as it were cast into the air, she seemed like one of those antique Mænades, whose wild and all but impossible positions still strike us with astonishment when seen on classic monuments, &c.

"It was late; and Aurelia, perhaps the only one retaining self-possession in the party, now stood up, and signified that it was time to go. By way of termination, Serlo gave a firework, or what resembled one; for he could imitate the sound of crackers, rockets, and fire-wheels with his mouth, in a style of nearly inconceivable correctness. You had only to shut your eyes, and the deception was complete. On reaching the open air, almost all of them observed that *they had drank too liberally*. They glided asunder without taking leave.

"The instant Wilhelm gained his room, he stripped, and, extinguishing his candle, hastened into bed. Sleep was overpowering him without delay, when a noise, that seemed to issue from behind the stove, aroused him. In the eye of his heated fancy, the image of the harnessed king was hovering near him: he sat up that he might address the spectre; but he felt himself encircled with soft arms, and his mouth was shut with kisses, which he had not force to push away!" — Vol. ii. pp. 205—209.

In this division of the story we hear a great deal of an Aurelia — a sister of the manager's — an actress of course — but a woman of talent and sentiment — who had been perfidiously left by her lover — and confided all the bitterness of her heart to our hero. There is a good deal of eloquence in some of these dialogues — and a nearer approach to nature, than in any other part of the work. This is a sample of them.

"'One more forsaken woman in the world!' you will say. You are a man. You are thinking: 'What a noise she makes, the fool, about a necessary evil, which certainly as death awaits women when such is the fidelity of men!' Oh, my friend! if my fate were common I would gladly undergo a common evil. But it is so singular: why cannot I present it to you in a mirror, why not command some one to tell it you? Oh, had I, had I been seduced, surprised, and afterwards forsaken! there would then be comfort in despair: but I am far more miserable; I have been my own deceiver; I have wittingly betrayed myself; and this, this is what shall never be forgiven me.'

"'I hate the French language,' she added, 'from the bottom of my soul. During the period of our kindliest connection, he wrote in German, and what genuine, powerful, cordial German!' It was not till he wanted to get quit of me, that he began seriously to write in French. I marked, I felt what he meant. What he would have blushed to utter in his mother tongue, he could by this means write with a quiet conscience. It is the language of reservations, equivocations, and lies: it is a *perfidious* language! Heaven be praised! I cannot find another word to express this *perfide* of theirs in all its compass. Our

poor *treulos*, the *faithless* of the English, are innocent as babes besides it. *Perfide* means faithless with enjoyment, with insolence and malice. How enviable is the culture of a nation that can figure out so many shades of meaning by a single word! French is exactly the language of the world; worthy to become the universal language, that all may have it in their power to cheat, and cozen, and betray each other! His French letters were always smooth and pleasant while you read them. If you chose to believe it, they sounded warmly, even passionately: but if you examined narrowly, they were but phrases, accursed phrases! He has spoiled my feelings to the whole language, to French literature, even to the beautiful delicious expressions of noble souls which may be found in it. I shudder when a French word is spoken in my hearing."

What follows is still more in the raving style — and we suppose is much more admired in Germany.

"She sunk in thought; then, after a brief pause, she exclaimed with violence: 'You are accustomed to have all things fly into your arms. No, you cannot feel; no *man* is in a case to feel the worth of a woman that can reverence herself. By all the holy angels, by all the images of blessedness which a pure and kindly heart creates, there is not any thing more heavenly than the soul of a woman that gives herself to the man she loves! We are cold, proud, high, clear-sighted, wise, while we deserve the name of women; and all these qualities we lay down at your feet, the instant that we love, that we hope to excite a return of love. Oh! how have I cast away my entire existence wittingly and willingly! But now will I despair, purposely despair. There is no drop of blood within me but shall suffer, no fibre that I will not punish. Smile, I pray you; laugh at this theatrical display of passion.'

"Wilhelm was far enough from any tendency to laugh. This horrible, half-natural, half-factitious condition of his friend afflicted him but too deeply. She looked him intently in the face, and asked: 'Can you say that you never yet betrayed a woman, that you never tried with thoughtless gallantry, with false asseverations, with cajoling oaths, to wheedle favour from her?' 'I can,' said Wilhelm, 'and indeed without much vanity: my life has been so simple and sequestered, I have had but few enticements to attempt such things. And what a warning, my beautiful, my noble friend, is this melancholy state in which I see you! Accept of me a vow, which is suited to my heart, &c.; no woman shall receive an acknowledgment of love from my lips, to whom I cannot consecrate my life!' She looked at him with a wild indifference; and drew back some steps as he offered her his hand. ''Tis of no moment!' cried she: 'so many women's tears more or fewer! the ocean will not swell by reason of them! And yet,' continued she, 'among thousands *one* woman saved! that still is something: among thousands one honest man discovered; this is not to be refused. Do you know then what you promise?' 'I know it,' answered Wilhelm with a smile, and holding out his hand. 'I accept it then,' said she, and made a movement with her right hand, as if meaning to take hold of his: but instantly she darted it into her pocket, pulled out her dagger quick as lightning, and scored with the edge and point of it across his hand! He hastily drew back his arm, but the blood was already running down.

"'One must mark you men rather sharply, if one means you to take heed,' cried she with a wild mirth, which soon passed into a quick assiduity. She took her handkerchief, and bound his hand with it to staunch the fast-flowing blood. 'Forgive a half-crazed being,' cried she, 'and regret not these few drops of blood. I am appeased, I am again myself. On my knees will I crave your pardon: leave me the comfort of healing you.'" — Vol. ii. pp. 128—132.

Alternating with these agonies, we have many such scenes as the following.

"''Tis a pity, I declare,' said Serlo to Philina, 'that we have no ballet; else I would make you dance me a *pas de deux* with your first, and another with your second husband: the harper might be lulled to sleep by the measure; and your bits of feet and ancles would look so pretty, tripping to and fro upon the side stage.' 'Of my ancles you do not know much,' replied she snappishly; 'and as to my bits of feet,' cried she, hastily reaching below the table, *pulling off her slippers*, and holding them out to Serlo; 'here are the cases of them, and I give you leave to find me nicer ones.' 'It were a serious task,' said he, looking at the elegant half-shoes. 'In truth, one does not often meet with any thing so dainty.' They were of Parisian workmanship; Philina had obtained them as a present from the countess, a lady whose foot was celebrated for its beauty. 'A charming thing!' cried Serlo; 'my heart leaps at the sight of them.' 'What gallant throbs!' replied Philina. 'There is nothing in the world beyond a pair of slippers,' said he; 'of such pretty manufacture, in their proper time and place ——' Philina took her slippers from his hands, crying, 'You have squeezed them all! They are far too wide for me!' She played with them, and rubbed the soles of them together. 'How hot it is!' cried she, clapping the sole upon her cheek, then again rubbing, and holding it to Serlo. He was innocent enough to stretch out his hand to feel the warmth. 'Clip! clap!' cried she, giving him a smart rap over the knuckles with the heel, that he screamed and drew back his hand; 'I will teach you how to use my slippers better.' 'And I will teach you also how to use old folk like children,' cried the other; then sprang up, seized her, and plundered many a kiss, every one of which she artfully contested with a show of serious reluctance. In this romping her long hair got loose, and floated round the group; *the chair overset*; and Aurelia, inwardly indignant at such rioting, arose in great vexation." — Vol. ii. pp. 166, 167.

This said Aurelia has a little boy called

Felix — and dying at last of her sorrow, leaves a letter for her betrayer, which she had engaged our hero to deliver to him in person. But between the giving and execution of this mandate, the ingenious author has interpolated a separate piece, which he has entitled "the confessions of a fair Saint"—and which has no other apparent connection with the story, than that poor Aurelia's physician had lent it to her to read in her last moments. Though eminently characteristic of the author, it need not detain us long. The first part is full of vulgarity and obscurity — the last absolutely unintelligible. This fair saint lived in her youth among a set of people whom she calls German courtiers, and says, with singular delicacy,

"I look upon it as a providential guidance, that none of these many handsome, rich, and well-dressed men could take my fancy. They were rakes, and did not hide it; this scared me back: their speech was frequently adorned with double meanings; this offended me, and made me act with coldness towards them. Many times their improprieties surpassed belief! and I did not prevent myself from being rude. *Besides*, my ancient counsellor had once in confidence contrived to tell me, that, with the greater part of these lewd fellows, *health* as well as virtue was in danger! I now shudder at the sight of them; I was afraid, if one of them in any way approached too near me. I would not touch their cups or glasses, even the chairs they had been sitting on! Thus morally and physically I remained apart from them."

She then falls in love with a certain Narciss, with whom her first acquaintance was first formed at a ball, where, "after having jigged it for a while in the crowd, he came into the room where I was, in consequence of *a bleeding at the nose*, with which he had been overtaken, and began to speak about a multitude of things!" In spite of this promising beginning, however, the mutual flame is not caught till they meet again at a dinner, where,

"Even at table, we had many things to suffer; for several of the gentlemen *had drunk too much*: and after rising from it, they insisted on a game at *forfeits*. It went on with great vivacity and tumult. Narciss had lost a forfeit: they ordered him, by way of penalty to whisper something pleasant in the ear of every member of the company. It seems, he staid too long beside my neighbour, the lady of a captain. The latter on a sudden struck him such a *box with his fist*, that the powder flew about my eyes and blinded me! When I had cleared my sight, and in some degree recovered from my terror, I saw that both of them had drawn their swords. Narciss was bleeding; and the other, mad with wine, and rage, and jealousy, could scarcely be held back by all the company: I seized Narciss, led him by the arm up stairs; and as I did not think my friend even here in safety from his frantic enemy, I shut the door and bolted it."

After this they are soon betrothed; but she grows Methodistical, and he cold,—and their engagement flies off; — and then she becomes pious in good earnest, and is by turns a *Hallean* and a *Herrnhuther*, and we do not know how many other things, and raves through seventy or eighty pages, of which we have not courage to attempt any analysis.

We now get rid in a great degree of plays and players, and emerge into the region of mysticism. Wilhelm goes to the country to deliver Aurelia's letter to Lothario; but finds that worthy Baron so busy preparing to fight a duel, that he cannot find an opportunity to discharge himself of his mission. He remains, however, in the castle, and soon finds himself in the midst of several peremptory and omniscient people, who make what they please of him. In discourse, they happen to make mention of a certain Count, a brother-in-law of Lothario's, who had grown melancholy, and talked of joining the Herrnhuthers, with his beautiful wife. Wilhelm immediately inquires what Count they are speaking of.

"'One whom you know very well,' said Jarno. 'You yourself are the ghost that have chased the unhappy wiseacre into piety; you are the villain who have brought his pretty wife to such a state, that she inclines accompanying him.' 'And she is Lothario's sister?' cried our friend. 'No other!'—'and Lothario knows—?' 'The whole.' 'O let me fly!' cried Wilhelm: 'How shall I appear before him? What can he say to me?' 'That no man should cast a stone at his brother; that when one composes long speeches, with a view to shame his neighbours, he should speak them to a looking-glass.' 'Do you know that also?' 'And many things beside,' said Jarno with a smile."

From this moment our hero gives up the idea of reproaching the Baron with his perfidy to Aurelia, and offers his services to decoy away from him another love-sick damsel who is then in the house, and whose hysterics, it is thought, might retard the cure of the wound he has just received in his duel. He takes her away, accordingly, under some false pretext, to a certain Theresa, another deserted love of Lothario, and who is distinguished by a singular

passion for housekeeping and all manner of economical employments. The conception of this character, which is dwelt on at great length, is one of the most glaring absurdities and affectations in the book. The author has actually endeavoured, in serious earnest, to exalt the common qualifications of a domestic drudge, or notable housewife, into heroic virtues, and to elaborate his favourite heroine out of these base materials. The whole scene is tinged, even beyond the average standard of the book, with the apparently opposite faults of vulgarity and extravagance. This is the debut.

"She entered Wilhelm's room, inquiring if he wanted any thing. 'Pardon me,' said she, 'for having lodged you in a chamber which *the smell of paint* still renders disagreeable: my little dwelling is but just made ready; you are handselling this room, which is appointed for my guests; also, you will have many things to pardon. My *cook has run away* from me, at this unseasonable time; and a serving-man has bruised his hand. I might be forced to manage all myself; and if it were so, we must just put up with it. One is plagued with nobody so much as with one's servants: not one of them will serve you, scarcely even serve himself.' She said a good deal more on different matters: in general she seemed to like to speak."

They then take a walk together, and, on their return,

"Wilhelm testified his admiration at her skill in husbandry concerns. 'Decided inclination, early opportunity, external impulse, and continued occupation in a useful business,' said she, 'make many things, which were at first far harder, possible in life.' On returning home, she sent him to her little garden. Here he scarce could turn himself, so narrow were the walks, so thickly was it sown and planted. On looking over to the court, he could not keep from smiling: the *firewood* was lying there, as accurately sawed, split, and piled, as if it had been part of the building, and had been intended to abide there constantly. The *tubs* and implements, all clean, were standing in their places: the house was *painted white and red*; it was *really pleasant* to behold! 'Whatever can be done by handicraft, that knows not beautiful proportions, but that labours for convenience, cheerfulness, and durability, appeared united on the spot."

She then *puts on men's clothes!* which, indeed, she generally wore as most handy; and they have another walk, in the course of which she tells him her story. She was nobly born. But

"'From my earliest youth, the *kitchen*, the store-room, the granaries, the field, were my selected element! Cleanliness and order in the house seemed, even while I was playing in it, to be my peculiar instinct, my peculiar object. This tendency gave pleasure to my father; and he by degrees afforded it the most suitable employment. When we were by ourselves, when walking through the fields, when I was helping to examine his accounts, I could perceive what happiness he was enjoying.'"

Her mother took great delight in a private theatre—"But I," she observed, "very seldom stayed among the audience; however, *I always snuffed their candles*, and *prepared the supper*,—and put the wardrobe in order." After her father's death her mother wastes the property, and she goes as a kind of steward or manager, into the family of a neighbouring lady, whom "she faithfully assisted in *struggling* with her steward and domestics."

"'I am neither of a niggardly nor grudging temper; but we women are accustomed to insist, more earnestly than men, that *nothing shall be wasted.* Embezzlement of all sorts is intolerable to us. Here I was in my element once more'"

This is enough, we suppose, for the character of Theresa. But the accomplished Lothario falls in love with this angel, and here are the grounds on which he justifies his preference.

"'What is the highest happiness of mortals, if not to execute what we consider right and good; to be really masters of the means conducive to our aims? And where should or can our first and nearest aims be but *within the house!* All those indispensable, and still to be renewed *supplies*, where do we expect, do we require to find them, if it is not in the place where we arise and where we go to sleep, where *kitchen* and *cellar*, and every species of accommodation for ourselves and ours is to be always ready? What unvarying activity is needed to conduct this constantly recurring series in unbroken living order! It is when a woman has attained this inward mastery, that she truly makes the husband whom she loves a master: her attention will acquire all sorts of knowledge for her; her activity will turn them all to profit. Thus is she dependent upon no one; and she procures her husband genuine independence, that which is interior and domestic: whatever he possesses he beholds secured; what he earns, well employed,'" &c.

They are engaged accordingly to be married; but the match is broken off by an unlucky discovery, that this gay Lothario had formerly had a love affair with Theresa's mother, when she was travelling abroad under a feigned name! We are rather surprised, we confess, at the notable fair one's delicacy, in considering this as a bar to their union—for her notions

on the subject of conjugal fidelity must be owned to be sufficiently liberal, having intimated, in reference to her lover's subsequent intrigues with Aurelia and others, that

"Even if he had been her husband, she would have had sufficient spirit to endure a matter of this kind, if *it had not troubled her domestic order:* at least she often used to say, that a wife, who properly conducted her economy, should take no umbrage at *such little fancies of her husband*, but be always certain that he would return."

Our hero returns to the castle quite enchanted with this paragon of women — and his rising flame is fed by the conversation which takes place with regard to her. After amusing themselves with each telling confidentially their pretty love adventures, the accomplished Lothario holds forth in this edifying and decided manner.

"'It is true,' observed Lothario, 'there can scarcely any feeling in the world be more agreeable, than when the heart, after a pause of indifference, again opens to love for some *new* object. Yet I would for ever have renounced *that* happiness, had fate been pleased to unite me with Theresa. What a heaven had I figured for myself beside Theresa! Not the heaven of an enthusiastic bliss; but of a *sure* life on earth: *order* in prosperity, courage in adversity, *care* for the smallest, and a spirit capable of comprehending and *managing* the greatest. You may well forgive me,' added he, and turned to Wilhelm with a smile, 'that I forsook Aurelia for Theresa: with the one I could expect a calm and cheerful life, with the other not a happy hour.' 'I will confess,' said Wilhelm, 'that in coming hither, I had no small anger in my heart against you; that I proposed to censure with severity your conduct to Aurelia.' 'It was really censurable,' said Lothario: 'I should not have exchanged my friendship for her with the sentiment of love; I should not, in place of the respect which she deserved, have intruded an attachment she was neither calculated to excite nor maintain. Alas! *she was not lovely when she loved!* the greatest misery which can befall a woman.'"

And in this cavalier manner is the subject dismissed. He denies, however, that Felix is his child, or Aurelia's either; and avers that he was brought to her by the old woman Barbara, by whom the boy was generally attended. On this hint Wilhelm flies back to the town, finds out Barbara, in whom he at length recognises the attendant of his first love, Mariana, and learns from her that the boy Felix is the offspring of their early connexion, and that the unhappy mother died in consequence of his desertion, not only heart-broken but innocent! He is long incredulous, and appoints the ancient crone to come to him again at night, and abide all his interrogations.—The scene which follows, we think, is very powerfully executed, and is the only part almost of the book which produces any thing of a pathetic effect.

"Midnight was past, when something rustled at the half-open door, and Barbara came in with a little basket. 'I am to tell you the story of our woes,' said she; 'and I must believe that you will sit unmoved at the recital; that you are waiting for me but to satisfy your curiosity; that you will now, as you did formerly, retire within your cold selfishness, while our hearts are breaking. But look you here! *Thus*, on that happy evening, did I bring you the bottle of champagne! *thus* did I place the three glasses on the table! and as you then began, with soft nursery tales, to cozen us and lull us asleep, so will I now with stern truths instruct you and keep you waking.'

"Wilhelm knew not what to say, when the crone in fact let go the cork, and filled three glasses to the brim. 'Drink!' cried she, having emptied at a draught her foaming glass. 'Drink, ere the spirit of it pass! The third glass shall froth away untasted, to the memory of my unhappy Mariana! How red were her lips when she *then* drank your health! Ah! and now for ever pale and cold!' 'Sibyl! Fury!' Wilhelm cried, springing up and striking the table with his fist. 'Softly, Mein Herr!' replied the crone; 'you shall not ruffle me. Your debts to us are deep and dark: the railing of a debtor does not anger one. But you are right: the simplest narrative will punish you sufficiently. Hear, then, the struggle and the victory of Mariana striving to continue yours.'"

She then tells a long story, explaining away the indications of perfidy, on the strength of which he had quitted her; and the scene ends in this very dramatic and truly touching manner.

"'Good, dear Barbara!' cried Wilhelm, springing up, and seizing the old woman by the hand, 'we have had enough of mummery and preparation! Thy indifferent, thy calm, contented tone betrays thee. Give me back my Mariana! She is living! she is near at hand! Not in vain didst thou choose this late lonely hour to visit me; not in vain hast thou prepared me by thy most delicious narrative. Where is she? where hast thou hid her? I believe all, I will promise to believe all. Thy object is attained. Where hast thou hid her? Let me light thee with this candle,—let me once more see her fair and kindly face!'

"He had pulled old Barbara from her chair: she stared at him; tears started to her eyes; wild pangs of grief took hold of her. 'What luckless error,' cried

she, 'leaves you still a moment's hope? Yes, I have hidden her—but beneath the ground! neither the light of the sun nor any social taper shall again illuminate her kindly face. Take the boy Felix to her grave, and say to him: "There lies thy mother, whom thy father doomed unheard." The heart of Mariana beats no longer with impatience to behold you. Not in a neighbouring chamber is she waiting the conclusion of my narrative, or fable; the dark chamber has received her, to which no bridegroom follows, from which none comes to meet a lover.' She cast herself upon the floor beside a chair, and wept bitterly."

She then shows him some of the poor girl's letters, which he had refused to receive, and another which she had addressed to him on her deathbed. One of the former is as follows.

"'Thou regardest me as guilty—and so I am; but not as thou thinkest. Come to me! It involves the safety of a soul, it involves a life, two lives, one of which must ever be dear to you. This, too, thy suspicion will discredit; yet I will speak it in the hour of death; the child, which I carry underneath my heart, is thine. Since I began to love thee, no other man has even pressed my hand; O that thy love, that thy uprightness, had been the companions of my youth!'"

After this he sends the boy and Mignon to his new love, Theresa, and goes back himself to Lothario, by whom, and his energetic friends, the touching tale he had to tell "is treated with indifference and levity." And now comes the mystery of mysteries. After a great deal of oracular talk, he is ordered, one morning at sunrise, to proceed to a part of the castle to which he had never before found access; and when he gets to the end of a dark hot passage, he hears a voice call "Enter!" and he lifts a tapestry, and enters!—

"The hall, in which he now stood, appeared to have at one time been a chapel; instead of the altar he observed a large table raised some steps above the floor, and covered with a green cloth hanging over it. On the top of this, a drawn curtain seemed as if it hid a picture; on the sides were spaces beautifully worked, and covered in with fine wire netting, like the shelves of a library; only here, instead of books, a multitude of rolls had been inserted. Nobody was in the hall. The rising sun shone through the window, right on Wilhelm, and kindly saluted him as he came in.

"'Be seated!' cried a voice, which seemed to issue from the altar. Wilhelm placed himself in a small arm-chair, which stood against the tapestry where he had entered. There was no seat but this in the room; Wilhelm was obliged to take it, though the morning radiance dazzled him; the chair stood fast, he could only keep his hands before his eyes.

"But now the curtain, which hung down above the altar, went asunder with a gentle rustling; and showed, within a picture-frame, a dark empty aperture. A man stepped forward at it, in a common dress; saluted the astonished looker-on, and said to him: 'Do you not recognise me?'"

We have not room, however, for the detail of all this mummery. A succession of figures, known and unknown, present themselves;—among others, the ghost of Hamlet. At last, after a pause,

"The Abbé came to view, and placed himself behind the green table. 'Come hither!' cried he to his marvelling friend. He went, and mounted up the steps. On the green cloth lay a little roll. 'Here is your *Indenture*,' said the Abbé; 'take it to heart; it is of weighty import.' Wilhelm lifted, opened it, and read:

"INDENTURE.—

"Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, occasion transient. To act is easy, to think is hard; to act according to our thought is troublesome. Every beginning is cheerful; the threshold is the place of expectation. The boy stands astonished, his impressions guide him; he learns sportfully, seriousness comes on him by surprise. Imitation is born with us; what should be imitated is not easy to discover. The excellent is rarely found, more rarely valued. The height charms us, the steps to it do not; with the summit in our eye, we love to walk along the plain. It is but a part of art that can be taught; the artist needs it all. Who knows it half, speaks much and is always wrong; who knows it wholly, inclines to act and speaks seldom or late. The former have no secrets and no force; the instruction they can give is like baked bread, savoury and satisfying for a single day; but flour cannot be sown, and seed-corn ought not to be ground. Words are good, but they are not the best. The best is not to be explained by words. The spirit in which we act is the highest matter. Action can be understood and again represented by the spirit alone. No one knows what he is doing, while he acts rightly; but of what is wrong we are always conscious. Whoever works with symbols only, is a pedant, a hypocrite, or a bungler. There are many such, and they like to be together. Their babbling detains the scholar; their obstinate mediocrity vexes even the best. The instruction, which the true artist gives us, opens up the mind; for where words fail him, deeds speak. The true scholar learns from the known to unfold the unknown, and approaches more and more to being a master.

"'Enough!' cried the Abbé; 'the rest in due time. Now, look round you among these cases.'

"Wilhelm went and read the titles of the rolls. With astonishment he found *Lothario's Apprenticeship*, *Jarno's Apprenticeship*, and is own *Apprentice-*

ship placed there, with many others whose names he did not know. 'May I hope to cast a look into these rolls?' 'In this chamber, there is now nothing hid from you.' 'May I put a question?' 'Ask not,' said the Abbé. 'Hail to thee, young man! Thy apprenticeship is done: Nature has pronounced thee free.'"

When he afterwards inspects this roll, he finds "his whole life delineated with large, sharp strokes, and a number of bland and general reflections!" We doubt whether there is any such nonsense as this, any where else in the universe.

After this illumination, the first step he takes, with the assent of these oracular sages, is to propose for Theresa, in a long letter. But while waiting for her answer, he is sent by Lothario to visit his sister, to whose care, it appears, poor Mignon had been transferred by Theresa. This sister he takes, of course, for the Countess from whom he had parted so strangely in the castle, and is a little embarrassed at the thought of meeting her. But he discovers on the road that there is *another* sister; and that she is the very healing angel who had given him the great coat when wounded in the forest, and had haunted his fancy ever since.

"He entered the house; he found himself in the most earnest, and as he almost felt, the holiest place, which he had ever trod. A pendent dazzling lustre threw its light upon a broad and softly rising stair, which lay before him, and which parted into two divisions at a turn above. Marble statues and busts were standing upon pedestals, and arranged in niches; some of them seemed known to him. The impressions of our childhood abide with us, even in their minutest traces. He recognised a Muse which had formerly belonged to his grandfather."

He finds poor Mignon in a wretched state of health — and ascertains that it is a secret passion for him that is preying on her delicate form. In the mean time, and just as his romantic love for Natalia (his fair hostess) has resumed its full sway, she delivers him Theresa's letter of acceptance — very kind and confiding, but warning him not to lay out any of his money, till she can assist and direct him about the investment. This letter perplexes him a little, and he replies, with a bad grace, to the warm congratulations of Natalia — when, just at this moment, Lothario's friend steps in most opportunely to inform them, that Theresa had been discovered not to be the daughter of her reputed mother!—and that the bar to her union with Lothario was therefore at an end. Wilhelm affects great magnanimity in resigning her to his prior claims — but is puzzled by the warmth of her late acceptance — and still more, when a still more ardent letter arrives, in which she sticks to her last choice, and assures him that "her dream of living with Lothario has wandered far away from her soul;" and the matter seems finally settled, when she comes post-haste in her own person, flies into his arms, and exclaims, "My friend — my love — my husband! Yes, for ever thine! amidst the warmest kisses" — and he responds, "O my Theresa!" and kisses in return. In spite of all this, however, Lothario and his friends come to urge his suit; and, with the true German taste for impossibilities and protracted agonies, the whole party is represented as living together quite quietly and harmoniously for several weeks — none of the parties pressing for a final determination, and all of them occupied, in the interval, with a variety of tasks, duties, and dissertations. At last the elective affinities prevail. Theresa begins to cool to her new love; and, on condition of Natalia undertaking to comfort Wilhelm, consents to go back to her engagements with Lothario — and the two couples, and some more, are happily united.

This is the ultimate catastrophe — though they who seek it in the book will not get at it quite so easily — there being an infinite variety of other events intermingled or premised. There is the death of poor Mignon — and her musical obsequies in the Hall of the Past — the arrival of an Italian Marchese, who turns out to be her uncle, and recognises his brother in the old crazy harper, of whom, though he has borne us company all along, we have not had time to take notice — the return of Philina along with a merry cadet of Lothario's house, as sprightly and indecorous as ever — the saving of Felix from poisoning, by his drinking out of the bottle instead of the glass — and the coming in of the Count, whom Wilhelm had driven into dotage and piety by wearing his clothes — and the fair Countess, who is now discovered to have suffered for years from her momentary lapse in the castle — the picture of her husband having, by a most apt retribution,

been pressed so hard to her breast in that stolen embrace, as to give great pain at the time, and to afflict her with fears of cancer for very long after! Besides all this, there are the sayings of a very decided and infallible gentleman called Jarno – and his final and not very intelligible admission, that all which our hero had seen in the hall of the castle was "but the relics of a youthful undertaking, in which the greater part of the initiated were once in deep earnest, though all of them now viewed it with a smile."

Many of the passages to which we have now alluded are executed with great talent; and we are very sensible are better worth extracting than many of those we have cited. But it is too late now to change our selections — and we can still less afford to add to them. On the whole, we close the book with some feelings of mollification towards its faults, and a disposition to abate, if possible, some part of the censure we were impelled to bestow on it at the beginning. It improves certainly as it advances — and though nowhere probable, or conversant indeed either with natural or conceivable characters, the inventive powers of the author seem to strengthen by exercise, and come gradually to be less frequently employed on childish or revolting subjects. While we hold out the work therefore as a curious and striking instance of that diversity of national tastes, which makes a writer idolized in one part of polished Europe, who could not be tolerated in another, we would be understood as holding it out as an object rather of wonder than of contempt; and though the greater part certainly could not be endured, and indeed could not have been written in England, there are many passages of which any country might reasonably be proud, and which demonstrate, that if taste be local and variable, genius is permanent and universal.

RICHARDSON'S CORRESPONDENCE.

(October, 1804.)

The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, *Author of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison; selected from the original Manuscripts bequeathed to his Family. To which are prefixed, a Biographical Account of that Author, and Observations on his Writings.* By Anna Lætitia Barbauld. 6 vols. 8vo. Phillips, London: 1804.

The public has great reason to be satisfied, we think, with Mrs. Barbauld's share in this publication. She has contributed a very well written Introduction; and she has suppressed about twice as many letters as are now presented to our consideration. Favourably as we are disposed to think of all for which she is directly responsible, the perusal of the whole six volumes has fully convinced us that we are even more indebted to her forbearance than to her bounty.

The fair biographer unquestionably possesses very considerable talents, and exercises her powers of writing with singular judgment and propriety. Many of her observations are acute and striking, and several of them very fine and delicate. Yet this is not, perhaps, the general character of her genius; and it must be acknowledged, that she has a tone and manner which is something formal and heavy; that she occasionally delivers trite and obvious truths with the pomp and solemnity of important discoveries, and sometimes attempts to exalt and magnify her subject by a very clumsy kind of declamation. With all those defects, however, we think the life and observations have so much substantial merit, that most readers will agree with us in thinking that they are worth much more than all the rest of the publication.

She sets off indeed with a sort of formal dissertation upon novels and romances in general; and, after obligingly recapitulating the whole history of this branch of literature, from the Theagenes and Chariclea of Heliodorus to the Gil Blas and Nouvelle Heloise of modern times, she proceeds to distinguish these performances into three several classes, according to the mode and form of narration adopted by the author. The first, she is pleased to inform us, is the narrative or epic form, in which the whole story is put into the mouth of the

author, who is supposed, like the Muse, to know every thing, and is not obliged to give any account of the sources of his information; the second is that in which the hero relates his own adventures; and the third is that of epistolary correspondence, where all the agents in the drama successively narrate the incidents in which they are principally concerned. It was with Richardson, Mrs. Barbauld then informs us, that this last mode of novel writing originated; and she enters into a critical examination of its advantages and disadvantages, and of the comparative probability of a person despatching a narrative of every interesting incident or conversation in his life to his friends by the post, and of his sitting down after his adventures are concluded, to give a particular account of them to the public.

There is something rather childish, we think, in all this investigation; and the problem of comparative probability seems to be stated purely for the pleasure of the solution. No reader was ever disturbed, in the middle of an interesting story, by any scruple about the means or the inducements which the narrator may be presumed to have had for telling it. While he is engaged with the story, such an inquiry never suggests itself; and when it is suggested, he recollects that the whole is a fiction, invented by the author for his amusement, and that the best way of communicating it must be that by which he is most interested and least fatigued. To us it appears very obvious, that the first of the three modes, or the author's own narrative, is by far the most eligible; and for this plain reason, that it lays him under much less restraint than either of the other two. He can introduce a letter or a story whenever he finds it convenient, and can make use of the dramatic or conversation style as often as the subject requires it. In epistolary writing there must be a great deal of repetition and egotism; and we must submit, as on the stage, to the intolerable burden of an insipid confidant, with whose admiration of the hero's epistles the reader may not always be disposed to sympathize. There is one species of novel indeed, (but only one), to which the epistolary style is peculiarly adapted; that is, the novel, in which the whole interest depends, not upon the adventures, but on the characters of the persons represented, and in which the story is of very subordinate importance, and only serves as an occasion to draw forth the sentiments and feelings of the agents. The Heloise of Rousseau may be considered as the model of this species of writing; and Mrs. Barbauld certainly overlooked this obvious distinction, when she asserted that the author of that extraordinary work is to be reckoned among the imitators of Richardson. In the Heloise, there is scarcely any narrative at all; and the interest may be said to consist altogether in the eloquent expression of fine sentiments and exalted passion. All Richardson's novels, on the other hand, are substantially narrative; and the letters of most of his characters contain little more than a minute journal of the conversations and transactions in which they were successively engaged. The style of Richardson might be perfectly copied, though the epistolary form were to be dropped; but no imitation of the Heloise could be recognised, if it were not in the shape of letters.

After finishing her discourse upon Novels, Mrs. Barbauld proceeds to lay before her readers some account of the life and performances of Richardson. The biography is very scanty, and contains nothing that can be thought very interesting. He was the son of a joiner in Derbyshire; but always avoided mentioning the town in which he was born. He was intended at first for the church; but his father, finding that the expense of his education would be too heavy, at last bound him apprentice to a printer. He never was acquainted with any language but his own. From his childhood, he was remarkable for invention, and was famous among his schoolfellows for amusing them with tales and stories which he composed extempore, and usually rendered, even at that early age, the vehicle of some useful moral. He was constitutionally shy and bashful; and instead of mixing with his companions in noisy sports and exercises, he used to read and converse with the sedate part of the other sex, or assist them in the composition of their love-letters. The following passage, extracted by Mrs. Barbauld from one of the suppressed letters, is more curious and interesting, we think, than any thing in those that are published.

"As a bashful and not forward boy, I was an early favourite with all the young women of taste and read-

ing in the neighbourhood. Half a dozen of them, when met to work with their needles, used, when they got a book they liked, and thought I should, to borrow me to read to them; their mothers sometimes with them; and both mothers and daughters used to be pleased with the observations they put me upon making.

"I was not more than thirteen, when three of these young women, unknown to each other, having a high opinion of my taciturnity, revealed to me their love-secrets in order to induce me to give them copies to write after, or correct, for answers to their lovers' letters; nor did any of them ever know that I was the secretary to the others. I have been directed to chide, and even to repulse, when an offence was either taken or given, at the very time that the heart of the chider or repulser was open before me, overflowing with esteem and affection: and the fair repulser, dreading to be taken at her word, directing *this* word, or *that* expression, to be softened or changed. One highly gratified with her lover's fervour and vows of everlasting love has said, when I have asked her direction — I cannot tell you what to write; but (her heart on her lips) you cannot write too kindly. All her fear was only that she should incur slight for her kindness." — Vol. i. Introduction, pp. xxxix. xl.

We add Mrs. Barbauld's observation on this passage, for the truth of the sentiment it contains, though more inelegantly written than any other sentence in her performance.

"Human nature is human nature in every class; the hopes and the fears, the perplexities and the struggles, of these low-bred girls in probably an obscure village, supplied the future author with those ideas which, by their gradual development, produced the characters of a Clarissa and a Clementina; nor was he probaby happier, or amused in a more lively manner, when sitting in his grotto, with a circle of the best informed women in England about him, who in after times courted his society, than in reading to these girls in, it may be, a little back shop, or a mantua-maker's parlour with a brick floor." — Pp. xl. xli.

During his apprenticeship, he distinguished himself only by exemplary diligence and fidelity; though he informs us, that he even then enjoyed the correspondence of a gentleman, of great accomplishments, from whose patronage, if he had lived, he entertained the highest expectations. The rest of his worldly history seems to have been pretty nearly that of Hogarth's virtuous apprentice. He married his master's daughter, and succeeded to his business; extended his wealth and credit by sobriety, punctuality, and integrity; bought a residence in the country; and, though he did not attain to the supreme dignity of Lord Mayor of London, arrived in due time at the respectable situation of Master of the Worshipful Company of Stationers. In this course of obscure prosperity, he appears to have continued till he had passed his fiftieth year, without giving any intimation of his future celebrity, and even without appearing to be conscious that he was differently gifted from the other flourishing traders of the metropolis. He says of himself, we observe, in one of these letters — "My business, till within these few years, filled all my time. I had no leisure; nor, being unable to write by a regular plan, knew I that I had so much invention, till I almost accidentally slid into the writing of Pamela. And besides, little did I imagine that any thing I could write would be so kindly received by the world." Of the origin and progress of this first work he has himself left the following authentic account.

"Two booksellers, my particular friends, entreated me to write for them a little volume of letters, in a common style, on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves. Will it be any harm, said I, in a piece you want to be written so low, if we should instruct them how they should think and act in common cases, as well as indite? They were the more urgent with me to begin the little volume for this hint. I set about it; and, in the progress of it, writing two or three letters to instruct handsome girls, who were obliged to go out to service, as we phrase it, how to avoid the snares that might be laid against their virtue; the above story recurred to my thought: and hence sprung Pamela."— Introduction, p. liii.

This publication, we are told, which made its first appearance in 1740, was received with a burst of applause. Dr. Sherlock recommended it from the pulpit. Mr. Pope said it would do more good than volumes of sermons; and another literary oracle declared, that if all other books were to be burnt, Pamela and the Bible should be preserved! Its success was not less brilliant in the world of fashion. "Even at Ranelagh," Mrs. Barbauld assures us, "it was usual for the ladies to hold up the volumes to one another, to show they had got the book that every one was talking of." And, what will appear still more extraordinary, one gentleman declares, that he will give it to *his son* as soon as he can read, that he may have an early impression of virtue. — After faithfully reciting these and other testimonies of the high estimation in which this work was

once held by all ranks of people, Mrs. Barbauld subjoins some very acute and judicious observations both on its literary merits and its moral tendency. We cannot find room for the whole of this critique; but there is so much good sense and propriety in the following passage, that we cannot refrain from inserting it.

"So long as Pamela is solely occupied in schemes to escape from her persecutor, her virtuous resistance obtains our unqualified approbation; but from the moment she begins to entertain hopes of marrying him, we admire her guarded prudence, rather than her purity of mind. She has an end in view, an interested end; and we can only consider her as the conscious possessor of a treasure, which she is wisely resolved not to part with but for its just price. Her staying in his house a moment after she found herself at liberty to leave it, was totally unjustifiable: her repentant lover ought to have followed her to her father's cottage, and to have married her from thence. The familiar footing upon which she condescends to live with the odious Jewkes, shows also, that her fear of offending the man she hoped to make her husband, had got the better of her delicacy and just resentment; and the same fear leads her to give up the correspondence with honest Mr. Williams, who had generously sacrificed his interest with his patron in order to effect her deliverance. In real life, we should, at this period, consider Pamela as an interested girl: but the author says, she married Mr. B. because he had won her affection: and we are bound, it may be said, to believe an author's own account of his characters. But again, is it quite natural that a girl, who had such a genuine love for virtue, should feel her heart attracted to a man who was endeavouring to destroy that virtue? Can a woman value her honour infinitely above her life, and hold in serious detestation every word and look contrary to the nicest purity, and yet be won by those very attempts against her honour to which she expresses so much repugnance? — His attempts were of the grossest nature; and previous to, and during those attempts, he endeavoured to intimidate her by sternness. He puts on the master too much, to win upon her as the lover. Can affection be kindled by outrage and insult? Surely, if her passions were capable of being awakened in his favour, during such a persecution, the circumstance would be capable of an interpretation very little consistent with that delicacy the author meant to give her. The other alternative is, that she married him for

'The gilt coach and dappled Flanders mares.'

Indeed, the excessive humility and gratitude expressed by herself and her parents on her exaltation, shows a regard to rank and riches beyond the just measure of an independent mind. The pious goodman Andrews should not have thought his virtuous daughter so infinitely beneath her licentious master, who, after all, married her to gratify his own passions." — Introd. pp. lxiii.—lxvi.

The first part of this work, which concludes with the marriage of the heroine, was written in three months; and was founded, it seems, on a real story which had been related to Richardson by a gentleman of his acquaintance. It was followed by a second part, confessedly very inferior to the first, and was ridiculed by Fielding in his Joseph Andrews; an offence for which he was never forgiven.

Within eight years after the appearance of Pamela, Richardson's reputation may be said to have attained its zenith, by the successive publication of the volumes of his Clarissa. We have great pleasure in laying before our readers a part of Mrs. Barbauld's very judicious observations upon this popular and original performance. After a slight sketch of the story, she observes,

"The plot, as we have seen, is simple, and no underplots interfere with the main design — no digressions, no episodes. It is wonderful that, without these helps of common writers, he could support a work of such length. With Clarissa it begins, — with Clarissa it ends. We do not come upon unexpected adventures and wonderful recognitions, by quick turns and surprises: we see her fate from afar, as it were through a long avenue, the gradual approach to which, without ever losing sight of the object, has more of simplicity and grandeur than the most cunning labyrinth that can be contrived by art. In the approach to the modern country seat, we are made to catch transiently a side view of it through an opening of the trees, or to burst upon it from a sudden turning in the road; but the old mansion stood full in the eye of the traveller, as he drew near it, contemplating its turrets, which grew larger and more distinct every step that he advanced; and leisurely filling his eye and his imagination with still increasing ideas of its magnificence. As the work advances, the character rises; the distress is deepened; our hearts are torn with pity and indignation; bursts of grief succeed one another, till at length the mind is composed and harmonised with emotions of milder sorrow; we are calmed into resignation, elevated with pious hope, and dismissed glowing with the conscious triumphs of virtue." — Introd. pp. lxxxiii. lxxxiv.

She then makes some excellent remarks on the conduct of the story, and on the characters that enliven it; on that of the heroine, she observes,

"In one instance, however, Clarissa certainly sins against the delicacy of her character, that is, in allowing herself to be made a show of to the loose com-

panions of Lovelace. But, how does her character rise when we come to the more distressful scenes; the view of her horror, when, deluded by the pretended relations, she re-enters the fatal house; her temporary insanity after the outrage, in which she so affectingly holds up to Lovelace the licence he had procured, and her dignified behaviour when she first sees her ravisher, after the perpetration of his crime! What finer subject could be presented to the paintor, than the prison scene, where she is represented kneeling amidst the gloom and horror of that dismal abode; illuminating, as it were, the dark chamber, her face reclined on her crossed arms, her white garments floating round her in the negligence of woe: Belford contemplating her with respectful commiseration: Or, the scene of calmer but heart-piercing sorrow, in the interview Colonel Morden has with her in her dying moments! She is represented fallen into a slumber, in her elbow-chair, leaning on the widow Lovick, whose left arm is around her neck; one faded cheek resting on the good woman's bosom, the kindly warmth of which had overspread it with a faintish flush, the other pale and hollow, as if already iced over by death; her hands, the blueness of the veins contrasting their whiteness, hanging lifeless before her—the widow's tears dropping unfelt upon her face—Colonel Morden, with his arms folded, gazing on her in silence, her coffin just appearing behind a screen. What admiration, what reverence, does the author inspire us with for the innocent sufferer, the sufferings too of such a peculiar nature!

"There is something in virgin purity, to which the imagination willingly pays homage. In all ages, something saintly has been attached to the idea of unblemished chastity; but it was reserved for Richardson to overcome all circumstances of dishonour and disgrace, and to throw a splendour around the *violated virgin*, more radiant than she possessed in her first bloom. He has drawn the triumph of mental chastity; he has drawn it uncontaminated, untarnished, and incapable of mingling with pollution.—The scenes which follow the death of the heroine, exhibit grief in an affecting variety of forms, as it is modified by the characters of different survivors. They run into considerable length, but we have been so deeply interested, that we feel it a relief to have our grief drawn off, as it were, by a variety of sluices, and we are glad not to be dismissed till we have shed tears, even to satiety." —Introd. pp. xciii.—xcvii.

This criticism, we think, is equally judicious and refined; and we could easily prolong this extract, in a style not at all inferior. With regard to the morality of the work, Mrs. Barbauld is very indignant at the notion of its being intended to exhibit a rare instance of female chastity.

She objects, with some reason, to the number of interviews which Clarissa is represented to have had with Lovelace after the catastrophe; and adds, "If the reader, on casually opening the book, can doubt of any scene between them, whether it passes before or after the outrage, that scene is one too much."—The character of Lovelace, she thinks, is very much of a fancy piece; and affirms, that our national manners do not admit of the existence of an original. If he had been placed in France, she observes, and his gallantries directed to married women, it might have been more natural; "but, in England, Lovelace would have been run through the body, long before he had seen the face either of Clarissa or Colonel Morden."

Mrs. Barbauld gives us a copious account of the praise and admiration that poured in upon the author from all quarters on the publication of this extraordinary work: he was overwhelmed with complimentary letters, messages, and visits. But we are most gratified with the enthusiasm of one of his female correspondents, who tells him that she is very sorry "that he was not a *woman, and blessed with the means of shining as Clarissa did*; for a person capable of drawing such a character, would certainly be able to act in the same manner, *if in a like situation!*"

After Clarissa, at an interval of about five years, appeared his Sir Charles Grandison. Upon this work, also, Mrs. Barbauld has made many excellent observations, and pointed out both its blemishes and beauties, with a very delicate and discerning hand. Our limits will not permit us to enter upon this disquisition: we add only the following acute paragraph.

"Sir Charles, as a Christian, was not to fight a duel; yet he was to be recognised as the finished gentleman, and could not be allowed to want the most essential part of the character, the deportment of a man of honour, courage, and spirit. And in order to exhibit his spirit and courage, it was necessary to bring them into action by adventures and rencounters. His first appearance is in the rescue of Miss Byron, a meritorious action, but one which must necessarily expose him to a challenge. How must the author untie this knot? He makes him so very good a swordsman, that he is always capable of disarming his adversary without endangering either of their lives. But are a man's principles to depend on the science of his fencing master? Every one cannot have the skill of Sir Charles; every one cannot be the *best* swordsman; and the man whose study it is to avoid fighting, is not quite so likely as another to be the best."—Introd. pp. cxxvii. cxxviii.

Besides his great works, Richardson published only a paper in the Rambler (the 97th); an edition of Æsop's Fables, with Reflections; and a volume of Familiar Letters for the use of persons in inferior situations. It was this latter work which gave occasion to Pamela: it is excellently adapted to its object, and we think may be of singular use to Mr. Wordsworth and his friends, in their great scheme of turning all our poetry into the language of the common people. In this view we recommend it very earnestly to their consideration.

There is little more to be said of the transactions or events of Richardson's life. His books were pirated by the Dublin booksellers: at which he was very angry, and could obtain no redress. He corresponded with a great number of females; and gradually withdrew himself from the fatigues of business to his country residence at Parson's Green; where his life was at last terminated in 1761, by a stroke of apoplexy, at the age of seventy-two.

His moral character was in the highest degree exemplary and amiable. He was temperate, industrious, and upright; punctual and honourable in all his dealings; and with a kindness of heart, and a liberality and generosity of disposition, that must have made him a very general favourite, even if he had never acquired any literary distinction. — He had a considerable share of vanity, and was observed to talk more willingly on the subject of his own works than on any other. The lowness of his original situation, and the lateness of his introduction into polite society, had given to his manners a great shyness and reserve; and a consciousness of his awkwardness and his merit together, rendered him somewhat jealous in his intercourse with persons in more conspicuous situations, and made him require more courting and attention than every one was disposed to pay. He had high notions of parental authority, and does not seem always quite satisfied with the share of veneration which his wife could be prevailed on to show for him. He was particularly partial to the society of females; and lived, indeed, as Mrs. Barbauld has expressed it, in a flower-garden of ladies. Mrs. Barbauld will have it, that this was in the way of his profession as an author; and that he frequented their society to study the female heart, and instruct himself in all the niceties of the female character. From the tenor of the correspondence now before us, however, we are more inclined to believe, with Dr. Johnson, that this partiality was owing to his love of continual superiority, and that he preferred the conversation of ladies, because they were more lavish of their admiration, and more easily engaged to descant on the perplexities of Sir Charles, or the distresses of Clarissa. His close application to business, and the sedentary habits of a literary life, had materially injured his health: he loved to complain, as most invalids do who have any hope of being listened to, and scarcely writes a letter without some notice of his nervous tremors, his giddiness and catchings. "I had originally a good constitution," he says, in one place, "and hurt it by no intemperance, but that of application."

In presenting our readers with this imperfect summary of Mrs. Barbauld's biographical dissertation, we have discharged by far the most pleasing part of our task; and proceed to the consideration of the correspondence which it introduces, with considerable heaviness of spirit, and the most unfeigned reluctance. The letters are certainly authentic; and they were bought, we have no doubt, for a fair price from the legal proprietors: but their publication, we think, was both improper and injudicious, as it can only tend to lower a very respectable character, without communicating any gratification or instruction to others. We are told, indeed, in the preface, "that it was the employment of Mr. Richardson's *declining* years, to select and arrange the collection from which this publication has been made; and that he always looked forward to their publication at some distant period; nay, "that he was not without thoughts of publishing them in his lifetime; and that, after his death, they remained in the hands of his last surviving daughter, upon whose decease they became the property of his grandchildren, and were purchased from them at a very liberal price by Mr. Phillips." We have no doubt that what Mrs. Barbauld has here stated to the public, was stated to her by her employers: but we cannot read any one volume of the letters, without being satisfied that the idea of such a publication could only come into the mind of Richardson, after his judgment was

impaired by the infirmities of "*declining* years;" and we have observed some passages in those which are now published, that seem to prove sufficiently his own consciousness of the impropriety of such an exposure, and the absence of any idea of giving them to the world. In the year 1755, when nine-tenths of the whole collection must have been completed, we find him expressing himself in these words to his friend Mr. Edwards:

"I am employing myself at present in looking over and sorting and classing my correspondences and other papers. This, when done, will amuse me, by reading over again a very ample correspondence, and in comparing the sentiments of my correspondents, at the time, with the present, and improving from both. The many letters and papers I shall destroy will make an executor's work the easier; and if any of my friends desire their letters to be returned, they will be readily come at for that purpose. Otherwise they will amuse and direct *my children*, and teach them to honour their father's friends *in their closets* for the favours done him." — Vol. iii. pp. 113, 114.

Accordingly, they remained in the closet till the death of the *last of his children*; and then the whole collection is purchased by a bookseller, and put into the hands of an editor, who finds it expedient to suppress two-thirds of it!

Those who have looked into the volumes in question, will be at no loss to comprehend the reasons of the unqualified reprehension we are inclined to bestow on their publication. For the information of those who have not had an opportunity of seeing them, we may observe that, so far from containing any view of the literature, the politics, or manners of the times — any anecdotes of the eminent and extraordinary personages to whom the author had access — or any pieces of elegant composition, refined criticism, or interesting narrative, they consist almost entirely of compliments and minute criticisms on his novels, a detail of his ailments and domestic concerns, and some tedious prattling disputations with his female correspondents, upon the duties of wives and children; the whole so loaded with gross and reciprocal flattery, as to be ridiculous at the outset, and disgusting in the repetition. Compliments and the novels form, indeed, the staples of the whole correspondence: we meet with the divine Clarissa, and the more divine Sir Charles, in every page, and are absolutely stunned with the clamorous raptures and supplications with which the female train demand the conversion of Lovelace, and the death or restoration of Clementina. Even when the charming books are not the direct subject of the correspondence, they appear in eternal allusions, and settle most of the arguments by an authoritative quotation. In short, the Clarissa and Grandison are the scriptures of this congregation; and the members of it stick as close to their language upon all occasions, as any of our sectaries ever did to that of the Bible. The praises and compliments, again, which are interchanged among all the parties, are so extremely hyperbolical as to be ludicrous, and so incessant as to be excessively fatiguing. We shall trouble our readers with but a very few specimens.

The first series of letters is from Aaron Hill, a poet of some notoriety, it seems, in his day; but, if we may judge from these epistles, a very bad composer in prose. The only amusing things we have met with in this volume of his inditing, are his prediction of his own great fame, and of the speedy downfal of Pope's; and his scheme for making English wine of a superior quality to any that can be imported. Of Pope he says, that he died "in the wane of his popularity; and that it arose originally only from meditated little personal assiduities, and a *certain bladdery swell of management*." And a little after —

"But rest his memory in peace! It will very rarely be distributed by that time he himself is ashes. It is pleasant to observe the justice of forced fame; she lets down those, at once, who got themselves pushed upward; and lifts none above the fear of falling, but a few who never teased her.

"What she intends to do with *me*, the Lord knows!" — Vol. i. p. 107.

In another place he adds, "For my part, I am *afraid* to be popular; I see so many who write to the living, and deserve not to live, that I content myself with a resurrection when dead:" and after lamenting the unpopularity of some of his writings, he says, "But there *will* arise a time in which they will be seen in a far different light. *I know it* on a surer hope than that of vanity." The wine project, which is detailed in many pages, requires no notice. As a specimen of the adulation with which Richardson was incensed by

all his correspondents, we may add the following sentences.

"Where will your wonders end? or how could I be able to express the joy it gives me to discern your genius rising with the grace and boldness of a pillar! &c. Go on, dear sir (I see you will and must), to charm and captivate the world, and force a scribbling race to learn and practise one rare virtue — to be pleased with what disgraces them." — "There is a manner (so beyond the matter, extraordinary always too as that is,) in whatever you say or do, that makes it an impossibility to speak those sentiments which it is equally impossible not to conceive in reverence and affection for your goodness."

In allusion to the promise of Sir Charles, he says —

"I am greatly pleased at the hint you gave of a design to raise another Alps upon this Apennine: we can never see too many of his works who has no equal in his labours."

These passages, we believe, will satisfy most readers; but those who have any desire to see more, may turn up any page in the volume: it may be of some use, perhaps, as a great commonplace for the materials of "soft dedication."

The next series of letters is from Miss Fielding, who wrote *David Simple*, and Miss Collier, who assisted in writing *The Cry*. What modern reader knows any thing about The Cry, or David Simple? And if the elaborate performances of these ladies have not been thought worthy of public remembrance, what likelihood is there that their private and confidential letters should be entitled to any notice? They contain nothing, indeed, that can be interesting to any description of readers; and only prove that Richardson was indulgent and charitable to them, and that their gratitude was a little too apt to degenerate into flattery.

The letters of Mrs. Pilkington and of Colley Cibber appear to us to be still less worthy of publication. The former seems to have been a profligate, silly actress, reduced to beggary in her old age, and distressed by the misconduct of her ill-educated children. The compassionate heart of Richardson led him to pity and relieve her; and she repays him with paltry adulation, interlarded, in the bombastic style of the green room, with dramatic misquotations misapplied. Of the letters of Cibber, Mrs. B. says that "they show in every line the man of wit and the man of the world." We are sorry to dissent from so respectable an opinion; but the letters appear to us in every respect contemptible and disgusting; without one spark of wit or genius of any sort, and bearing all the traces of vanity, impudence, affectation, and superannuated debauchery, which might have been expected from the author. His first epistle is to Mrs. Pilkington (for the editor has more than once favoured us with letters that have no sort of relation to Richardson or his writings), and sets off in this manner:

"Thou frolicsome farce of fortune! What! Is there another act of you to come then? I was afraid, some time ago, you had made your last exit. Well! but without wit or compliment, I am glad to hear you are so tolerably alive," &c.

We can scarcely conceive that this pitiful slang could appear to Mrs. Barbauld like the pleasantry of a man of fashion. His letters to Richardson are, if any thing, rather more despicable. After reading some of the proof-sheets of Sir Charles, he writes,

"Z——ds! I have not patience, till I know what is become of her. Why, you — I do not know what to call you! — Ah! ah! you may laugh if you please: but how will you be able to look me in the face, if the lady should ever be able to show *hers* again? What piteous, d——d, disgraceful pickle have you plunged her in? For God's sake send me the sequel; or — I don't know what to say! ——"

The following is an entire letter:

"The delicious meal I made of Miss Byron on Sunday last has given me an appetite for another slice of her, off from the spit, before she is served up to the public table. If about five o'clock to-morrow afternoon will not be inconvenient, Mrs. Brown and I will come and piddle upon a bit more of her: but pray let your whole family, with Mrs. Richardson at the head of them, come in for their share. This, sir, will make me more and more yours," &c.

After these polite effusions, we have a correspondence with Mr. Edwards, the author of the Canons of Criticism, a good deal of which is occupied as usual with flattery and mutual compliments, and the rest with consultations about their different publications. Richardson exclaims, "O that you could resolve to publish your pieces in two pretty volumes!" And Mr. Edwards sends him long epistles in exaltation of Sir Charles and Clarissa. It is in

this correspondence that we meet with the first symptom of that most absurd and illiberal prejudice which Richardson indulged against all the writings of Fielding. He writes to Mr. Edwards —

"Mr. Fielding has met with the disapprobation you foresaw he would meet with, of his Amelia. He is, in every paper he publishes under the title of the Common Garden, contributing to his own overthrow. He has been overmatched in his own way by people whom he had despised, and whom he thought he had vogue enough, from the success his spurious brat Tom Jones so unaccountably met with, to write down, but who have turned his own artillery against him, and beat him out of the field, and made him even poorly in his Court of Criticism give up his Amelia, and promise to write no more on the like subjects." — Vol. iii. pp. 33, 34.

This, however, is but a small specimen of his antipathy. He says to his French translator, "Tom Jones is a dissolute book. *Its run is over*, even with us. Is it true that France had virtue enough to refuse to license such a profligate performance?" But the worst of all is the following:—

"I have not been able to read any more than the first volume of Amelia. Poor Fielding! I could not help *telling his sister*, that I was equally surprised at, and concerned for, his continued lowness. Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner at a sponging house, we should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantage of a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company; but it is beyond my conception, that a man of family, and who had some learning, and who really is a writer, should descend so excessively low in all his pieces. Who can care for any of his people? A person of honour asked me, the other day, what he could mean, by saying, in his Covent Garden Journal, that he had followed Homer and Virgil in his Amelia? I answered, that he was justified in saying so, because he must mean Cotton's Virgil Travestied, where the women are drabs and the men scoundrels." — Vol. vi. pp. 154, 155.

It is lamentable that such things should have been written confidentially; it was surely unnecessary to make them public.

After the dismissal of Mr. Edwards, we meet with two or three very beautiful and interesting letters from Mrs. Klopstock, the first wife of the celebrated German poet. They have pleased us infinitely beyond any thing else in the collection; but how far they are indebted for the charm we have found in them to the lisping innocence of the broken English in which they are written, or to their intrinsic merit, we cannot pretend to determine. We insert the following account of her courtship and marriage.

"After having seen him two hours, I was obliged to pass the evening in a company, which never had been so wearisome to me. I could not speak, I could not play; I thought I saw nothing but Klopstock. I saw him the next day, and the following, and we were very seriously friends. But the fourth day he departed. It was an strong hour the hour of his departure! He wrote soon after, and from that time our correspondence began to be a very diligent one. I sincerely believed my love to be friendship. I spoke with my friends of nothing but Klopstock, and showed his letters. They raillied at me, and said I was in love. I raillied them again, and said that they must have a very friendshipless heart, if they had no idea of friendship to a man as well as to a woman. Thus it continued eight months, in which time my friends found as much love in Klopstock's letters as in me. I perceived it likewise, but I would not believe it. At the last Klopstock said plainly that he loved; and I startled as for a wrong thing. I answered, that it was no love, but friendship, as it was what I felt for him; we had not seen one another enough to love (as if love must have more time than friendship!). This was sincerely my meaning, and I had this meaning till Klopstock came again to Hamburg. This he did a year after we had seen one another the first time. We saw, we were friends, we loved; and we believed that we loved: and, a short time after, I could even tell Klopstock that I loved. But we were obliged to part again, and wait two years for our wedding. My mother would not let marry me a stranger. I could marry then without her consentment, as by the death of my father my fortune depended not on her; but this was an horrible idea for me; and thank Heaven that I have prevailed by prayers! At this time knowing Klopstock, she loves him as her lifely son, and thanks God that she has not persisted. We married, and I am the happiest wife in the world. In some few months it will be four years that I am so happy, and still I dote upon Klopstock as if he was my bridegroom.

"If you knew my husband, you would not wonder. If you knew his poem, I could describe him very briefly, in saying he is in all respects what he is as a poet. This I can say with all wifely modesty..... But I dare not speak of my husband; I am all raptures when I do it. And as happy as I am in love so happy am I in friendship, in my mother, two elder sisters, and five other women. How rich I am!" — Vol. iii. pp. 146—149.

One of the best letters is dated from Tunbridge in 1751. We shall venture on an extract.

"But here, to change the scene, to see Mr. Walsh at eighty (Mr. Cibber calls him papa), and Mr. Cibber at seventy-seven, hunting after new faces; and thinking themselves happy if they can obtain the notice and familiarity of a fine woman! — How ridiculous! —

"Mr. Cibber was over head and ears in love with Miss Chudleigh. Her admirers (such was his happiness!) were not jealous of him; but, pleased with that wit in him which they had not, were always for calling him to her. She said pretty things — for she was Miss Chudleigh. He said pretty things — for he was Mr. Cibber; and all the company, men and women, seemed to think they had an interest in what was said, and were half as well pleased as if they had said the sprightly things themselves; and mighty well contented were they to be second-hand repeaters of the pretty things. But once I faced the laureate squatted upon one of the benches, with a face more wrinkled than ordinary with disappointment. 'I thought,' said I, 'you were of the party at the tea treats — Miss Chudleigh is gone into the tea-room.' — 'Pshaw!' said he, 'there is no coming at her, she is so surrounded by the toupets.'—And I left him upon the fret — But he was called to soon after; and in he flew, and his face shone again, and looked smooth.

"Another extraordinary old man we have had here, but of a very different turn; the noted Mr. Whiston, showing eclipses, and explaining other phenomena of the stars, and preaching the millennium and anabaptism (for he is now, it seems, of that persuasion) to gay people, who, if they have white teeth, hear him with open mouths, though perhaps shut hearts; and after his lecture is over, not a bit the wiser, run from him the more eagerly to C—r and W—sh, and to flutter among the loud-laughing young fellows upon the walks, like boys and girls at a breaking-up."— Vol. iii. pp. 316—319.

As Richardson was in the habit of flattering his female correspondents, by asking their advice (though he never followed it) as to the conduct of his works, he prevailed on a certain Lady Echlin to communicate a new catastrophe which she had devised for his Clarissa. She had reformed Lovelace, by means of a Dr. Christian, and made him die of remorse, though the last outrage is not supposed to be committed. How far Lady Echlin's epistles are likely to meet with readers, in this fastidious age, may be conjectured from the following specimen.

"I heartily wish every Christian would read and wisely consider Mr. Skelton's fine and pious lessons. I admire the warmth of this learned gentleman's zeal; it is laudable and necessary, 'especially in an age like this, which, for its coldness (he observes) may be called the winter of Christianity.' A melancholy truth, elegantly expressed! I have only perused a small part of this divine piece, and am greatly delighted with what I have read. *Surely he is a heavenly man. I am also very fond of Dr. Clark: and excellent good Seed!* I thank you, sir, for introducing another wise charmer, not less worthy of every body's regard.* He merits attention, and religiously commands it."—Vol. v. p. 40.

Next come several letters from the Reverend Mr. Skelton, mostly on the subject of the Dublin piracy, and the publication of some works of his own. He seems to have been a man of strong, coarse sense, but extremely irritable. Some delay in the publication of his sermons, draws from him the following amusing piece of fretfulness.

"Johnston kept them a month on the way; Wilson kept them three, and does nothing, only hints a sort of contemptuous censure of them to you, and huffs them out of his hands. The booksellers despise them, and I am forced to print them, when the season for sale is over, or burn them. God's will be done! If I had wrote against my Saviour, or his religion, my work would long ago have been bought, and reprinted and bought again. Millar would have now been far advanced in his third edition of it! But why do I make these weak complaints? I know my work is calculated to serve the cause of God and truth, and by no means contemptibly executed. I am confident also, I shall, if God spares me life to give it the necessary introduction, sell it to advantage, and receive the thanks of every good man for it. I will therefore be in the hands of God, and not of Mr. Millar, whose indifference to my performances invite me not to any overtures."—Vol. v. p. 234, 235.

Although Richardson is not responsible for more than one fifth part of the dulness exhibited in this collection, still the share of it that may be justly imputed to him is so considerable, and the whole is so closely associated with his name, that it would be a sort of injustice to take our final leave of his works, without casting one glance back to those original and meritorious performances, upon which his reputation is so firmly established.

The great excellence of Richardson's novels consists, we think, in the unparalleled minuteness and copiousness of his descriptions, and in the pains he takes to make us thoroughly and intimately acquainted with every particular in the character and situation of the personages with whom we are occupied. It has been the policy of other writers to avoid all details that are not necessary or impressive,

to hurry over all the preparatory scenes, and to reserve the whole of the reader's attention for those momentous passages in which some decisive measure is adopted, or some great passion brought into action. The consequence is, that we are only acquainted with their characters in their dress of ceremony, and that, as we never see them except in those critical circumstances, and those moments of strong emotion, which are but of rare occurrence in real life, we are never deceived into any belief of their reality, and contemplate the whole as an exaggerated and dazzling illusion. With such authors we merely make a visit by appointment, and see and hear only what we know has been prepared for our reception. With Richardson, we slip, invisible, into the domestic privacy of his characters, and hear and see every thing that is said and done among them, whether it be interesting or otherwise, and whether it gratify our curiosity or disappoint it. We sympathise with the former, therefore, only as we sympathise with the monarchs and statesmen of history, of whose condition as individuals we have but a very imperfect conception. We feel for the latter, as for our private friends and acquaintance, with whose whole situation we are familiar, and as to whom we can conceive exactly the effects that will be produced by every thing that may befall them. In this art Richardson is undoubtedly without an equal, and, if we except De Foe, without a competitor, we believe, in the whole history of literature. We are often fatigued, as we listen to his prolix descriptions, and the repetitions of those rambling and inconclusive conversations, in which so many pages are consumed, without any apparent progress in the story; but, by means of all this, we get so intimately acquainted with the characters, and so impressed with a persuasion of their reality, that when any thing really disastrous or important occurs to them, we feel as for old friends and companions, and are irresistibly led to as lively a conception of their sensations, as if we had been spectators of a real transaction. This we certainly think the chief merit of Richardson's productions: for, great as his knowledge of the human heart, and his powers of pathetic description, must be admitted to be, we are of opinion that he might have been equalled in those particulars by many, whose productions are infinitely less interesting.

That his pieces were all intended to be strictly moral, is indisputable; but it is not quite so clear, that they will uniformly be found to have this tendency. We have already quoted some observations of Mrs. Barbauld's on this subject, and shall only add, in general, that there is a certain air of irksome regularity, gloominess, and pedantry, attached to most of his virtuous characters, which is apt to encourage more unfortunate associations than the engaging qualities with which he has invested some of his vicious ones. The mansion of the Harlowes, which, before the appearance of Lovelace, is represented as the abode of domestic felicity, is a place in which daylight can scarcely be supposed to shine; and Clarissa, with her formal devotions, her intolerably early rising, her day divided into tasks, and her quantities of needle-work and discretion, has something in her much less winning and attractive than inferior artists have often communicated to an innocent beauty of seventeen. The solemnity and moral discourses of Sir Charles, his bows, minuets, compliments, and immoveable tranquillity, are much more likely to excite the derision than the admiration of a modern reader. Richardson's good people, in short, are too wise and too formal, ever to appear in the light of desirable companions, or to excite in a youthful mind any wish to resemble them. The gaiety of all his characters, too, is extremely girlish and silly, and is much more like the prattle of spoiled children, than the wit and pleasantry of persons acquainted with the world. The diction throughout is heavy, vulgar, and embarrassed; though the interest of the tragical scenes is too powerful to allow us to attend to any inferior consideration. The novels of Richardson, in short, though praised perhaps somewhat beyond their merits, will always be read with admiration; and certainly can never appear to greater advantage than when contrasted with the melancholy farrago which is here entitled his Correspondence.

MELCHIOR GRIMM.

(JULY, 1813.)

Correspondance, Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique. Adressée à un Souverain d'Allemagne, depuis 1770 jusqu'à 1782. Par le BARON DE GRIMM, et par DIDEROT. 5 tomes, 8vo. Pp. 2250. Paris: 1812.

THIS is certainly a very entertaining book—though a little too bulky—and, the greater part of it, not very important. We are glad to see it, however; not only because we are glad to see any thing entertaining, but also because it makes us acquainted with a person, of whom every one has heard a great deal, and most people hitherto known very little. There is no name which comes oftener across us, in the modern history of French literature, than that of Grimm; and none, perhaps, whose right to so much notoriety seemed to most people to stand upon such scanty titles. Coming from a foreign country, without rank, fortune, or exploits of any kind to recommend him, he contrived, one does not very well see how, to make himself conspicuous for forty years in the best company of Paris; and at the same time to acquire great influence and authority among literary men of all descriptions, without publishing any thing himself, but a few slight observations upon French and Italian music.

The volumes before us help, in part, to explain this enigma; and not only give proof of talents and accomplishments quite sufficient to justify the reputation the author enjoyed among his contemporaries, but also of such a degree of industry and exertion, as entitle him, we think, to a reasonable reversion of fame from posterity. Before laying before our readers any part of this miscellaneous chronicle, we shall endeavour to give them a general idea of its construction—and to tell them all that we have been able to discover about its author.

Melchior Grimm was born at Ratisbon in 1723, of very humble parentage; but, being tolerably well educated, took to literature at a very early period. His first essays were made in his own country—and, as we understand, in his native language—where he composed several tragedies, which were hissed upon the stage, and unmercifully abused in the closet, by Lessing, and the other oracles of Teutonic criticism. He then came to Paris, as a sort of tutor to the children of M. de Schomberg, and was employed in the humble capacity of reader to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, when he was first brought into notice by Rousseau, who was smitten with his enthusiasm for music, and made him known to Diderot, the Baron d'Holbach, and various other persons of eminence in the literary world. His vivacity and various accomplishments soon made him generally acceptable; while his uniform prudence and excellent good sense prevented him from ever losing any of the friends he had gained. Rousseau, indeed, chose to quarrel with him for life, upon his sitting down one evening in a seat which he had previously fixed upon for himself; but with Voltaire and D'Alembert, and all the rest of that illustrious society, both male and female, he continued always on the most cordial footing; and, while he is reproached with a certain degree of obsequiousness towards the rich and powerful, must be allowed to have used less flattery toward his literary associates than was usual in the intercourse of those jealous and artificial beings.

When the Duke of Saxe-Gotha left Paris, Grimm undertook to send him regularly an account of every thing remarkable that occurred in the literary, political, and scandalous chronicle of that great city; and acquitted himself in this delicate office so much to the satisfaction of his noble correspondent, that he nominated him, in 1776, his resident at the court of France, and raised him at the same time to the rank and dignity of a Baron. The volumes before us are a part of the despatches of this literary plenipotentiary; and are certainly the most amusing state papers that have ever fallen under our observation.

The Baron de Grimm continued to exercise the functions of this philosophical diplomacy, till the gathering storm of the Revolution drove both ministers and philosophers from the territories of the new Republic. He then took refuge of course in the court of his master, where he resided till 1795; when Catharine of Russia, to whose shrine he had formerly made a pilgrimage from Paris, gave him the appointment of her minister at the court of Saxony—which he continued to hold till the end of the reign of the unfortunate Paul, when the partial loss of sight obliged him to with-

draw altogether from business, and to return to the court of Saxe-Gotha, where he continued his studies in literature and the arts with unabated ardour, till he sunk at last under a load of years and infirmities in the end of 1807. — He was of an uncomely and grotesque appearance — with huge projecting eyes and discordant features, which he rendered still more hideous, by daubing them profusely with white and with red paint — according to the most approved *costume* of *petits-maîtres*, in the year 1748, when he made his *début* at Paris.

The book embraces a period of about twelve years only, from 1770 to 1782, with a gap for 1775 and part of 1776. It is said in the title-page to be partly the work of Grimm, and partly that of Diderot,—but the contributions of the latter are few, and comparatively of little importance. It is written half in the style of a journal intended for the public, and half in that of private and confidential correspondence; and, notwithstanding the retrenchments which the editor boasts of having made in the manuscript, contains a vast miscellany of all sorts of intelligence; — critiques upon all new publications, new operas, and new performers at the theatres; — accounts of all the meetings and elections at the academies, — and of the deaths and characters of all the eminent persons who demised in the period to which it extends; — copies of the epigrams, and editions of the scandalous stories that occupied the idle population of Paris during the same period — interspersed with various original compositions, and brief and pithy dissertations upon the general subjects that are suggested by such an enumeration. Of these the accounts of the operas and the actors are (now) the most tedious,—the critical and biographical sketches the most lively, and the general observations the most striking and important. The whole, however, is given with great vivacity and talent, and with a degree of freedom which trespasses occasionally upon the borders both of propriety and good taste.

There is nothing indeed more exactly painted in these graphical volumes, than the character of M. Grimm himself; —and the beauty of it is, that as there is nothing either natural or peculiar about it, it may stand for the character of most of the wits and philosophers he frequented. He had more wit, perhaps, and more sound sense and information, than the greater part of the society in which he lived. —But the leading traits belong to the whole class, and to all classes indeed, in similar situations, in every part of the world. Whenever there is a very large assemblage of persons who have no other occupation but to amuse themselves, there will infallibly be generated acuteness of intellect, refinement of manners, and good taste in conversation; — and, with the same certainty, all profound thought, and all serious affection, will be generally discarded from their society. The multitude of persons and things that force themselves on the attention in such a scene, and the rapidity with which they succeed each other and pass away, prevent any one from making a deep or permanent impression; and the mind, having never been tasked to any course of application, and long habituated to this lively succession and variety of objects, comes at last to require the excitement of perpetual change, and to find a multiplicity of friends as indispensable as a multiplicity of amusements. Thus the characteristics of large and polished society, come almost inevitably to be, wit and heartlessness — acuteness and perpetual derision. The same impatience of uniformity, and passion for variety, which gives so much grace to their conversation, by excluding tediousness and pertinacious wrangling, make them incapable of dwelling for many minutes on the feelings and concerns of any one individual; while the constant pursuit of little gratifications, and the weak dread of all uneasy sensations, render them equally averse from serious sympathy and deep thought. They speedily find out the shortest and most pleasant way to all truths, to which a short and a pleasant way can readily be discovered; and then lay it down as a maxim, that no others are worth looking after — and in the same way, they do such petty kindnesses, and indulge such light sympathies, as do not put them to any trouble, or encroach at all on their amusements, — while they make it a principle to wrap themselves up in those amusements from the assault of all more engrossing or importunate affections.

The turn for derision again arises naturally out of this order of things. When passion

and enthusiasm, affection and serious occupation, have once been banished by a short-sighted voluptuousness, the sense of ridicule is almost the only lively sensation that remains; — and the envied life of those who have nothing to do but to enjoy themselves, would be utterly listless and without interest, if they were not allowed to laugh at each other. Their quickness in perceiving ordinary follies and illusions too, affords great encouragement to this laudable practice; — and as none of them have so much passion or enthusiasm left, as to be deeply wounded by the shafts of derision, they fall lightly, and without rankling, on the lesser vanities, which supply in them those master-springs of human action and feeling.

The whole style and tone of this publication affords the most striking illustration of these general remarks. From one end of it to the other, it is a display of the most complete heartlessness, and the most uninterrupted levity. It chronicles the deaths of half the author's acquaintance — and makes jests upon them all; and is much more serious in discussing the merits of an opera dancer, than in considering the evidence for the being of a God, or the first foundations of morality. Nothing, indeed, can be more just or conclusive, than the remark that is forced from M. Grimm himself, upon the utter carelessness and instant oblivion, that followed the death of one of the most distinguished, active, and amiable members of his coterie; — "tant il est vrai que ce qui nous appellons *la Société*, est ce qu'il y a de plus leger, de plus ingrat, et de plus frivole au monde!"

Holding this opinion very firmly ourselves, it will easily be believed that we are very far from *envying* the brilliant persons who composed, or gave the tone to this exquisite society; — and while we have a due admiration for the elegant pleasantry, correct taste, and gay acuteness, of which they furnish, perhaps, the only perfect models, we think it more desirable, on the whole, to be the spectators, than the possessors of those accomplishments; and would no more wish to buy them at the price of our sober thinking, and settled affections, than we would buy the dexterity of a fiddler, or a ropedancer, at the price of our personal respectability. Even in the days of youth and high spirits, there is no solid enjoyment in living altogether with people who care nothing about us; and when we begin to grow old and unamuseable, there can be nothing so comfortless as to be surrounded with those who think of nothing but amusement. The spectacle, however, is gay and beautiful to those who look upon it with a good-natured sympathy, or indulgence; and naturally suggests reflections that may be interesting to the most serious. A judicious extractor, we have no doubt, might accommodate both classes of readers, from the ample magazine that lies before us.

The most figuring person in the work, and indeed of the age to which it belongs, was beyond all question *Voltaire*, — of whom, and of whose character, it presents us with many very amusing traits. He receives no other name throughout the book, than "The Patriarch" of the Holy Philosophical Church, of which the authors, and the greater part of their friends, profess to be humble votaries and disciples. The infallibility of its chief, however, seems to have formed no part of the creed of this reformed religion; for, with all his admiration for the wit, and playfulness, and talent of the philosophic pontiff, nothing can exceed the freedoms in which M. Grimm indulges, both as to his productions, and his character. All his poetry, he says, after Tancred, is clearly marked with the symptoms of approaching dotage and decay; and his views of many important subjects he treats as altogether erroneous, shallow, and contemptible. He is particularly offended with him for not adopting the decided atheism of the *Système de la Nature*, and for weakly stopping short at a kind of paltry deism. "The Patriarch," says he, "still sticks to his *Rémunérateur-Vengeur*, without whom he fancies the world would go on very ill. He is resolute enough, I confess, for putting down the god of knaves and bigots, but is not for parting with that of the virtuous and rational. He reasons upon all this, too, like a baby — a very smart baby it must be owned — but a baby notwithstanding. He would be a little puzzled, I take it, if he were asked what was *the colour* of his god of the virtuous and wise, &c. &c. He cannot conceive, he says, how mere motion, undirected by intelligence, should ever have produced such a world as we

inhabit—and we verily believe him. Nobody can conceive it—but it is *a fact* nevertheless; and we see it—which is nearly as good." We give this merely as a specimen of the disciple's irreverence towards his master; for nothing can be more contemptible than the reasoning of M. Grimm in support of his own desolating opinions. He is more near being right, where he makes himself merry with the patriarch's ignorance of natural philosophy. Every Achilles however, he adds, has a vulnerable heel—and that of the hero of Ferney is his Physics.*

M. Grimm, however, reveals worse infirmities than this in his great preceptor. There was a young Mademoiselle Raucour, it seems, who, though an actress, enjoyed an unblemished reputation. Voltaire, who had never seen her, chose one morning to write to the Marechal de Richelieu, by whom she was patronized, that she was a notorious prostitute, and ready to be taken into keeping by any one who would offer for her. This imputation having been thoughtlessly communicated to the damsel herself, produced no little commotion; and upon Voltaire's being remonstrated with, he immediately retracted the whole story, which it seems was a piece of pure invention; and confessed, that the only thing he had to object to Madlle. Raucour was, that he had understood they had put off the representation of a new play of his, in order to gratify the public with her appearance in comedy;—"and this was enough," says M. Grimm, "to irritate a child of seventy-nine, against another child of seventeen, who came in the way of his gratification!"

A little after, he tells another story which is not only very disreputable to the Patriarch, but affords a striking example of the monstrous evils that arise from religious intolerance, in a country where the whole population is not of the same communion. A Mons. de B. introduced himself into a Protestant family at Montauban, and after some time, publicly married the only daughter of the house, in the church of her pastor. He lived several years with her, and had one daughter—dissipated her whole property—and at last deserted her, and married another woman at Paris—upon the pretence that his first union was not binding, the ceremony not having been performed by a Catholic priest. The Parliament ultimately allowed this plea; and farther directed, that the daughter should be taken from its mother, and educated in the true faith in a convent. The transaction excited general indignation; and the legality of the sentence, and especially the last part of it, was very much disputed, both in the profession and out of it;—when Voltaire, to the astonishment of all the world, thought fit to put forth a pamphlet in its defence! M. Grimm treats the whole matter with his usual coldness and pleasantry;—and as a sort of apology for this extraordinary proceeding of his chief, very coolly observes, "The truth is, that for some time past, the Patriarch has been suspected, and indeed convicted, of the most abominable cowardice. He defied the old Parliament in his youth with signal courage and intrepidity; and now he cringes to the new one, and even condescends to be its panegyrist, from an absurd dread of being persecuted by it on the very brink of the tomb. Ah! Seigneur Patriarche! he concludes, in the true Parisian accent, Horace was much more excusable for flattering Augustus, who had honoured him, though he destroyed the republic, than you are, for justifying, without any intelligible motive, a proceeding so utterly detestable, and upon which, if you had not courage to speak as became you, you were not called upon to say any thing." It must be a comfort to the reader to learn, that immediately after this sentence, a M. Vanrobais, an old and most respectable gentleman, was chivalrous enough, at the age of seventy, to marry the deserted widow, and to place her in a situation every way more re-

* This is only true, however, with regard to natural history and chemistry; for as to the nobler part of physics, which depends on science, his attainments were equal perhaps to those of any of his age and country, with the exception of D'Alembert. Even his astronomy, however, though by no means "mince et raccourtie," had a tendency to confirm him in that paltry Deism, for which he is so unmercifully rated by M. Grimm. We do not know many quartains in French poetry more beautiful than the following, which the Patriarch indited *impromptu*, one fine summer evening:—

"Tous ces vastes pays d'Azur et de Lumière,
Tirés du sein du vide, et formés sans matière,
Arrondis sans compas, et tournans sans pivot,
Ont à peine couté la dépense d'un mot!"

spectable than that of which she had been so basely defrauded.

There is a great deal, in the first of these volumes, about the statue that was voted to Voltaire by his disciples in 1770.—Pigalle the sculptor was despatched to Ferney to model him, in spite of the opposition he affects to make in a letter to Madame Necker, in which he very reasonably observes, that in order to be modelled, a man ought to have a face—but that age and sickness have so reduced him, that it is not easy to point out whereabouts his had been; that his eyes are sunk into pits three inches deep, and the small remnant of his teeth recently deserted; that his skin is like old parchment wrinkled over dry bones, and his legs and arms like dry spindles;—in short, "qu'on n'a jamais sculpté un pauvre homme dans cet état." * Phidias Pigalle, however, as he calls him, goes upon his errand, notwithstanding all these discouragements; and finds him, according to M. Grimm, in a state of great vivacity. "He skips up stairs," he assures me, "more nimbly than all his subscribers put together, and is as quick as lightning in running to shut doors, and open windows; but, with all this, he is very anxious to pass for a poor man in the last extremities; and would take it much amiss if he thought that any body had discovered the secret of his health and vigour." Some awkward person, indeed, it appears, has been complimenting him upon the occasion; for he writes me as follows:—"My dear Friend—Though Phidias Pigalle is the most virtuous of mortals, he calumniates me cruelly; I understand he goes about saying that I am quite well, and as sleek as a monk!—Such is the ungrateful return he makes for the pains I took to force my spirits for his amusement, and to puff up my buccinatory muscles, in order to look well in his eyes!—Jean Jacques, to be sure, is far more puffed up than I am; but it is with conceit—from which I am free." In another letter he says,—"When the peasants in my village saw Pigalle laying out some of the instruments of his art, they flocked round us with great glee, and said, Ah! he is going to *dissect* him—how droll!—so one spectacle, you see, is just as good for some people as another."

The account which Pigalle himself gives of his mission, is extremely characteristic. For the first eight days, he could make nothing of his patient,—he was so restless and full of grimaces, starts, and gesticulations. He promised every night, indeed, to give him a long sitting next day, and always kept his word;—but then, he could no more sit still, than a child of three years old. He dictated letters all the time to his secretary; and, in the mean time, kept blowing peas in the air, making *pirouettes* round his chamber, or indulging in other feats of activity, equally fatal to the views of the artist. Poor Phidias was about to return to Paris in despair, without having made the slightest progress in his design; when the conversation happening by good luck to turn upon Aaron's golden calf, and Pigalle having said that he did not think such a thing could possibly be modelled and cast in less than six months, the Patriarch was so pleased with him, that he submitted to any thing he thought proper all the rest of the day, and the model was completed that very evening.

There are a number of other anecdotes, extremely characteristic of the vivacity, impatience, and want of restraint which distinguished this extraordinary person. One of the most amusing is that of the congé which he gave to the Abbé Coyer, who was kind enough to come to his castle of Ferney, with the intention of paying a long visit. The second morning, however, the Patriarch interrupted him in the middle of a dull account of his travels, with this perplexing question, "Do you know, M. l'Abbé, in what you differ entirely from Don Quixotte?" The poor Abbé was unable to define the precise point of distinction; and the philosopher was pleased to add, "Why, you know the Don took all the inns on his road for castles,—but it appears to me that you take some castles for inns." The Abbé decamped without waiting for a further reckoning. He behaved still worse to a M. de Barthe, whom he invited to come and read a play to him, and afterwards drove out of the house, by the yawns and frightful contortions with which he amused himself, during the whole of the performance.

One of his happiest repartees is said to have been made to an Englishman, who had recently been on a visit to the celebrated Haller, in whose praise Voltaire enlarged with great warmth, extolling him as a great poet, a great

naturalist, and a man of universal attainments. The Englishman answered, that it was very handsome in M. de Voltaire to speak so well of Mr. Haller, inasmuch as he, the said Mr. Haller, was by no means so liberal to M. de Voltaire. "Ah!" said the Patriarch, with an air of philosophic indulgence, "I dare say we are both of us very much mistaken."

On another occasion, a certain M. de St. Ange, who valued himself on the graceful turn of his compliments, having come to see him, took his leave with this studied allusion to the diversity of his talents, "My visit to-day has only been to Homer — another morning I shall pay my respects to Sophocles and Euripides — another to Tacitus — and another to Lucian." "Ah, Sir!" replied the Patriarch, "I am wretchedly old, — could you not contrive to see all these gentlemen together?" M. Mercier, who had the same passion for fine speeches, told him one day, "You outdo every body so much in their own way, that I am sure you will beat Fontenelle even, in longevity." "No, no, Sir!" answered the Patriarch, "Fontenelle was a Norman: and, you may depend upon it, contrived to trick Nature out of her rights."

One of the most prolific sources of witticisms that is noticed in this collection, is the Patriarch's elevation to the dignity of temporal father of the Capuchins in his district. The cream of the whole, however, may be found in the following letter of his to M. de Richelieu.

"Je voudrais bien, monseigneur, avoir le plaisir de vous donner ma bénédiction avant de mourir. L'expression vous paraîtra un peu forte: elle est pourtant dans la vérité. J'ai l'honneur d'être capucin. Notre général qui est à Rome, vient de m'envoyer mes patentes; mon titre est, *Frère Spirituel et Père Temporel des Capucins.* Mandez-moi laquelle de vos maîtresses vous voulez rétirer du purgatoire: je vous jure sur ma barbe qu'elle n'y sera pas dans vingt-quatre heures. Comme je dois me détacher des biens de ce monde, j'ai abandonné à mes parens ce qui m'est dû par la succession de feu madame la princesse de Guise, et par M. votre intendant; ils iront à ce sujet prendre vos ordres qu'ils regarderont comme un bienfait. Je vous donne ma bénédiction. Signé VOLTAIRE, Capucin indigne, et qui n'a pas encore eu de bonne fortune de capucin." — Pp. 54, 55.

We have very full details of the last days of this distinguished person. He came to Paris, as is well known, after twenty-seven years' absence, at the age of eighty-four; and the very evening he arrived, he recited himself the whole of his Irene to the players, and passed all the rest of the night in correcting the piece for representation. A few days after, he was seized with a violent vomiting of blood, and instantly called stoutly for a priest, saying that they should not throw him out on the dunghill. A priest was accordingly brought; and the Patriarch very gravely subscribed a profession of his faith in the Christian religion — of which he was ashamed, and attempted to make a jest, as soon as he recovered. He was received with unexampled honours at the Academy, the whole members of which rose together, and came out to the vestibule to escort him into the hall; while, on the exterior, all the avenues, windows, and roofs of houses, by which his carriage had to pass, were crowded with spectators, and resounded with acclamations. But the great scene of his glory was the theatre; in which he no sooner appeared, than the whole audience rose up, and continued for upwards of twenty minutes in thunders of applause and shouts of acclamation that filled the whole house with dust and agitation. When the piece was concluded, the curtain was again drawn up, and discovered the bust of their idol in the middle of the stage, while the favourite actress placed a crown of laurel on its brows, and recited some verses, the words of which could scarcely be distinguished amidst the tumultuous shouts of the spectators. The whole scene, says M. Grimm, reminded us of the classic days of Greece and Rome. But it became more truly touching at the moment when its object rose to retire. Weakened and agitated by the emotions he had experienced, his limbs trembled beneath him; and, bending almost to the earth, he seemed ready to expire under the weight of years and honours that had been laid upon him. His eyes, filled with tears, still sparkled with a peculiar fire in the midst of his pale and faded countenance. All the beauty and all the rank of France crowded round him in the lobbies and staircases, and literally bore him in their arms to the door of his carriage. Here the humbler multitude took their turn; and, calling for torches that all might get a sight of him, clustered round his coach, and followed it to the door of his lodgings, with vehement

shouts of admiration and triumph. This is the heroic part of the scene; — but M. Grimm takes care also to let us know, that the Patriarch appeared on this occasion in long lace ruffles, and a fine coat of cut velvet, with a grey periwig of a fashion forty years old, which he used to comb every morning with his own hands, and to which nothing at all parallel had been seen for ages — except on the head of Bachaumont the novelist, who was known accordingly among the wits of Paris by the name of "Voltaire's wigblock."

This brilliant and protracted career, however, was fast drawing to a close. — Retaining to the last that untameable spirit of activity and impatience which had characterised all his past life, he assisted at rehearsals and meetings of the Academy, with the zeal and enthusiasm of early youth. At one of the latter, some objections were started to his magnificent project, of giving an improved edition of their Dictionary; — and he resolved to compose a discourse to obviate those objections. To strengthen himself for this task, he swallowed a prodigious quantity of strong coffee, and then continued at work for upwards of twelve hours without intermission. This imprudent effort brought on an inflammation in his bladder; and being told by M. de Richelieu, that he had been much relieved in a similar situation, by taking, at intervals, a few drops of laudanum, he provided himself with a large bottle of that medicine, and, with his usual impatience, swallowed the greater part of it in the course of the night. The consequence was, as might naturally have been expected, that he fell into a sort of lethargy, and never recovered the use of his faculties, except for a few minutes at a time, till the hour of his death, which happened three days after, on the evening of the 30th of May, 1778. The priest to whom he had made his confession, and another, entered his chamber a short time before he breathed his last. He recognized them with difficulty, and assured them of his respects. One of them coming close up to him, he threw his arm round his neck, as if to embrace him. But when M. le Curé, taking advantage of this cordiality, proceeded to urge him to make some sign or acknowledgment of his belief in the Christian faith, he gently pushed him back, and said, "Alas! let me die in peace." The priest turned to his companion, and, with great moderation and presence of mind, observed aloud, "You see his faculties are quite gone." They then quietly left the apartment; — and the dying man having testified his gratitude to his kind and vigilant attendants, and named several times the name of his favourite niece Madame Denis, shortly after expired.

Nothing can better mark the character of the work before us, and of its author, than to state, that the despatch which contains this striking account of the last hours of his illustrious patron and friend, terminates with an obscene epigram of M. Rulhiere, and a gay critique on the new administration of the Opera Buffa! There are various epitaphs on Voltaire, scattered through the sequel of the volume: — we prefer this very brief one, by a lady of Lausanne:

"*Ci gît l'enfant gaté du monde qu'il gata.*"

Among the other proofs which M. Grimm has recorded of the celebrity of this extraordinary person, the incredible multitude of his portraits that were circulated, deserves to be noticed. One ingenious artist, in particular, of the name of Huber, had acquired such a facility in forming his countenance, that he could not only cut most striking likenesses of him out of paper, with scissors held behind his back, but could mould a little bust of him in half a minute, out of a bit of bread, and at last used to make his *dog* manufacture most excellent profiles, by making him bite off the edge of a biscuit, which he held to him in three or four different positions!

There is less about *Rousseau* in these volumes than we should expect from their author's early intimacy with that great writer. What there is, however, is candid and judicious. M. Grimm agrees with Madame de Staël, that Rousseau was nothing of a Frenchman in his character; — and accordingly he observes, that though the magic of his style and the extravagance of his sentiments procured him some crazy disciples, he never had any hearty partisans among the enlightened part of the nation. He laughs a good deal at his affectations and unpardonable animosities, — but gives, at all times, the highest praise to his genius, and sets him above all his contem-

poraries, for the warmth, the elegance, and the singular richness of his style. He says, that the general opinion at Paris was, that he had poisoned himself; — that his natural disposition to melancholy had increased in an alarming degree after his return from England, and had been aggravated by the sombre and solitary life to which he had condemned himself; — that mind, he adds, at once too strong and too weak to bear the burden of existence with tranquillity, was perpetually prolific of monsters and of phantoms, that haunted all his steps, and drove him to the borders of distraction. There is no doubt, continues M. Grimm, that for many months before his death, he had firmly persuaded himself that all the powers of Europe had their eyes fixed upon him as a most dangerous and portentous being, whom they should take the first opportunity to destroy. He was also satisfied that M. de Choiseul had projected and executed the conquest of Corsica, for no other purpose but to deprive him of the honour of legislating for it; and that Prussia and Russia had agreed to partition Poland upon the same jealous and unworthy consideration. While the potentates of Europe were thus busied in thwarting and mortifying him abroad, the philosophers, he was persuaded, were entirely devoted to the same project at home. They had spies, he firmly believed, posted round all his steps, and were continually making efforts to rouse the populace to insult and murder him. At the head of this conspiracy, of the reality of which he no more doubted than of his existence, he had placed the Duc de Choiseul, his physician Tronchin, M. D'Alembert, and our author! — But we must pass to characters less known or familiar.

The gayest, and the most naturally gay perhaps of all the coterie, was the Abbé *Galiani*, a Neapolitan, who had resided for many years in Paris, but had been obliged, very much against his will, to return to his own country about the time that this journal commenced. M. Grimm inserts a variety of his letters, in all of which the infantine petulance and freedom of his character are distinctly marked, as well as the singular acuteness and clearness of his understanding. The first is written immediately after his exile from Paris in 1770.

"Madame, je suis toujours inconsolable d'avoir quitté Paris; et encore plus inconsolable de n'avoir reçu aucune nouvelle ni de vous, ni du paresseux philosophe. Est-il possible que ce monstre, dans son impassibilité, ne sente pas à quel point mon honneur, ma gloire, dont je me fiche, mon plaisir et celui de mes amis, dont je me soucie beaucoup, sont intéressés dans l'affaire que je lui ai confiée, et combien je suis impatient d'apprendre qu'en fin la pacotille a doublé le cap et passé le terrible défilé de la révision: car, après cela, je serai tranquille sur le reste.

"Mon voyage a été très heureux sur la terre et sur l'onde; il a même été d'un bonheur inconcevable. Je n'ai jamais eu chaud, et toujours le vent en poupe sur le Rhône et sur la mer; il paraît que tout me pousse à m'éloigner de tout ce que j'aime au monde. L'héroïsme sera donc bien plus grand et bien plus mémorable, de vaincre les élémens, la nature, les dieux conspirés, et de retourner à Paris en dépit d'eux. Oui, Paris est ma patrie; on aura beau m'en exiler, j'y retomberai. Attendez-vouz donc à me voir établi dans la rue Fromenteau, au quatrième, sur le derrière, chez la nommée ..., fille majeure. Là demeurera le plus grand génie de notre âge, en pension à trente sous par jour; et il sera heureux. Quel plaisir que de délirer! Adieu. Je vous prie d'envoyer vos lettres toujours à l'hôtel de l'ambassadeur.

"Grimm est-il de retour de son voyage?"

Another to the Baron Holbach is nearly in the same tone.

"Que faites-vous, mon cher baron? Vous amusez-vouz? La baronne se porte-t-elle bien? Comment vont vos enfans? La philosophie, dont vous êtes le premier maître d'hôtel, mange-t-elle toujours d'un aussi bon appétit?

"Pour moi, je m'ennuie mortellement ici; je ne vois personne, excepté deux ou trois Français. Je suis le Gulliver revenu du pays des Hoyinhyims, qui ne fait plus société qu'avec ses deux chevaux. Je vais rendre des visites de devoir aux femmes des deux ministres d'état et de finances; et puis je dors ou je rêve. Quelle vie! Rien n'amuse ici: point d'édits, point de réductions, point de retenues, point de suspensions de paiemens: la vie y est d'une uniformité tuante; on ne dispute de rien, pas même de religion. Ah! mon cher Paris! ah! que je te regrette!

"Donnez-moi quelques nouvelles littéraires, mais n'en attendez pas en revanche. Pour les grands évènemens en Europe, je crois que nous en allons devenir le bureau. On dit, en effet, que la flotte Russe a enfin débarque à Patras, que toute la Morée s'est révoltée et déclarée en faveur des débarqués, et que sans coup ferir ils s'en sont rendus maîtres, excepté des villes de Corinthe et de Napoli de Romanie: cela mérite confirmation. Quelle aventure! Nous serons limitrophes des Russes; et d'Otrante à Pétersbourg il n'y aura plus qu'un pas, et un petit trajet de mer: *Dux*

fœmina facti. Une femme aura fait cela! Cela est trop beau pour être vrai."

The next is not such pure trifling.

"Vous avez reconnu Voltaire dans son sermon; moi je n'y reconnais que l'écho de feu M. de Voltaire. Ah! il rabâche trop à présent. Sa Catherine est une maîtresse femme, parce qu'elle est intolérante et conquérante; tous les grands hommes ont été intolérans, et il faut l'être. Si l'on rencontre sur son chemin un prince sot, il faut lui prêcher la tolérance, afin qu'il donne dans le piège, et que le parti écrasé ait le temps de se relever par la tolérance qu'on lui accorde, et d'écraser son adversaire à son tour. Ainsi le sermon sur la tolérance est un sermon fait aux sots ou aux gens dupes, ou à des gens qui n'ont aucun intérêt dans la chose: voilà pourquoi, quelquefois, un prince séculier doit écouter la tolérance; c'est lorsque l'affaire intéresse les prêtres sans intéresser les souverains. Mais en Pologne, les évêques sont tout à la fois prêtres et souverains, et, s'ils le peuvent, ils feront fort bien de chasser les Russes, et d'envoyer au diable tous les Dissidens; et Catherine fera fort bien d'écraser les évêques si cela lui réussit. Moi je n'en crois rien; je crois que les Russes écraseront les Turcs par contre-coup, et ne feront qu'agrandir et réveiller les Polonais, comme Philippe II. et la maison d'Autriche écrasèrent l'Allemagne et l'Italie, en voulant troubler la France qu'ils ne firent qu'ennoblir: voilà mes prophéties."

"Votre lettre du 8 juin n'est point gaie; il s'en faut même beaucoup: vous avouez vous-même que vous n'avez que quelques lueurs de gaieté; je crains que cela ne tienne au physique, et que vous ne vous portiez pas bien: voilà ce qui me fâche. Pour moi, je fais tout ce que je puis pour vous égayer, et ce n'est pas un petit effort pour moi: car je suis si ennuyé de mon existence ici, qu'en vérité je deviens homme d'affaires et homme grave de jour en jour davantage, et je finirai par devenir Nepolitain, tout comme un autre."

Another contains some admirable remarks on the character of Cicero, introduced in the same style of perfect ease and familiarity.

"On peut regarder Cicéron comme littérateur, comme philosophe et comme homme d'état. Il a été un des plus grands littérateurs qui aient jamais été; il savait tout ce qu'on savait de son temps, excepté la géométrie et autres sciences de ce genre. Il était médiocre philosophe: car il savait tout ce que les Grecs avaient pensé, et le rendait avec une clarté admirable, mais il ne pensait rien et n'avait pas la force de rien imaginer. Comme homme d'état, Cicéron, étant d'une basse extraction, et voulant parvenir, aurait dû se jeter dans le parti de l'opposition, de la chambre basse ou du peuple, si vous voulez. Cela lui était d'autant plus aisé, que Marius, fondateur de ce parti, était de son pays. Il en fut même tenté, car il débuta par attaquer Sylla et par se lier avec les gens du parti de l'opposition, à la tête desquels, après la mort de Marius, étaient Claudius, Catilina, César. Mais le parti des grands avait besoin d'un jurisconsulte et d'un savant; car les grands seigneurs, en général, ne savent ni lire ni écrire; il sentit donc qu'on aurait plus besoin de lui dans le parti des grands, et qu'il y jouerait un rôle plus brillant. Il s'y jeta, et dès-lors on vit un homme nouveau, un parvenu, mêlé avec les patriciens. Figurez-vous en Angleterre un avocat dont la cour a besoin pour faire un chancelier, et qui suit par conséquent le parti du ministère. Cicéron brilla donc à côté de Pompée, etc., toutes les fois qu'il était question de choses de jurisprudence; mais il lui manquait la naissance, les richesses; et surtout n'étant pas homme de guerre, il jouait de ce côté-là un rôle subalterne. D'ailleurs, par inclination naturelle, il aimait le parti de César, et il était fatigué de la morgue des grands qui lui faisaient sentir souvent le prix des bienfaits dont on l'avait comblé. Il n'était pas pusillanime, il était incertain; il ne défendait pas des scélérats, il défendait les gens de son parti qui ne valaient guère mieux que ceux du parti contraire."

We shall add only the following.

"Le dialogue des tableaux du Louvre intéresse peu à cinq cents lieues de Paris; le baron de Gleichen et moi, nous en avons ri: personne ne nous aurait entendus. Au reste, à propos des tableaux, je remarque que le caractère dominant des Français perce toujours; ils sont causeurs, raisonneurs, badins par essence. Un mauvais tableau enfante une bonne brochure; ainsi vous parlerez mieux des arts que vous ne les cultiverez jamais. Il se trouvera au bout du compte, dans quelques siècles, que vous aurez le mieux raisonné, le mieux discuté, ce que toutes les autres nations auront fait de mieux. Chérissez donc l'imprimerie, c'est votre lot dans ce bas monde. Mais vous avez mis un impôt sur le papier. Quelle sottise! Plaisanterie à part, un impôt sur le papier est la faute en politique la plus forte que se soit commise en France depuis un siècle. Il valait mieux faire la banqueroute universelle, et laisser au Français le plaisir de parler à l'Europe à peu de frais. Vous avez plus conquis de pays par les livres que par les armes. Vous ne devez la gloire de la nation qu'à vos ouvrages, et vous voulez vous forcer à vous taire!

"Ma belle dame, s'il servait à quelque chose de pleurer les morts, je viendrais pleurer avec vous la perte de notre Helvétius; mais la mort n'est autre chose que le regret des vivans; si nous ne le regrettons pas, il n'est pas mort: tout comme si nous ne l'avions jamais ni connu ni aimé, il ne serait pas né. Tout ce qui existe, existe en nous par rapport à nous. Souvenez-vous que le petit prophète faisait de la métaphysique lorsqu'il était triste; j'en fais de même à présent. Mais enfin le mal de la perte d'Helvétius est le vide qu'il laisse dans la ligne du bataillon. Serrons donc les lignes, aimons nous davantage, nous qui restons, et il n'y paraîtra pas. Moi qui suis le major de ce malheureux régiment, je vous crie à tous: Serrez les lignes, avancez, feu! On ne s'apercevra pas de notre perte. Ses enfans n'ont perdu ni jeunesse ni beauté par la mort de leur père; elles ont gagné la

qualité d'héritières: pourquoi diable allez-vous pleurer sur leur sort? Elles se marieront, n'en doutez pas: *cet oracle est plus sûr que celui de Calchas.* Sa femme est plus à plaindre, à moins qu'elle ne rencontre un gendre aussi raisonnable que son mari, ce qui n'est pas bien aisé, mais plus aisé à Paris qu'ailleurs. Il y a encore bien des mœurs, des vertus, de l'heroïsme dans votre Paris; il y en a plus qu'ailleurs, croyez-moi: c'est ce qui me le fait regretter, et me le fera peut-être revoir un jour."

The notice of the death of *Helvetius*, contained in this last extract, leads us naturally to turn to the passage in M. Grimm in which this event is commemorated; and we there find a very full and curious account of this zealous philosopher. Helvetius was of Dutch extraction; and his father having been chief physician to the Queen, the son was speedily appointed to the very lucrative situation of Farmer-general of the Finances. He was remarkably good-tempered, benevolent, and liberal; and passed his youth in idle and voluptuous indulgence, keeping a sort of seraglio as a part of his establishment, and exercising himself with universal applause in the noble science of dancing, in which he attained such eminence, that he is said to have several times supplied the place of the famous Dupré in the ballets at the opera. An unhappy passion for literary glory came, however, to disturb this easy life. The paradoxes and effrontery of Maupertuis had brought science into fashion; and for a season, no supper was thought complete at Paris without a mathematician. Helvetius therefore betook himself immediately to the study of geometry: but he could make no hand of it; and fortunately the rage passed away before he had time to expose himself in the eyes of the initiated. Next came the poetical glory of Voltaire; — and Helvetius instantly resolved to be a poet — and did with great labour produce a long poem on Happiness, which was not published, however, till after his death, and has not improved his chance for immortality. But it was the success of the President Montesquieu's celebrated Esprit des Loix, that finally decided the literary vocation of Helvetius. That work appeared in 1749; and in 1750 the Farmer-general actually resigned his office; married, retired into the country, and spent ten long years in digesting his own book *De l'Esprit*, by which he fondly expected to rival the fame of his illustrious predecessor. In this, however, he was wofully disappointed. The book appeared to philosophers to be nothing but a paradoxical and laborious repetition of truths and difficulties with which all good thinkers had long been familiar; and it probably would have fallen into utter oblivion, had it not been for the injudicious clamour which was raised against it by the bigots and devotees of the court. Poor Helvetius, who had meant nothing more than to make himself remarkable, was as much surprised at the outcries of the godly, as at the silence of the philosophers; and never perfectly recovered the shock of this double disappointment. He still continued, however, his habits of kindness and liberality — gave dinners to the men of letters when at Paris, and hunted and compiled philosophy with great perseverance in the country. His temper was so good that his society could not fail to be agreeable; but his conversation, it seems, was not very captivating; he loved to push every matter of discussion to its very last results; and reasoned at times so very loosely and largely as to be in danger of being taken for a person very much overtaken with liquor. He died of gout in his stomach, at the age of fifty-six; and, as an author, is now completely forgotten.

Nobody makes a better or a more amiable figure in this book, than Madame Geoffrin. Active, reasonable, indulgent, and munificent beyond example for a woman in private life, she laid a sure claim to popularity by taking for her maxim the duty of "giving and forgiving;" and showed herself so gentle in her deportment to children and servants, that if she had not been overcome with an unlucky passion for intrigue and notoriety, she might have afforded one exception at least to the general heartlessness of the society to which she belonged. Some of the repartees recorded of her in these volumes, are very remarkable. M. de Rulhiere threatened to make public, certain very indiscreet remarks on the court of Russia, from the sale of which he expected great profits. Madame Geoffrin, who thought he would get into difficulties by taking such a step, offered him a very handsome sum to put his manuscript in the fire. He answered her with many lofty and animated observations on the meanness and unworthiness of taking

money to suppress truth. To all which the lady listened with the utmost complacency; and merely replied: "Well! say yourself how much more you must have." Another *mot* of hers became an established canon at all the tables of Paris. The Comte de Coigny was wearying her one evening with some interminable story, when, upon somebody sending for a part of the dish before him, he took a little knife out of his pocket, and began to carve, talking all the time as before. "Monsieur le Comte," said Madame Geoffrin, a little out of patience, "at table there should only be large knives and short stories." In her old age she was seized with apoplexy; and her daughter, during her illness, refused access to the philosophers. When she recovered a little, she laughed at the precaution, and made her daughter's apology—by saying, "She had done like Godfrey of Bouillon—defended her tomb from the Infidels." The idea of her ending in devotion, however, occasioned much merriment and some scandal among her philosophical associates.

The name of *Marmontel* occurs very often in this collection; but it is not attended with any distinguished honours. M. Grimm accuses him of want of force or passion in his style, and of poverty of invention and littleness of genius. He says something, however, of more importance on occasion of the first representation of that writer's foolish little piece, entitled "*Silvain*." The courtiers and sticklers for rank, he observes, all pretended to be mightily alarmed at *the tendency* of this little opera in one act; and the Duc de Noailles took the trouble to say, that its plain object was to show that a gentleman could do nothing so amiable as to marry his maid-servant, and let his cottagers kill his game at their pleasure. It is really amusing, continues M. Grimm, to observe, how positive many people are, that all this is the result of a deep plot on the part of the Encyclopedistes, and that this silly farce is the fruit of a solemn conspiracy against the privileged orders, and in support of the horrible doctrine of universal equality. If they would only condescend to consult me, however, he concludes, I could oblige them with a much simpler, though less magnificent solution of the mystery; the truth being, that the extravagance of M. Marmontel's little plot proceeds neither from his love of equality, nor from the commands of an anti-social conspiracy, but purely from the poverty of his imagination, and his want of talent for dramatic composition. It is always much more easy to astonish by extravagance, than to interest by natural representations; and those common-places, of love triumphing over pride of birth, and benevolence getting the better of feudal prejudices, are among the most vulgar resources of those who are incapable of devising incidents at once probable and pathetic.

This was written in the year 1770;—and while it serves to show us, that the imputation of conspiracies against the throne and the altar, of which succeeding times were doomed to hear so much, were by no means an original invention of the age which gave them the greatest encouragement: it may help also to show upon what slight foundation such imputations are usually hazarded. Great national changes, indeed, are never the result of conspiracies—but of causes laid deep and wide in the structure and condition of society,—and which necessarily *produce* those combinations of individuals, who seem to be the authors of the revolution when it happens to be ultimately brought about by their instrumentality. The Holy Church Philosophic of Paris, however, was certainly quite innocent of any such intention; and, we verily believe, had at no time any deeper views in its councils than are expressed in the following extract from its registers.

"Comme il est d'usage, dans notre sainte Eglise philosophique, de nous réunir quelquefois pour donner aux fidèles de salutaires et utiles instructions sur l'état actuel de la foi, les progrès et bonnes œuvres de nos frères, j'ai l'honneur de vous adresser les annonces et bans qui ont eu lieu à la suite de notre dernier sermon.

"Frère Thomas fait savoir qu'il a composé un *Essai sur les Femmes*, qui fera un ouvrage considérable. L'Eglise estime la pureté de mœurs et les vertus de frère Thomas; elle craint qu'il ne connaisse pas encore assez les femmes; elle lui conseille de se lier plus intimement, s'il se peut, avec quelques unes des héroïnes qu'il fréquente, pour le plus grand bien de son ouvrage; et, pour le plus grand bien de son style, elle le conjure de considérer combien, suivant la découverte de notre illustre patriarche, l'adjectif affaiblit souvent le substantif, quoiqu'il s'y rapporte en cas, en nombre et en genre.

"Sœur Necker fait savoir qu'elle donnera toujours à dîner les vendredis: l'Eglise s'y rendra, parce qu'elle fait cas de sa personne et de celle de son époux; elle voudrait pouvoir en dire autant de son cuisinier.

"Sœur de l'Espinasse fait savoir que sa fortune ne lui permet pas d'offrir ni à dîner, ni à souper, et qu'elle n'en a pas moins d'envie de recevoir chez elle les frères qui voudront y venir digérer. L'Eglise m'ordonne de lui dire qu'elle s'y rendra, et que, quand on a autant d'esprit et de mérite, on peut se passer de beauté et de fortune.

"Mère de Geoffrin fait savoir qu'elle renouvelle les défenses et lois prohibitives des années précédentes, et qu'il ne sera pas plus permis que par le passé de parler chez elle ni d'affaires intérieures, ni d'affaires extérieures; ni d'affaires de la cour, ni d'affaires de la ville; ni de paix, ni de guerre; ni de religion, ni de gouvernement; ni de théologie, ni de métaphysique; ni de grammaire, ni de musique; ni, en général, d'aucune matière quelconque; et qu'elle commet dom Burigni, bénédictin de robe courte, pour faire taire tout le monde, à cause de sa dextérité connue, et du grand crédit dont il jouit, et pour être grondé par elle, en particulier, de toutes les contraventions à ces défenses. L'église, considérant que le silence, et notamment sur les matières dont est question, n'est pas son fort, promet d'obéir autant qu'elle y sera contrainte par forme de violence."

We hear a great deal, of course, of *Diderot*, in a work of which he was partly the author; and it is impossible to deny him the praise of ardour, originality, and great occasional eloquence. Yet we not only feel neither respect nor affection for Diderot — but can seldom read any of his lighter pieces without a certain degree of disgust. There is a tone of *blackguardism*—(we really can find no other word) — both in his indecency and his profanity, which we do not recollect to have met with in any other good writer, and which is apt, we think, to prove revolting even to those who are accustomed to the licence of this fraternity. They who do not choose to look into his *Religieuse* for the full illustration of this remark—and we advise no one to look there for any thing — may find it abundantly, though in a less flagrant form, in a little essay on women, which is inserted in these volumes as a supplement or corrective to the larger work of M. Thomas on that subject. We must say, however, that the whole tribe of French writers who have had any pretensions to philosophy for the last seventy years, are infected with a species of indelicacy which is peculiar, we think, to their nation; and strikes us as more shameful and offensive than any other. We do not know very well how to describe it, otherwise than by saying, that it consists in a strange combination of physical science with obscenity, and an attempt to unite the pedantic and disgusting details of anatomy and physiology with images of voluptuousness and sensuality; — an attempt, we think, exceedingly disgusting and debasing, but not in the least degree either seductive or amusing. Maupertuis and Voltaire, and Helvetius and Diderot, are full of this. Buffon and D'Alembert are by no means free of it; and traces of it may even be discovered in the writings of Rousseau himself. We could pardon some details in the Emile — or the Confessions; — but we own it appears to us the most nauseous and unnatural of all things to find the divine Julie herself informing her cousin, with much complacency, that she had at last discovered, that "quoique son cœur trop tendre avoit besoin d'amour, ses sens n'avoient plus besoin d'un amant."

The following epigram is a little in the taste we have been condemning; — but it has the merit of being excessively clever. Madame du Chatelet had long lived separate from her husband, and was understood to receive the homage of two lovers — Voltaire and M. de St. Lambert. She died in childbirth; and the following dramatic elegy was circulated all over Paris the week after that catastrophe.

"*M. de Chatelet.* — Ah! ce n'est pas ma faute!

"*M. de Voltaire.* — Je l'avais predit!

"*M. de St. Lambert.* — Elle l'a voulu!"

Crebillon the younger is naturally brought to our recollection by the mention of wit and indecency. We have an account of his death, and a just and candid estimate of his merits, in one of the volumes before us. However frivolous and fantastic the style of his novels may appear, he had still the merit of inventing that style, and of adorning it with much ingenuity, wit, and character. The taste for his writings, it seems, passed away very rapidly and completely in France; and long before his death, the author of the *Sopha* and *Les Egaremens du Cœur et de l'Esprit*, had the mortification to be utterly forgotten by the public. M. Grimm thinks this reverse of fortune rather unmerited; and observes, that in foreign countries he was still held in estimation, and that

few French productions had had such currency in London as the *Sopha.* The reason, perhaps, may be, that the manners and characters which the French at once knew to be unnatural, might be mistaken by us for true copies of French originals. It is a little more difficult, however, to account for the fact, that the perusal of his works inspired a young lady of good family in this country with such a passion for the author, that she ran away from her friends, came to Paris, married him, and nursed and attended him with exemplary tenderness and affection to his dying day. But there is nothing but luck, good or bad — as M. Grimm sagely observes — in this world. The author of a licentious novel inspires a romantic passion in a lady of rank and fortune, who crosses seas, and abandons her family and her native country for his sake; — while the author of the *Nouvelle Heloise*, the most delicate and passionate of all lovers that ever existed, is obliged to clap up a match with his singularly stupid chambermaid!

Of all the loves, however, that are recorded in this chronicle, the loves of Madame du Deffant and M. de Pont-de-Vesle, are the most exemplary; for they lasted upwards of fifty years without quarrel or intermission. The secret of this wonderful constancy is, at all events, worth knowing; and we give it in the words of an authentic dialogue between this venerable Acmé and Septimius.

"Pont-de-Vesle? — Madame? — Où êtes-vous? — Au coin de votre cheminée. — Couché les pieds sur les chenets, comme on est chez ses amis? — Oui, Madame. — Il faut convenir qu'il est peu de liaisons aussi anciennes que la nôtre. — Cela est vrai. — Il y a cinquante ans. — Oui, cinquante ans passés. — Et dans ce long intervalle aucun nuage, pas même l'apparence d'une brouillerie. — C'est ce que j'ai toujours admiré. — Mais, Pont-de-Vesle, cela ne viendrait-il point de ce qu'au fond nous avons toujours été fort indifférens l'un à l'autre? — Cela se pourrait bien, Madame."

The evening this veteran admirer died, she came rather late to a great supper in the neighbourhood; and as it was known that she made it a point of honour to attend on him, the catastrophe was generally suspected. She mentioned it, however, herself, immediately on coming in; — adding, that it was lucky he had gone off so early in the evening, as she might otherwise have been prevented from appearing. She then sate down to table, and made a very hearty and merry meal of it!

Besides Pont-de-Vesle, however, this celebrated lady had a lover, almost as ancient, in the President Henault — whom also she had the misfortune to survive; though he had the complaisance, as well as his predecessor, to live to near ninety years for her sake. The poor president, however, fell into dotage before his death; and one day, when in that state, Madame du Deffant having happened to ask him whether he liked her or Madame de Castelmoron the best, he, quite unconscious of the person to whom he was speaking, not only declared his preference of the absent lady, but proceeded to justify it by a most feeling and accurate enumeration of the vices and defects of his hearer, in which he grew so warm and eloquent, that it was quite impossible either to stop him, or to prevent all who were present from profiting by the communication. When Madame de Chatelet died, Madame du Deffant testified her grief for the most intimate of her female acquaintance, by circulating all over Paris, the very next morning, the most libellous and venomous attack on her person, her understanding, and her morals. When she came to die herself, however, she met with just about as much sympathy as she deserved. Three of her dearest friends used to come and play cards every evening by the side of her couch—and as she chose to die in the middle of a very interesting game, they quietly played it out — and settled their accounts before leaving the apartment. We hope these little traits go near to justify what we ventured to say in the outset, of the tendency of large and agreeable society to *fortify* the heart; — at all events, they give us a pretty lively idea of the *liaisons* that united kindred souls at Paris. We might add to the number several anecdotes of the President Henault — and of the Baron d'Holbach, who told Helvetius, a little time before the death of the latter, that though he had lived all his life with irritable and indigent men of letters, he could not recollect that he had either quarrelled with, or done the smallest service to, any one among them.

There is a great deal of admirable criticism in this work, upon the writings and genius of almost all the author's contemporaries—Dorat, Piron, Millot, Bernard, Mirabeau, Moncrif,

Colardeau, and many others, more or less generally known in this country; nor do we know any publication, indeed, so well calculated to give a stranger a just and comprehensive view of the recent literature of France. The little we can afford to extract, however, must be hung upon names more notorious.

The publication of a stupid journal of *Montaigne's* Travels in Italy gives M. Grimm an opportunity of saying something of the Essays of that most agreeable veteran. Nothing can be more just than the greater part of the following observations.

"Quoiqu'il y ait dans ses *Essais* une infinité de faits, d'anecdotes et de citations, il n'est pas difficile de s'apercevoir que ses études n'etaient ni vastes ni profondes. Il n'avait guère lu que quelques poëtes latins, quelques livres de voyage, et son Sénèque et son Plutarque.

"De tous les auteurs qui nous restent de l'antiquité, Plutarque est, sans contredit, celui qui a recueilli le plus de vérités de fait et de spéculation. Ses œuvres sont une mine inépuisable de lumières et de connaissances: c'est vraiment l'Encyclopédie des anciens. Montaigne nous en a donné la fleur, et il y a ajouté les reflexions les plus fines, et sur-tout les résultats les plus secrets de sa propre expérience. Il me semble donc que si j'avais à donner une idée de ses *Essais*, je dirais en deux mots que c'est un commentaire que Montaigne fit sur lui-même en méditant les écrits de Plutarque... Je pense encore que je dirais mal: ce serait lui prêter un prôjet... Montaigne n'en avait aucun. En mettant la plume à la main, il paraît n'avoir songé qu'au plaisir de causer familièrement avec son lecteur. Il lui rend compte de ses lectures, de ses pensées, de ses reflexions, sans suite, sans dessein: il veut avoir le plaisir de penser tout haut, et il en jouit à son aise. Il cite souvent Plutarque, parce que Plutarque était son livre favori. La seule loi qu'il semble s'être prescrite, c'est de ne jamais parler que de ce qui l'intéressait vivement: de là l'énergie et la vivacité de ses expressions, la grace et l'originalité de son langage. Son esprit a cette assurance et cette franchise aimable que l'on ne trouve que dans ces enfans bien nés dont la contrainte du monde et de l'éducation ne gêna point encore les mouvemens faciles et naturels."

After a still farther encomium on the sound sense of this favourite writer, M. Grimm concludes—

"Personne n'a-t-il donc pensé plus que Montaigne? Je l'ignore. Mais ce que je crois bien savoir, c'est que personne n'a dit avec plus de simplicité ce qu'il a senti, ce qu'il a pensé. On ne peut rien ajouter à l'éloge qu'il a fait lui-même de son ouvrage; *c'est ici un livre de bonne foi.* Cela est divin, et cela est exact."

"Qu'est-ce que toutes les connaissances humaines? le cercle en est si borné! .... Et depuis quatre mille ans, qu'a-t-on fait pour l'étendre? Montesquieu a dit quelque part, *qu'il travaillait à un livre de douze pages, qui contiendrait tout ce que nous savons sur la Métaphysique, la Politique et la Morale, et tout ce que de grands auteurs ont oublié dans les volumes qu'ils ont donnés sur ces sciences-là.* .... Je suis très sérieusement persuadé qu'il ne tenait qu'à lui d'accomplir ce grand projet."

Montesquieu, Buffon, and Raynal are the only authors, we think, of whom M. Grimm speaks with serious respect and admiration. Great praise is lavished upon Robertson's Charles V. — Young's Night Thoughts are said, and with justice, to be rather ingenious than pathetic; and to show more of a gloomy imagination than a feeling heart. — Thomson's Seasons are less happily stigmatized as excessively ornate and artificial, and said to stand in the same relation to the Georgics, that the Lady of Loretto, with all her tawdry finery, bears to the naked graces of the Venus de Medici.—Johnson's Life of Savage is extolled as exceedingly entertaining — though the author is laughed at, in the true Parisian taste, for not having made a jest of his hero.—Hawkesworth's Voyages are also very much commended; and Sir William Jones's letter to *Anquetil du Perron*, is said to be capable, with a few retrenchments, of being made worthy of the pen of the Patriarch himself.—Mrs. Montagu's Essay on Shakspeare is also applauded to the full extent of its merits; and, indeed, a very laudable degree of candour and moderation is observed as to our national taste in the drama. — Shakspeare, he observes, is fit for us, and Racine for them: and each should be satisfied with his lot, and would do well to keep to his own national manner. When we attempt to be regular and dignified, we are merely cold and stiff; and when they aim at freedom and energy, they become absurd and extravagant. The celebrity of Garrick seems to have been scarcely less at Paris than in London, — their greatest actor being familiarly designated "Le Garrick François." His powers of pantomime, indeed, were universally intelligible, and seem to have made a prodigious impression upon the theatrical critics of France. But his authority is quoted by M. Grimm, for the observation, that there is not the smallest affinity in the tragic declamation of the two countries;—so that an actor

who could give the most astonishing effect to a passage of Shakspeare, would not, though perfectly master of French, be able to guess how a single line of Racine should be spoken on the stage.

We cannot leave the subject of the drama, however, without observing, with what an agreeable surprise we discovered in M. Grimm an auxiliary in that battle which we have for some time waged, though not without trepidation, against the theatrical standards of France, and in defence of our own more free and irregular drama. While a considerable part of our own men of letters, carried away by the authority and supposed unanimity of the continental judges, were disposed to desert the cause of Shakspeare and Nature, and to recognize Racine and Voltaire as the only true models of dramatic excellence, it turns out that the greatest Parisian critic, of that best age of criticism, was of opinion that the very idea of dramatic excellence had never been developed in France; and that, from the very causes which we have formerly specified, there was neither powerful passion nor real nature on their stage. After giving some account of a play of La Harpe's, he observes, "I am more and more confirmed in the opinion, that *true tragedy, such as has never yet existed in France*, must, after all, be written in prose; or at least can never accommodate itself to the pompous and rhetorical tone of our stately versification. The ceremonious and affected dignity which belongs to such compositions, is quite inconsistent with the just imitation of nature, and destructive of all true pathos. It may be very fine and very poetical; but it is not dramatic: — and accordingly I have no hesitation in maintaining, that all our celebrated tragedies belong to the *epic* and not to the *dramatic* division of poetry. The Greeks and Romans had a dramatic verse, which did not interfere with simplicity or familiarity of diction; but as we have none, we must make up our minds to compose our tragedies in prose, if we ever expect to have any that may deserve the name. What then?" he continues; "must we throw our Racines and Voltaires in the fire? — by no means; — on the contrary, we must keep them, and study and admire them more than ever; — but with right conceptions of their true nature and merit — as masterpieces of poetry, and reasoning, and description; — as the first works of the first geniuses that ever adorned any nation under heaven: — but not as tragedies, — not as pieces intended to exhibit natural characters and passions speaking their own language, and to produce that terrible impression which such pieces alone can produce. Considered in that light, their coldness and childishness will be immediately apparent; — and though the talents of the artist will always be conspicuous, their misapplication and failure will not be less so. With the prospect that lies before us, the best thing, perhaps, that we can do is to go on, boasting of the unparalleled excellence we have attained. But how speedily should our boastings be silenced if the present race of *children* should be succeeded by a generation of *men!* Here is a theory," concludes the worthy Baron, a little alarmed, it would seem, at his own temerity, "which it would be easy to confirm and illustrate much more completely — if a man had a desire to be stoned to death, before the door of the *Théâtre François!* But, in the mean time, till I am better prepared for the honours of martyrdom, I must entreat you to keep the secret of my infidelity to yourself."

Diderot holds very nearly the same language. After a long dissertation upon the difference between real and artificial dignity, he proceeds, — "What follows, then, from all this — but that tragedy is still to be invented in France; and that the ancients, with all their faults, were probably much nearer inventing it than we have been? — Noble actions and sentiments, with simple and familiar language, are among its first elements; — and I strongly suspect, that for these two hundred years, we have mistaken the stateliness of Madrid for the heroism of Rome. If once a man of genius shall venture to give to his characters and to his diction the simplicity of ancient dignity, plays and players will be very different things from what they are now. But how much of this," he adds also in a fit of sympathetic terror, "could I venture to say to any body but you! I should be pelted in the streets, if I were but suspected of the blasphemies I have just uttered."

With the assistance of two such allies, we shall renew the combat against the Continental dramatists with fresh spirits and confidence;

and shall probably find an early opportunity to brave the field, upon that important theme. In the mean time we shall only remark, that we suspect there is something more than an analogy between the government and political constitution of the two countries, and the character of their drama. The tragedy of the Continent is conceived in the very genius and spirit of absolute monarchy — the same artificial stateliness — the same slow moving of few persons — the same suppression of ordinary emotions, and ostentatious display of lofty sentiments, and, finally, the same jealousy of the interference of lower agents, and the same horror of vulgarity and tumult. When we consider too, that in the countries where this form of the drama has been established, the Court is the chief patron of the theatre, and courtiers almost its only supporters, we shall probably be inclined to think that this uniformity of character is not a mere accidental coincidence, but that the same causes which have stamped those attributes on the serious hours of its rulers, have extended them to those mimic representations which were originally devised for their amusement. In England, again, our drama has all along partaken of the mixed nature of our government — persons of all degrees take a share in both, each in his own peculiar character and fashion: and the result has been, in both, a much greater activity, variety, and vigour, than was ever exhibited under a more exclusive system. In England, too, the stage has in general been dependent on the nation at large, and not on the favour of the Court; — and it is natural to suppose that the character of its exhibitions has been affected by a due consideration of that of the miscellaneous patron whose feelings it was its business to gratify and reflect.

After having said so much about the stage, we cannot afford room either for the quarrels or witticisms of the actors, which are reported at great length in these volumes — or for the absurdities, however ludicrous, of the "*Dieu de Danse*" as old Vestris ycleped himself — or even the famous "*affaire du Menuet*" which distracted the whole court of France at the marriage of the late king. We can allow only a sentence, indeed, to the elaborate dissertation in which Diderot endeavours to prove that an actor is all the worse for having any feeling of the passions he represents, and is never so sure to agitate the souls of his hearers, as when his own is perfectly at ease. We are persuaded that this is not correctly true; — though it might take more distinctions than the subject is worth, to fix precisely where the truth lies. It is plain we think, however, that a good actor must have *a capacity*, at least, of all the passions whose language he mimics, — and we are rather inclined to think, that he must also have a transient feeling of them, whenever his mimicry is very successful. That the emotion should be very short-lived, and should give way to trivial or comic sensations, with very little interval, affords but a slender presumption against its reality, when we consider how rapidly such contradictory feelings succeed each other, in light minds, in the real business of life. That real passion, again, never would be so graceful and dignified as the counterfeited passion of the stage, is either an impeachment of the accuracy of the copy, or a contradiction in terms. The real passion of a noble and dignified character must always be dignified and graceful, — and if Cæsar, when actually bleeding in the Senate-house, folded his robe around him, that he might fall with decorum at the feet of his assassins, why should we say that it is out of nature for a player, both to sympathise with the passions of his hero, and to think of the figure he makes in the eyes of the spectators? Strong conception is, perhaps in every case, attended with a temporary belief of the reality of its objects; — and it is impossible for any one to copy with tolerable success the symptoms of a powerful emotion, without a very lively apprehension and recollection of its actual presence. We have no idea, we own, that the copy can ever be given without some participation in the emotion itself — or that it is possible to repeat pathetic words, and with the true tone and gestures of passion, with the same indifference with which a schoolboy repeats his task, or a juggler his deceptions. The feeling, we believe, is often very momentary; and it is this which has misled those who have doubted of its existence. But there are many strong feelings equally fleeting and undeniable. The feelings of the spectators, in the theatre, though frequently more keen than they experience anywhere else, are in general infinitely

less durable than those excited by real transactions; and a ludicrous incident or blunder in the performance will carry the whole house, in an instant, from sobbing to ungovernable laughter: and even in real life, we have every day occasion to observe, how quickly the busy, the dissipated, the frivolous, and the very youthful, can pass from one powerful and engrossing emotion to another. The daily life of Voltaire, we think, might have furnished Diderot with as many and as striking instances of the actual succession of incongruous emotions, as he has collected from the theatrical life of Sophie Arnoud, to prove that one part of the succession must necessarily have been fictitious.

There are various traits of the oppressions and abuses of the government, incidentally noticed in this work, which maintains, on the whole, a very aristocratical tone of politics. One of the most remarkable relates to no less a person than the Maréchal de Saxe. This great warrior, who is known never to have taken the field without a small travelling seraglio in his suite, had engaged a certain Madlle. Chantilly to attend him in one of his campaigns. The lady could not prudently decline the honour of the invitation, because she was very poor; but her heart and soul were devoted to a young pastry-cook of the name of Favart, for whose sake she at last broke out of the Marshal's camp, and took refuge in the arms of her lover, who rewarded her heroism by immediately making her his wife. The history of the Marshal's lamentation on finding himself deserted, is purely ludicrous, and is very well told; but our feelings take a very different character, when, upon reading a little farther, we find that this illustrious person had the baseness and brutality to apply to his sovereign for a *lettre de cachet* to *force* this unfortunate woman from the arms of her lawful husband, and to compel her to submit again to his embraces — and that the court was actually guilty of the incredible atrocity of granting such an order! It was not only granted, M. Grimm assures us, but executed, — and this poor creature was dragged from the house of her husband, and conducted by a file of grenadiers to the quarters of his highness, where she remained till his death, the unwilling and disgusted victim of his sensuality. It is scarcely possible to regret the subversion of a form of government, that admitted, if but once in a century, of abuses so enormous as this: but the tone in which M. Grimm notices it, as a mere *foiblesse* on the part of *le Grand Maurice*, gives us reason to think that it was by no means without a parallel in the contemporary history. In England, we verily believe, there never was a time in which it would not have produced insurrection or assassination.

One of the most remarkable passages in this philosophical journal, is that which contains the author's estimate of the advantages and disadvantages of philosophy. Not being much more of an optimist than ourselves, M. Grimm thinks that good and evil are pretty fairly distributed to the different generations of men; and that, if an age of philosophy be happier in some respects than one of ignorance and prejudice, there are particulars in which it is not so fortunate. Philosophy, he thinks, is the necessary fruit of a certain experience and a certain maturity; and implies, in nations as well as individuals, the extinction of some of the pleasures as well as the follies of early life. All nations, he observes, have begun with poetry, and ended with philosophy — or, rather, have passed through the region of philosophy in their way to that of stupidity and dotage. They lose the poetical passion, therefore, before they acquire the taste for speculation; and, with it, they lose all faith in those illusions, and all interest in those trifles which make the happiness of the brightest portion of our existence. If, in this advanced age of society, men are less brutal, they are also less enthusiastic; — if they are more habitually beneficent, they have less warmth of affection. They are delivered, indeed, from the yoke of many prejudices; but at the same time deprived of many motives of action. They are more prudent, but more anxious — are more affected with the general interests of mankind, but feel less for their neighbours; and, while curiosity takes the place of admiration, are more enlightened, but far less delighted with the universe in which they are placed.

The effect of this philosophical spirit on the arts, is evidently unfavourable on the whole. *Their* end and object is delight, and that of

philosophy is truth; and the talent that seeks to instruct, will rarely condescend to aim merely at pleasing. Racine, and Molière, and Boileau, were satisfied with furnishing amusement to such men as Louis XIV., and Colbert, and Turenne; but the geniuses of the present day pretend to nothing less than enlightening their rulers; and the same young men who would formerly have made their *début* with a pastoral or a tragedy, now generally leave college with a new system of philosophy and government in their portfolios. The very metaphysical, prying, and expounding turn of mind that is nourished by the spirit of philosophy, unquestionably deadens our sensibility to those enjoyments which it converts into subjects of speculation. It busies itself in endeavouring to understand those emotions which a simpler age was contented with enjoying; — and seeking, like Psyche, to have a distinct view of the sources of our pleasures, is punished, like her, by their instant annihilation.

Religion, too, continues M. Grimm, considered as a source of enjoyment or consolation in this world, has suffered from the progress of philosophy, exactly as the fine arts and affections have done. It has no doubt become infinitely more rational, and less liable to atrocious perversions; but then it has also become much less enchanting and ecstatic — much less prolific of sublime raptures, beatific visions, and lofty enthusiasm. It has suffered, in short, in the common disenchantment; and the same cold spirit which has chased so many lovely illusions from the earth, has dispeopled heaven of half its marvels and its splendours.

We could enlarge with pleasure upon these just and interesting speculations; but it is time we should think of drawing this article to a close; and we must take notice of a very extraordinary transaction which M. Grimm has recorded with regard to the final publication of the celebrated *Encyclopédie*. The *redaction* of this great work, it is known, was ultimately confided to *Diderot;* who thought it best, after the disturbances that had been excited by the separate publication of some of the earlier volumes, to keep up the whole of the last ten till the printing was finished; and then to put forth the complete work at once. A bookseller of the name of *Breton*, who was a joint proprietor of the work, had the charge of the mechanical part of the concern; but, being wholly illiterate, and indeed without pretensions to literature, had of course no concern with the correction, or even the perusal of the text. This person, however, who had heard of the clamours and threatened prosecutions which were excited by the freedom of some articles in the earlier volumes, took it into his head, that the value and security *of the property* might be improved, by a prudent castigation of the remaining parts; and accordingly, after receiving from Diderot the last proofs and revises of the different articles, took them home, and, with the assistance of another tradesman, scored out, altered, and suppressed, at their own discretion, all the passages which they in their wisdom apprehended might give offence to the court, or the church, or any other persons in authority — giving themselves, for the most part, no sort of trouble to connect the disjointed passages that were left after these mutilations — and sometimes soldering them together with masses of their own stupid vulgarity. After these precious ameliorations were completed, they threw off the full impression; and, to make all sure and irremediable, consigned both the manuscript and the original proofs to the flames! Such, says M. Grimm, is the true explanation of that mass of impertinences, contradictions, and incoherences, with which all the world has been struck, in the last ten volumes of this great compilation. It was not discovered till the very eve of the publication; when Diderot having a desire to look back to one of his own articles, printed some years before, with difficulty obtained a copy of the sheets containing it from the warehouse of M. Breton — and found, to his horror and consternation, that it had been garbled and mutilated, in the manner we have just stated. His rage and vexation on the discovery, are well expressed in a long letter to Breton, which M. Grimm has engrossed in his register. The mischief however was irremediable, without an intolerable delay and expense; and as it was impossible for the editor to take any steps to bring Breton to punishment for this "horrible forfait," without openly avowing the intended publication of a work which the court only tolerated by affecting ignorance of its existence, it was at last resolved, with many tears

of rage and vexation, to keep the abomination secret — at least till it was proclaimed by the indignant denunciations of the respective authors whose works had been subjected to such cruel mutilation. The most surprising part of the story however is, that none of these authors ever made any complaint about the matter. Whether the number of years that had clapsed since the time when most of them had furnished their papers, had made them insensible of the alterations — whether they believed the change effected by the base hand of Breton to have originated with Diderot, their legal censor — or that, in fact, the alterations were chiefly in the articles of the said Diderot himself, we cannot pretend to say; but M. Grimm assures us, that to his astonishment and that of Diderot, the mutilated publication, when it at last made its appearance, was very quietly received by the injured authors as their authentic production, and apologies humbly made, by some of them, for imperfections that had been created by the beast of a publisher.

There are many curious and original anecdotes of the Empress of Russia in this book; and as she always appeared to advantage where munificence and clemency to individuals were concerned, they are certainly calculated to give us a very favourable impression of that extraordinary woman. We can only afford room now for one, which characterises the nation as well as its sovereign. A popular poet, of the name of Sumarokoff, had quarrelled with the leading actress at Moscow, and protested that she should never again have the honour to perform in any of his tragedies. The Governor of Moscow, however, not being aware of this theatrical feud, thought fit to order one of Sumarokoff's tragedies for representation, and also to command the services of the offending actress on the occasion. Sumarokoff did not venture to take any step against his Excellency the Governor; but when the heroine advanced in full Muscovite costume on the stage, the indignant poet rushed forward from behind the scenes, seized her reluctantly by the collar and waist, and tossed her furiously from the boards. He then went home, and indited two querulous and sublime epistles to the Empress. Catherine, in the midst of her gigantic schemes of conquest and improvement, had the patience to sit down and address the following good-humoured and sensible exhortation to the disordered bard.

"Monsieur Sumarokoff, j'ai été fort étonnée de votre lettre du 28 Janvier, et encore plus de celle du premier Février. Toutes deux contiennent, à ce qu'il me semble, des plaintes contre la Belmontia qui pourtant n'a fait que suivre les ordres du comte Soltikoff. Le feldmaréchal a désiré de voir représenter votre tragédie; cela vous fait honneur. Il était convenable de vous conformer au désir de la première personne en autorité à Moscou; mais si elle a jugé à propos d'ordonner que cette pièce fût représentée, il fallait exécuter sa volonté sans contestation. Je crois que vous savez mieux que personne combien de respect méritent des hommes qui ont servi avec gloire, et dont la tête est couverte de cheveux blancs; c'est pourquoi je vous conseille d'éviter de pareilles disputes à l'avenir. Par ce moyen vous conserverez la tranquillité d'âme qui est nécessaire pour vos ouvrages, et il me sera toujours plus agréable de voir les passions représentées dans vos drames que de les lire dans vos lettres.

"Au surplus, je suis votre affectionnée. *Signé* CATHERINE."

"Je conseille," adds M. Grimm, "à tout ministre chargé du département des lettres de cachet, d'enregistrer ce formulaire à son greffe, et à tout hasard de n'en jamais délivrer d'autres aux poètes et à tout ce qui a droit d'être de genre irritable, c'est-à-dire enfant et fou par état. Après cette lettre qui mérite peut-être autant l'immortalité que les monumens de la sagesse et de la gloire du règne actuel de la Russie, je meurs de peur de m'affermir dans la pensée hérétique que l'esprit ne gâte jamais rien, même sur le trône."

But it is at last necessary to close these entertaining volumes, — though we have not been able to furnish our readers with any thing like a fair specimen of their various and miscellaneous contents. Whoever wishes to see the economist wittily abused — to read a full and picturesque account of the tragical rejoicings that filled Paris with mourning at the marriage of the late King — to learn how *Paul Jones* was a writer of pastorals and love songs — or how they made carriages of leather, and evaporated diamonds in 1772 — to trace the *début* of Madame de Staël as an author at the age of twelve, in the year —— ! — to understand M. Grimm's notions on suicide and happiness — to know in what the *unique* charm of Madlle. *Thevenin* consisted — and in what manner the dispute between the patrons of the French and the Italian music was conducted — will do well to peruse the five thick volumes, in which these, and innumerable other matters of equal importance, are discussed, with the talent and vivacity with which the reader must

have been struck, in the least of the foregoing extracts.

We add but one trivial remark, which is forced upon us, indeed, at almost every page of this correspondence. The profession of literature must be much wholesomer in France than in any other country: — for though the volumes before us may be regarded as a great literary obituary, and record the deaths, we suppose, of more than an hundred persons of some note in the world of letters, we scarcely meet with an individual who is less than seventy or eighty years of age — and no very small proportion actually last till near ninety or an hundred — although the greater part of them seem neither to have lodged so high, nor lived so low, as their more active and abstemious brethren in other cities. M. Grimm observes that, by a remarkable fatality, Europe was deprived, in the course of little more than six months, of the splendid and commanding talents of Rousseau, Voltaire, Haller, Linnæus, Heidegger, Lord Chatham, and Le Kain — a constellation of genius, he adds, that when it set to us, must have carried a dazzling light into the domains of the King of Terrors, and excited no small alarm in his ministers — if they bear any resemblance to the ministers of other sovereigns.

VICTOR ALFIERI.

(January, 1810.)

Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Victor Alfieri. Written by Himself. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 614. London: 1810.

This book contains the delineation of an extraordinary and not very engaging character; and an imperfect sketch of the rise and progress of a great poetical genius. It is deserving of notice in both capacities — but chiefly in the first; as there probably never was an instance in which the works of an author were more likely to be influenced by his personal peculiarities. Pride and enthusiasm — irrepressible vehemence and ambition — and an arrogant, fastidious, and somewhat narrow system of taste and opinions, were the great leading features in the mind of Alfieri. Strengthened, and in some degree produced, by a loose and injudicious education, those traits were still further developed by the premature and protracted indulgences of a very dissipated youth; and when, at last, they admitted of an application to study, imparted their own character of impetuosity to those more meritorious exertions; — converted a taste into a passion; and left him, for a great part of his life, under the influence of a true and irresistible inspiration. Every thing in him, indeed, appears to have been passion and ungoverned impulse; and, while he was raised above the common level of his degenerate countrymen by a stern and self-willed haughtiness, that might have become an ancient Roman, he was chiefly distinguished from other erect spirits by the vehemence which formed the basis of his character, and by the uncontrolled dominion which he allowed to his various and successive propensities. So constantly and entirely, indeed, was he under the influence of these domineering attachments, that his whole life and character might be summed up by describing him as the victim, successively, of a passion for horses — a passion for travelling — a passion for literature — and a passion for what he called independence.

The memoirs of such a life, and the confessions of such a man, seem to hold out a promise of no common interest and amusement. Yet, though they are here presented to us with considerable fulness and apparent fidelity, we cannot say that we have been much amused or interested by the perusal. There is a proud coldness in the narrative, which neither invites sympathy, nor kindles the imagination. The author seems to disdain giving himself *en spectacle* to his readers; and chronicles his various acts of extravagance and fits of passion, with a sober and languid gravity, to which we can recollect no parallel. In this review of the events and feelings of a life of adventure and agitation, he is never once betrayed into the genuine language of emotion; but dwells on the scenes of his childhood without tenderness, and on the struggles and tumults of his riper years without any sort of animation. We look in vain through the whole narrative for one gleam of that magical eloquence by which Rousseau transports us into the scenes he describes, and into the heart which responded to those scenes, — or even for a trait of that sociable garrulity which has enabled Marmontel

and Cumberland to give a grace to obsolete anecdote, and to people the whole space around them with living pictures of the beings among whom they existed. There is not one character attempted, from beginning to end of this biography;—which is neither lively, in short, nor eloquent — neither playful, impassioned, nor sarcastic. Neither is it a mere unassuming outline of the author's history and publications, like the short notices of Hume or Smith. It is, on the contrary, a pretty copious and minute narrative of all his feelings and adventures; and contains, as we should suppose, a tolerably accurate enumeration of his migrations, prejudices, and antipathies. It is not that he does not condescend to talk about trifling things, but that he will not talk about them in a lively or interesting manner; and systematically declines investing any part of his statement with those picturesque details, and that warm colouring, by which alone the story of an individual can often excite much interest among strangers. Though we have not been able to see the original of these Memoirs, we will venture to add, that they are by no means well written; and that they will form no exception to the general observation, that almost all Italian prose is feeble and deficient in precision. There is something, indeed, quite remarkable in the wordiness of most of the modern writers in this language,— the very copiousness and smoothness of which seems to form an apology for the want of force or exactness — and to hide, with its sweet and uniform flow, both from the writer and the reader, that penury of thought, and looseness of reasoning, which are so easily detected when it is rendered into a harsher dialect. Unsatisfactory, however, as they are in many particulars, it is still impossible to peruse the memoirs of such a man as Alfieri without interest and gratification. The traits of ardour and originality that are disclosed through all the reserve and gravity of the style, beget a continual expectation and curiosity; and even those parts of the story which seem to belong rather to his youth, rank, and education, than to his genius or peculiar character, acquire a degree of importance, from considering how far those very circumstances may have assisted the formation, and obstructed the development of that character and genius; and in what respects its peculiarities may be referred to the obstacles it had to encounter, in misguidance, passion, and prejudice.

Alfieri was born at Asti, in Piedmont, of noble and rich, but illiterate parents, in January 1749. The history of his childhood, which fills five chapters, contains nothing very remarkable. The earliest thing he remembers, is being fed with sweetmeats by an old uncle with square-toed shoes. He was educated at home by a good-natured, stupid priest; and having no brother of his own age, was without any friend or companion for the greater part of his childhood. When about seven years old, he falls in love with the smooth faces of some male novices in a neighbouring church; and is obliged to walk about with a green net on his hair, as a punishment for fibbing. To the agony which he endured from this infliction, he ascribes his scrupulous adherence to truth throughout the rest of his life;—all this notwithstanding, he is tempted to steal a fan from an old lady in the family, and grows silent, melancholy, and reserved;—at last, when about ten years of age, he is sent to the academy at Turin.

This migration adds but little to the interest of the narrative, or the improvement of the writer. The academy was a great, ill-regulated establishment; in one quarter of which the pages of the court, and foreigners of distinction, were indulged in every sort of dissipation,—while the younger pupils were stowed into filthy cells, ill fed, and worse educated. There he learned a little Latin, and tried, in vain, to acquire the elements of mathematics; for, after the painful application of several months, he was never able to comprehend the fourth proposition of Euclid; and found, he says, all his life after, that he had "a completely anti-geometrical head." From the bad diet, and preposterously early hours of the academy, he soon fell into wretched health, and growing more melancholy and solitary than ever, became covered over with sores and ulcers. Even in this situation, however, a little glimmering of literary ambition became visible. He procured a copy of Ariosto from a voracious schoolfellow, by giving up to him his share of the chickens which formed their Sunday regale; and read Metastasio and Gil Blas with great ardour and delight. The inflam-

mability of his imagination, however, was more strikingly manifested in the effects of the first opera to which he was admitted, when he was only about twelve years of age.

"This varied and enchanting music," he observes, "sunk deep into my soul, and made the most astonishing impression on my imagination; — it agitated the inmost recesses of my heart to such a degree, that for several weeks I experienced the most profound melancholy, which was not however wholly unattended with pleasure. I became tired and disgusted with my studies, while at the same time the most wild and whimsical ideas took such possession of my mind, as would have led me to portray them in the most impassioned verses, had I not been wholly unacquainted with the true nature of my own feelings. It was the first time music had produced such a powerful effect on my mind. I had never experienced any thing similar, and it long remained engraven on my memory. When I recollect the feelings excited by the representation of the grand operas, at which I was present during several carnivals, and compare them with those which I now experience, on returning from the performance of a piece I have not witnessed for some time, I am fully convinced that nothing acts so powerfully on my mind as all species of music, and particularly the sound of female voices, and of *contro-alto*. Nothing excites more various or terrific sensations in my mind. Thus the plots of the greatest number of my tragedies were either formed while listening to music, or a few hours afterwards." — Pp. 71—73.

With this tragic and Italian passion for Music, he had a sovereign contempt and abhorrence for Dancing. His own account of the origin of this antipathy, and of the first rise of those national prejudices, which he never afterwards made any effort to overcome, is among the most striking and characteristic passages in the earlier part of the story.

"To the natural hatred I had to dancing, was joined an invincible antipathy towards my master — a Frenchman newly arrived from Paris. He possessed a certain air of polite assurance, which, joined to his ridiculous motions and absurd discourse, greatly increased the innate aversion I felt towards this frivolous art. So unconquerable was this aversion, that, after leaving school, I could never be prevailed on to join in any dance whatever. The very name of this amusement still makes me shudder, and laugh at the same time — a circumstance by no means unusual with me. I attribute, also, in a great measure, to this dancing-master the unfavourable, and perhaps erroneous, opinion, I have formed of the French people! who, nevertheless, it must be confessed, possess many agreeable and estimable qualities. But it is difficult to weaken or efface impressions received in early youth. Two other causes also contributed to render me from my infancy disgusted with the French character. The first was the impression made on my mind by the sight of the ladies who accompanied the Duchess of Parma in her journey to Asti, and were all bedaubed with rouge, — the use of which was then exclusively confined to the French. I have frequently mentioned this circumstance several years afterwards, not being able to account for such an absurd and ridiculous practice, which is wholly at variance with nature; for when *men*, to disguise the effects of sickness, or other calamities, besmear themselves with this detestable rouge, — they carefully conceal it; well knowing that, when discovered, it only excites the laughter or pity of the beholders. These painted French figures left a deep and lasting impression on my mind, and inspired me with a certain feeling of disgust towards the females of this nation.

"From my geographical studies resulted another cause of antipathy to that nation. Having seen on the chart, the great difference in extent and population between England or Prussia and France; and hearing, every time news arrived from the armies, that the French had been beaten by sea and land; — recalling to mind the first ideas of my infancy, during which I was told that the French had frequently been in possession of Asti; and that during the last time, they had suffered themselves to be taken prisoners to the number of six or seven thousand, without resistance, after conducting themselves, while they remained in possession of the place, with the greatest insolence and tyranny; — all these different circumstances, *being associated with the idea of the ridiculous dancing-master!* tended more and more to rivet in my mind an aversion to the French nation." — Pp. 83—86.

At the early age of fourteen, Alfieri was put in possession of a considerable part of his fortune; and launched immediately into every sort of fashionable folly and extravagance. His passion for horses, from which he was never entirely emancipated, now took entire possession of his soul; and his days were spent in galloping up and down the environs of Turin, in company chiefly with the young English who were resident in that capital. From this society, and these exercises, he soon derived such improvement, that in a short time he became by far the most skilful jockey, farrier, and coachman, that modern Italy could boast of producing.

For ten or twelve years after this period, the life of Alfieri presents a most humiliating, but instructive picture of idleness, dissipation, and *ennui*. It is the finest and most flattering illustration of Miss Edgeworth's admirable tale of Lord Glenthorn; and, indeed, rather out-

goes, than falls short of that high-coloured and apparently exaggerated representation. Such, indeed, is the coincidence between the traits of the fictitious and the real character, that if these Memoirs had been published when Miss Edgeworth's story was written, it would have been impossible not to suppose that she had derived from them every thing that is striking and extraordinary in her narrative. For two or three years, Alfieri contented himself with running, restless and discontented, over the different states and cities of Italy; almost ignorant of its language, and utterly indifferent both to its literature and its arts. Consumed, at every moment of inaction, with the most oppressive discontent and unhappiness, he had no relief but in the velocity of his movements and the rapidity of his transitions. Disappointed with every thing, and believing himself incapable of application or reflection, he passed his days in a perpetual fever of impatience and dissipation;—apparently pursuing enjoyment with an eagerness which was in reality inspired by the vain hope of escaping from misery. There is much general truth, as well as peculiar character, in the following simple confession.

"In spite, however, of this constant whirl of dissipation, my being master of my own actions; notwithstanding I had plenty of money, was in the heyday of youth, and possessed a prepossessing figure; I yet felt every where satiety, ennui, and disgust. My greatest pleasure consisted in attending the opera buffa, though the gay and lively music left a deep and melancholy impression in my mind. A thousand gloomy and mournful ideas assailed my imagination, in which I delighted to indulge by wandering alone on the shores near the Chiaja and Portici."—Vol. i. p. 128.

When he gets to Venice, things are, if possible, still worse,—though, like other hypochondriacs, he is disposed to lay the blame on the winds and the weather. The tumult of the carnival kept him alive, it seems, for a few days.

"But no sooner was the novelty over, than my habitual melancholy and ennui returned. I passed several days together in complete solitude, never leaving the house nor stirring from the window, whence I made signs to a young lady who lodged opposite, and with whom I occasionally exchanged a few words. During the rest of the day, which hung very heavy on my hands, I passed my time either in sleeping or in dreaming, I knew not which, and frequently in weeping without any apparent motive. I had lost my tranquillity, and I was unable even to divine what had deprived me of it. A few years afterwards, on investigating the cause of this occurrence, I discovered that it proceeded from a malady which attacked me every spring, sometimes in April, and sometimes in June: its duration was longer or shorter, and its violence very different, according as my mind was occupied.

"I likewise experienced that my intellectual faculties resembled a barometer, and that I possessed more or less talent for composition, in proportion to the weight of the atmosphere. During the prevalence of the solstitial and equinoctial winds, I was always remarkably stupid, and uniformly evinced less penetration in the evening than in the morning. I likewise perceived that the force of my imagination, the ardour of enthusiasm, and capability of invention, were possessed by me in a higher degree in the middle of winter, or in the middle of summer, than during the intermediate periods. This materiality, which I believe to be common to all men of a delicate nervous system, has greatly contributed to lessen the pride with which the good I have done might have inspired me, in like manner as it has tended to diminish the shame I might have felt for the errors I have committed, particularly in my own art."—Vol. i. pp. 140—142.

In his nineteenth year, he extends his travels to France, and stops a few weeks at Marseilles, where he passed his evenings exactly as Lord Glenthorn is represented to have done his at his Irish castle. To help away the hours, he went every night to the play, although his Italian ears were disgusted with the poverty of the recitation; and

—"after the performance was over, it was my regular practice to bathe every evening in the sea. I was induced to indulge myself in this luxury, in consequence of finding a very agreeable spot, on a tongue of land lying to the right of the harbour, where, seated on the sand, with my back leaning against a rock, I could behold the sea and sky without interruption. In the contemplation of these objects, embellished by the rays of the setting sun, I passed my time dreaming of future delights."—Vol. i. pp. 150—151.

In a very short time, however, these reveries became intolerable; and he very nearly killed himself and his horses in rushing, with incredible velocity, to Paris. This is his own account of the impression which was made upon him by his first sight of this brilliant metropolis.

"It was on a cold, cloudy, and rainy morning, between the 15th and 20th of August, that I entered

Paris, by the wretched suburb of St. Marceau. Accustomed to the clear and serene sky of Italy and Provence, I felt much surprised at the thick fog which enveloped the city, especially at this season. Never in my life did I experience more disagreeable feelings than on entering the damp and dirty suburb of St. Germain, where I was to take up my lodging. What inconsiderate haste, what mad folly had led me into this sink of filth and nastiness! On entering the inn, I felt myself thoroughly undeceived; and I should certainly have set off again immediately, had not shame and fatigue withheld me. My illusions were still further dissipated when I began to ramble through Paris. The mean and wretched buildings; the contemptible ostentation displayed in a few houses dignified with the pompous appellation of hotels and palaces; the filthiness of the Gothic churches; the truly Vandal-like construction of the public theatres at that time, besides innumerable other disagreeable objects, of which not the least disgusting to me was the plastered countenances of many very ugly women, far outweighed in my mind the beauty and elegance of the public walks and gardens, the infinite variety of fine carriages, the lofty façade of the Louvre, as well as the number of spectacles and entertainments of every kind." — Vol. i. pp. 153, 154.

There, then, as was naturally to be expected, he again found himself tormented "by the demon of melancholy;" and, after trying in vain the boasted stimulant of play, he speedily grew wearied of the place and all its amusements, and resolved to set off, without delay, for England. To England, accordingly, he goes, at midwinter; and with such a characteristic and compassionable craving for all sorts of powerful sensations, that "he rejoiced exceedingly at the extreme cold, which actually froze the wine and bread in his carriage during a part of the journey." Prepared, as he was, for disappointment, by the continual extravagance of this expectation, Alfieri was delighted with England. "The roads, the inns, the horses, and, above all, the incessant bustle in the suburbs, as well as in the capital, all conspired to fill my mind with delight." He passed a part of the winter in good society, in London; but soon "becoming disgusted with assemblies and routs, determined no longer to play the lord in the drawing-room, but *the coachman* at the gate!" and accordingly contrived to get through three laborious months, by being "five or six hours every morning on horseback, and *being seated on the coachbox for two or three hours every evening*, whatever was the state of the weather." Even these great and meritorious exertions, however, could not long keep down his inveterate malady, nor quell the evil spirit that possessed him; and he was driven to make a hasty tour through the west of England, which appears to have afforded him very considerable relief.

"The country then so much enchanted me that I determined to settle in it: not that I was much attached to any individual, but because I was delighted with the scenery, the simple manners of the inhabitants, the modesty and beauty of the women, and, above all, with the enjoyment of political liberty — all which made me overlook its mutable climate, the melancholy almost inseparable from it, and the exorbitant price of all the necessaries of life."— Vol. i. pp. 162, 163.

Scarcely, however, was this bold resolution of *settling* adopted, when the author is again "seized with the mania of travelling;" and skims over to Holland in the beginning of summer. And here he is still more effectually diverted than ever, by falling in love with a young married lady at the Hague, who was obliging enough to return his affection. Circumstances, however, at last compel the fair one to rejoin her husband in Switzerland; and the impetuous Italian is affected with such violent despair, that he makes a desperate attempt on his life, by taking off the bandages after being let blood; and returns sullenly to Italy, without stopping to look at any thing, or uttering a single word to his servant during the whole course of the journey.

This violent fit of depression, however, and the seclusion by which it was followed, led him, for the first time, to look into his books; and the perusal of the Lives of Plutarch seems to have made such an impression on his ardent and susceptible spirit, that a passion for liberty and independence now took the lead of every other in his soul, and he became for life an emulator of the ancient republicans. He read the story of Timoleon, Brutus, &c., he assures us, with floods of tears, and agonies of admiration. "I was like one beside himself; and shed tears of mingled grief and rage at having been born at Piedmont; and at a period, and under a government, where it was impossible to conceive or execute any great design." The same sentiment, indeed, seems to have haunted him for the greater part of his life; and is expressed in many passages of these Memoirs besides the following.

"Having lived two or three years almost wholly among the English; having heard their power and riches everywhere celebrated; having contemplated their great political influence, and on the other hand viewed Italy wholly degraded from her rank as a nation, and the Italians divided, weak and enslaved, I was ashamed of being an Italian, and wished not to possess any thing in common with this nation."—Vol. i. p. 121.

"I was naturally attached to a domestic life; but after having visited England at nineteen, and read Plutarch with the greatest interest at twenty years of age, I experienced the most insufferable repugnance at marrying and having my children born at Turin."—Vol. i. p. 175.

The time, however, was not yet come when study was to ballast and anchor this agitated spirit. Plutarch was soon thrown aside; and the patriot and his horses gallop off to Vienna. The state of his mind, both as to idleness and politics, is strikingly represented in the following short passage.

"I might easily, during my stay at Vienna, have been introduced to the celebrated poet Metastasio, at whose house our minister, the old and respectable Count Canale, passed his evenings in a select company of men of letters, whose chief amusement consisted in reading portions from the Greek, Latin, and Italian classics. Having taken an affection for me, he wished, out of pity to my idleness, to conduct me thither. But I declined accompanying him, either from my usual awkwardness, or from the contempt which the constant habit of reading French works had given me for Italian productions. Hence I concluded, that this assemblage of men of letters, with their classics, could be only a dismal company of pedants. Besides, I had seen Metastasio, in the gardens of Schoenbrunn, perform the customary genuflexion to Maria Theresa in such a servile and adulatory manner, that I, who had my head stuffed with Plutarch, and who exaggerated every thing I conceived, could not think of binding myself, either by the ties of familiarity or friendship, with a poet who had sold himself to a despotism which I so cordially detested."—Vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

From Vienna he flew to Prussia, which, he says, looked all like one great guardhouse; and where he could not repress "the horror and indignation he felt at beholding oppression and despotism assuming the mask of virtue." From Prussia he passed on to Denmark, where his health was seriously affected by the profligacy in which he indulged; and where the only amusement he could relish, consisted in "driving a sledge with inconceivable velocity over the snow." In this way he wandered on through Sweden and Finland to Russia; and experienced, as usual, a miserable disappointment on arriving at St. Petersburg.

"Alas! no sooner had I reached this Asiatic assemblage of wooden huts, than Rome, Genoa, Venice and Florence rose to my recollection; and I could not refrain from laughing. What I afterwards saw of this country tended still more strongly to confirm my first impression, that it merited not to be seen. Every thing, except their beards and their horses, disgusted me so much, that, during six weeks I remained among these savages, I determined not to become acquainted with any one; nor even to see the two or three youths with whom I had associated at Turin, and who were descended from the first families of the country. I took no measure to be presented to the celebrated Autocratrix Catherine II.; nor did I even behold the countenance of a sovereign who in our days has outstripped fame. On investigating, at a future period, the reason of such extraordinary conduct, I became convinced that it proceeded from a certain intolerance of character, and a hatred to every species of tyranny, and which in this particular instance attached itself to a person suspected of the most horrible crime — the murder of a defenceless husband."—Vol. i. pp. 194, 195.

The rage for liberty continued to possess him in his return through Prussia, and really seems to have reached its acmé when it dictated the following most preposterous passage, — which, we cannot help suspecting, is indebted for part of its absurdity to the translator.

"I visited Zorndorff, a spot rendered famous by the sanguinary battle fought between the Russians and Prussians, where thousands of men on both sides were immolated on the altar of despotism, and thus escaped from the galling yoke which oppressed them. The place of their interment was easily recognised by its greater verdure, and by yielding more abundant crops than the barren and unproductive soil in its immediate vicinity. *On this occasion I reflected, with sorrow, that slaves seem everywhere only born to fertilize the soil on which they vegetate.*"—Vol. i. pp. 196, 197.

After this he meets with a beautiful *ass* at Gottingen, and regrets that his indolence prevented him from availing himself of this excellent opportunity for writing some immeasurably facetious verses "upon this rencounter of a German and an Italian ass, in so celebrated an university!" After a hasty expedition to Spa, he again traverses Germany and Holland, and returns to England in the twenty-third year of his age; where he is speedily involved in some very distressing and

discreditable adventures. He engages in an intrigue with an English lady of rank, and is challenged, and slightly wounded by her husband. After this éclat, he consoles himself with the thought of marrying the frail fair, with whom he is, as usual, most heroically in love; when he discovers, to his infinite horror and consternation, that, previous to her connection with him, she had been equally lavish of her favours to her husband's *groom!* whose jealous resentment had led him to watch and expose this new infidelity. After many struggles between shame, resentment, and unconquerable love, he at last tears himself from this sad sample of English virtue, and makes his way to Holland, bursting with grief and indignation; but without seeming to think that there was the slightest occasion for any degree of contrition or self-condemnation. From Holland he goes to France, and from France to Spain — as idle, and more oppressed with himself than ever — buying and caressing Andalusian horses, and constantly ready to sink under the heavy burden of existence. At Madrid he has set down an extraordinary trait of the dangerous impetuosity of his temper. His faithful servant, in combing his hair one day, happened accidentally to give him pain by stretching one hair a little more than the rest, upon which, without saying a word, he first seized a candlestick, and felled him to the ground with a huge wound on his temple, and then drew his sword to despatch him, upon his offering to make some resistance. The sequel of the story is somewhat more creditable to his magnanimity, than this part of it is to his self-command.

"I was shocked at the brutal excess of passion into which I had fallen. Though Elias was somewhat calmed, he still appeared to retain a certain degree of resentment; yet I was not disposed to display towards him the smallest distrust. Two hours after his wound was dressed I went to bed, leaving the door open, as usual, between my apartment and the chamber in which he slept; notwithstanding the remonstrance of the Spaniards, who pointed out to me the absurdity of putting vengeance in the power of a man whom I had so much irritated. I said even aloud to Elias, who was already in bed, that he might kill me, if he was so inclined, during the night; and that I justly merited such a fate. But this brave man, who possessed as much elevation of soul as myself, took no other revenge for my outrageous conduct, except preserving for several years two handkerchiefs stained with blood which had been bound round his head, and which he occasionally displayed to my view. It is necessary to be fully acquainted with the character and manners of the Piedmontese, in order to comprehend the mixture of ferocity and generosity displayed on both sides in this affair.

"When at a more mature age, I endeavoured to discover the cause of this violent transport of rage. I became convinced that the trivial circumstance which gave rise to it, was, so to speak, like the last drop poured into a vessel ready to run over. My irascible temper, which must have been rendered still more irritable by solitude and perpetual idleness, required only the slightest impulse to cause it to burst forth. Besides, I never lifted a hand against a domestic, as that would have been putting them on a level with myself. Neither did I ever employ a cane, nor any kind of weapon in order to chastise them, though I frequently threw at them any moveable that fell in my way, as many young people do, during the first ebullitions of anger; yet I dare to affirm that I would have approved, and even esteemed the domestic who should on such occasions have rendered me back the treatment he received, since I never punished them as a master, but only contended with them as one man with another." — Vol. i. pp. 244—246.

At Lisbon he forms an acquaintance with a literary countryman of his own, and feels, for the first time of his life, a glow of admiration on perusing some passages of Italian poetry. From this he returns to Spain, and, after lounging over the whole of that kingdom, returns through France to Italy, and arrives at Turin in 1773. Here he endeavours to maintain the same unequal contest of dissipation against ennui and conscious folly, and falls furiously in love, for the third time, with a woman of more than doubtful reputation, ten years older than himself. Neither the intoxication of this passion, however, nor the daily exhibition of his twelve fine horses, could repress the shame and indignation which he felt at thus wasting his days in inglorious licentiousness; and his health was at last seriously affected by those compunctious visitings of his conscience. In 1774, while watching by his unworthy mistress in a fit of sickness, he sketched out a few scenes of a dramatic work in Italian, which was thrown aside and forgotten immediately on her recovery; and it was not till the year after, that, after many struggles, he formed the resolution of detaching himself from this degrading connection. The efforts which this cost him, and the means he adopted to insure his own adherence to his resolution, appear altogether wild and extravagant to our northern imaginations. In the first

place, he had himself lashed with strong cords to his elbow chair, to prevent him from rushing into the presence of the syren; and, in the next place, he entirely cut off his hair, in order to make it impossible for him to appear with decency in any society! The first fifteen days, he assures us, he spent entirely "in uttering the most frightful groans and lamentations," and the next in riding furiously through all the solitary places in the neighbourhood. At last, however, this frenzy of grief began to subside; and, most fortunately for the world and the author, gave place to a passion for literature, which absorbed the powers of this fiery spirit during the greater part of his future existence. The perusal of a wretched tragedy on the story of Cleopatra, and the striking resemblance he thought he discovered between his own case and that of Antony, first inspired him with the resolution of attempting a dramatic piece on the same subject; and, after encountering the most extreme difficulty from his utter ignorance of poetical diction, and of pure Italian, he at last hammered out a tragedy, which was represented with tolerable success in 1775. From this moment his whole heart was devoted to dramatic poetry; and literary glory became the idol of his imagination.

In entering upon this new and arduous career, he soon discovered that greater sacrifices were required of him than he had hitherto offered to any of the former objects of his idolatry. The defects of his education, and his long habits of indolence and inattention to every thing connected with letters, imposed upon him far more than the ordinary labour of a literary apprenticeship. Having never been accustomed to the use of the pure Tuscan, and being obliged to speak French during so many years of travelling, he found himself shamefully deficient in the knowledge of that beautiful language, in which he proposed to enter his claims to immortality; and began, therefore, a course of the most careful and critical reading of the great authors who had adorned it. Dante and Petrarca were his great models of purity; and, next to them, Ariosto and Tasso; in which four writers, he gives it as his opinion, that there is to be found the perfection of every style, except that fitted for dramatic poetry, of which he more than insinuates, that his own writings are the only existing example. In order to acquire a perfect knowledge and command of their divine language, he not only made many long visits to Tuscany, but absolutely interdicted himself the use of every other sort of reading, and abjured for ever that French literature which he seems to have always regarded with a mixture of envy and disdain. To make amends for this, he went resolutely back to the rudiments of his Latin; and read over all the classics in that language with a most patient and laborious attention. He likewise committed to memory many thousand lines from the authors he proposed to imitate; and sought, with the greatest assiduity, the acquaintance of all the scholars and critics that came in his way, — pestering them with continual queries, and with requesting their opinion upon the infinite quantity of bad verses which he continued to compose by way of exercise. His two or three first tragedies he composed entirely in French prose; and afterwards translated, with infinite labour, into Italian verse.

"In this manner, without any other judge than my own feelings, I have only finished those, the sketches of which I had written with energy and enthusiasm; or, if I have finished any other, I have at least never taken the trouble to clothe them in verse. This was the case with Charles I., which I began to write in French prose, immediately after finishing Philippe. When I had reached to about the middle of the third act, my heart and my hand became so benumbed, that I found it impossible to hold my pen. The same thing happened in regard to Romeo and Juliet, the whole of which I nearly expanded, though with much labour to myself, and at long intervals. On re-perusing this sketch, I found my enthusiasm so much lowered, that, transported with rage against myself, I could proceed no further, but threw my work into the fire." — Vol. ii. pp. 48—51.

Two or three years were passed in these bewitching studies; and during this time, nine or ten tragedies, at the least, were in a considerable state of forwardness. In 1778, the study of Machiavel revived all that early zeal for liberty which he had imbibed from the perusal of Plutarch; and he composed with great rapidity his two books of "La Tiranide;" — perhaps the most nervous and eloquent of all his prose compositions. About the same period, his poetical studies experienced a still more serious interruption, from the commence-

ment of his attachment to the Countess of Albany, the wife of the late Pretender; — an attachment that continued to soothe or to agitate all the remaining part of his existence. This lady, who was by birth a princess of the house of Stolberg, was then in her twenty-fifth year, and resided with her ill-matched husband at Florence. Her beauty and accomplishments made, from the first *, a powerful impression on the inflammable heart of Alfieri, guarded as it now was, with the love of glory and of literature; and the loftiness of his character, and the ardour of his admiration, soon excited corresponding sentiments in her, who had suffered for some time from the ill temper and gross vices of her superannuated husband. Though the author takes the trouble to assure us that "their intimacy never exceeded the strictest limits of honour," it is not difficult to understand, that it should have aggravated the ill-humour of the old husband; which increased, it seems, so much, that the lady was at last forced to abandon his society, and to take refuge with his brother, the Cardinal York, at Rome. To this place, Alfieri speedily followed her; and remained there, divided between love and study, for upwards of two years; when her holy guardian becoming scandalized at their intimacy, it was thought necessary for her reputation that they should separate. The effects of this separation he has himself described in the following short, but eloquent passage.

"For two years I remained incapable of any kind of study whatever, so different was my present forlorn state from the happiness I enjoyed during my late residence in Rome: — there the Villa Strozzi near to the warm baths of Dioclesian, afforded me a delightful retreat, where I passed my mornings in study, only riding for an hour or two through the vast solitudes which, in the neighbourhood of Rome, invite to melancholy, meditation, and poetry. In the evening, I proceeded to the city, and found a relaxation from study in the society of her who constituted the charm of my existence; and, contented and happy, I returned to my solitude, never at a later hour than eleven o'clock. It was impossible to find, in the circuit of a great city, an abode more cheerful, more retired, — or better suited to my taste, my character, and my pursuits. Delightful spot! — the remembrance of which I shall ever cherish, and which through life I shall long to revisit." — Vol. ii. pp. 121, 122.

Previously to this time, his extreme love of independence, and his desire to be constantly with the mistress of his affections, had induced him to take the very romantic step of resigning his whole property to his sister; reserving to himself merely an annuity of 14,000 livres, or little more than 500*l.* As this transference was made with the sanction of the King, who was very well pleased, on the whole, to get rid of so republican a subject, it was understood, upon both sides, as a tacit compact of expatriation; so that, upon his removal from Rome, he had no house or fixed residence to repair to. In this desolate and unsettled state, his passion for horses revived with additional fury; and he undertook a voyage to England, for the sole purpose of purchasing a number of those noble animals; and devoted eight months to "the study of noble heads, fine necks, and well-turned buttocks, without once opening a book, or pursuing any literary avocation." In London he purchased fourteen horses, — in relation to the number of his tragedies! — and this whimsical relation frequently presenting itself to his imagination, he would say to himself, with a smile—"Thou hast gained a horse by each tragedy!" — Truly, the noble author must have been far gone in love, when he gave way to such innocent deliration. — He conducted his fourteen friends, however, with much judgment across the Alps; and gained great glory and notoriety at Sienna, from their daily procession through the streets, and the feats of dexterity he exhibited in riding and driving them.

In the mean time, he had printed twelve of his tragedies; and imbibed a sovereign contempt for such of his countrymen as pretended to find them harsh, obscure, or affectedly sententious. In 1784, after an absence of more than two years, he rejoined his mistress at Baden in Alsace; and, during a stay of two

* His first introduction to her, we have been informed, was in the great gallery of Florence; — a circumstance which led him to signalize his admiration by an extraordinary act of gallantry. As they stopped to examine the picture of Charles XII. of Sweden, the Countess observed, that the singular uniform in which that prince is usually painted, appeared to her extremely becoming. Nothing more was said at the time; but, in two days after, Alfieri appeared in the streets in the exact *costume* of that warlike sovereign — to the utter consternation of all the peaceful inhabitants.

months with her, sketched out three new tragedies. On his return to Italy, he took up his abode for a short time at Pisa, — where, in a fit of indignation at the faults of Pliny's Panegyric on Trajan, he composed in five days that animated and eloquent piece of the same name, which alone, of all his works which have fallen into our hands, has left on our minds the impression of ardent and flowing eloquence. His rage for liberty likewise prompted him to compose several odes on the subject of American independence, and several miscellaneous productions of a similar character: — at last, in 1786, he is permitted to take up his permanent abode with his mistress, whom he rejoins at Alsace, and never afterwards abandons. In the course of the following year, they make a journey to Paris, with which he is nearly as much dissatisfied as on his former visit, — and makes arrangements with Didot for printing his tragedies in a superb form. In 1788, however, he resolves upon making a complete edition of his whole works at Kehl; and submits, for the accommodation of his fair friend, to take up his residence at Paris. There they receive intelligence of the death of her husband, which seems, however, to make no change in their way of life; — and there he continues busily employed in correcting his various works for publication, till the year 1790, when the first part of these Memoirs closes with anticipations of misery from the progress of the revolution, and professions of devoted attachment to the companion whom time had only rendered more dear and respected.

The supplementary part bears date in May, 1803 — but a few months prior to the death of the author, — and brings down his history, though in a more summary manner, to that period. He seems to have lived in much uneasiness and fear in Paris, after the commencement of the revolution; from all approbation, or even toleration of which *tragic farce*, as he terms it, he exculpates himself with much earnestness and solemnity; but, having vested the greater part of his fortune in that country, he could not conveniently abandon it. In 1791, he and his companion made a short visit to England, with which he was less pleased than on any former occasion, — the damp giving him a disposition to gout, and the late hours interfering with his habits of study. The most remarkable incident in this journey, occurred at its termination. As he was passing along the quay at Dover, on his way to the packet-boat, he caught a glimpse of the bewitching woman on whose account he had suffered so much in his former visit to this country, nearly twenty years before! She still looked beautiful, he says, and bestowed on him one of those enchanting smiles which convinced him that he was recognised. Unable to control his emotion, he rushed instantly aboard — hid himself below — and did not venture to look up till he was landed on the opposite shore. From Calais he addressed a letter to her of kind inquiry, and offers of service; and received an answer, which, on account of the singular tone of candour and magnanimity which it exhibits, he has subjoined in the appendix. It is undoubtedly a very remarkable production, and shows both a strength of mind and a kindness of disposition which seem worthy of a happier fortune.

In the end of 1792, the increasing fury of the revolution rendered Paris no longer a place of safety for foreigners of high birth; and Alfieri and his countess with some difficulty effected their escape from it, and established themselves, with a diminished income, at his beloved Florence. Here, with his usual impetuosity, he gave vent to his anti-revolutionary feelings, by composing an apology for Louis XVI., and a short satirical view of the French excesses, which he entitled "The Antigallican." He then took to acting his own plays; and, for two or three years, this new passion seduced him in a good degree from literature. In 1795, however, he tried his hand in some satirical productions; and began, with much zeal, to reperuse and translate various passages from the Latin classics. Latin naturally led to Greek; and, in the forty-ninth year of his age, he set seriously to the study of this language. Two whole years did this ardent genius dedicate to solitary drudgery, without being able to master the subject he had undertaken. At last, by dint of perseverance and incredible labour, he began to understand a little of the easier authors; and, by the time he had completed his fiftieth year, succeeded in interpreting a considerable part of Herodotus, Thucydides, and

Homer. The perusal of Sophocles, in the following year, impelled him to compose his last tragedy of Alceste in 1798. In the end of this year, the progress of the French armies threatened to violate the tranquillity of his Tuscan retreat! and, in the spring following, upon the occupation of Florence, he and his friend retired to a small habitation in the country. From this asylum, however, they returned so precipitately on the retreat of the enemy, that they were surprised by them on their second invasion of Tuscany in 1800; but had more to suffer, it appears, from the importunate civility, than from the outrages of the conquerors. The French general, it seems, was a man of letters, and made several attempts to be introduced to Alfieri. When evasion became impossible, the latter made the following haughty but guarded reply to his warlike admirer:—

"If the general, in his official capacity, commands his presence, Victor Alfieri, who never resists constituted authority of any kind, will immediately hasten to obey the order; but if, on the contrary, he requests an interview only as a private individual, Alfieri begs leave to observe, that being of a very retired turn of mind, he wishes not to form any new acquaintance; and therefore entreats the French general to hold him excused."—Vol. ii. pp. 286, 287.

Under these disastrous circumstances, he was suddenly seized with the desire of signalizing himself in a new field of exertion; and sketched out no fewer than six *comedies* at once, which were nearly finished before the end of 1802. His health, during this year, was considerably weakened by repeated attacks of irregular gout and inflammatory affections; and the memoir concludes with the description of a collar and medal which he had invented, as the badge of "the order of Homer," which, in his late sprung ardour for Greek literature, he had founded and endowed. Annexed to this record is a sort of postscript, addressed by his friend the Abbé Caluso, to the Countess of Albany; from which it appears that he was carried off by an inflammatory or gouty attack in his bowels, which put a period to his existence, after a few days' illness, in the month of October, 1803. We have since learned, that the publication of his posthumous works, which had been begun by the Countess of Albany at Milan, has been stopped by the French government; and that several of the manuscripts have, by the same authority, been committed to the flames.

We have not a great deal to add to this copious and extraordinary narrative. Many of the peculiarities of Alfieri may be safely referred to the accident of his birth, and the errors of his education. His *ennui*, arrogance, and dissipation, are not very unlike those of many spoiled youths of condition; nor is there any thing very extraordinary in his subsequent application to study, or the turn of his first political opinions. The peculiar nature of his pursuits, and the character of his literary productions, afford more curious matter for speculation.

In reflecting on the peculiar misery which Alfieri and some other eminent persons are recorded to have endured, while their minds were withheld from any worthy occupation, we have sometimes been tempted to conclude, that to suffer deeply from *ennui* is an indication of superior intellect; and that it is only to minds destined for higher attainments that the want of an object is a source of real affliction. Upon a little reflection, however, we are disposed to doubt of the soundness of this opinion; and really cannot permit all the shallow coxcombs, who languish under the burden of existence, to take themselves, on our authority, for spell-bound geniuses. The most powerful stream, indeed, will stagnate the most deeply, and will burst out to more wild devastation when obstructed in its peaceful course; but the weakly current is, upon the whole, most liable to obstruction, and will mantle and rot at least as dismally as its betters. The innumerable blockheads, in short, who betake themselves to suicide, dram-drinking, or dozing in dirty nightcaps, will not allow us to suppose that there is any real connection between *ennui* and talent; or that fellows who are fit for nothing but mending shoes, may not be very miserable if they are unfortunately raised above their proper occupation.

If it does frequently happen that extraordinary and vigorous exertions are found to follow this heavy slumber of the faculties, the phenomenon, we think, may be explained without giving any countenance to the supposition, that vigorous faculties are most liable

to such an obscuration. In the first place, the relief and delight of exertion must act with more than usual force upon a mind which has suffered from the want of it; and will be apt to be pushed further than in cases where the exertion has been more regular. The chief cause, however, of the signal success which has sometimes attended those who have been rescued from *ennui*, we really believe to be their ignorance of the difficulties they have to encounter, and that inexperience which makes them venture on undertakings which more prudent calculators would decline. We have already noticed, more than once, the effect of early study and familiarity with the best models in repressing emulation by despair; and have endeavoured, upon this principle, to explain why so many original authors have been in a great degree without education. Now, a youth spent in lassitude and dissipation leads necessarily to a manhood of ignorance and inexperience; and has all the advantages, as well as the inconveniences, of such a situation. If any inward feeling of strength, ambition, or other extraordinary impulse, therefore, prompt such a person to attempt any thing arduous, it is likely that he will go about it with all that rash and vehement courage which results from unconsciousness of the obstacles that are to be overcome: and it is needless to say how often success is ensured by this confident and fortunate audacity. Thus Alfieri, in the outset of his literary career, ran his head against dramatic poetry, almost before he knew what was meant either by poetry or the drama; and dashed out a tragedy while but imperfectly acquainted with the language in which he was writing, and utterly ignorant either of the rules that had been delivered, or the models which had been created by the genius of his great predecessors. Had he been trained up from his early youth in fearful veneration for these rules and these models, it is certain that he would have resisted the impulse which led him to place himself, with so little preparation, within their danger; and most probable that he would never have thought himself qualified to answer the test they required of him. In giving way, however, to this propensity, with all the thoughtless freedom and vehemence which had characterised his other indulgences, he found himself suddenly embarked in an unexpected undertaking, and in sight of unexpected distinction. The success he had obtained with so little knowledge of the subject, tempted him to acquire what was wanting to deserve it; and justified hopes and stimulated exertions which earlier reflection would, in all probability, have for ever prevented.

The *morality* of Alfieri seems to have been at least as relaxed as that of the degenerate nobles, whom in all other things he professed to reprobate and despise. He confesses, without the slightest appearance of contrition, that his general intercourse with women was profligate in the extreme; and has detailed the particulars of three several intrigues with married women, without once appearing to imagine that they could require any apology or expiation. On the contrary, while recording the deplorable consequences of one of them, he observes, with great composure, that it was distressing to him to contemplate a degradation, of which he had, "though innocently," been the occasion. The general arrogance of his manners, too, and the occasional brutality of his conduct towards his inferiors, are far from giving us an amiable impression of his general character; nor have we been able to find, in the whole of these confessions, a single trait of kindness of heart, or generous philanthropy, to place in the balance against so many indications of selfishness and violence. There are proofs enough, of a firm, elevated, and manly spirit; but small appearance of any thing gentle, or even, in a moral sense, of any thing very respectable. In his admiration, in short, of the worthies of antiquity, he appears to have copied their harshness and indelicacy at least as faithfully as their loftiness of character; and, at the same time, to have combined with it all the licentiousness and presumption of a modern Italian noble.

We have been somewhat perplexed with his politics. After speaking, as we have seen, of the mild government of the kings of Sardinia, — after adding that, "when he had read Plutarch and visited England, he felt the most unsurmountable repugnance at marrying, or having his children born at Turin," — after recording that a monarch is a master, and a subject a slave, — and "that he shed tears of mingled grief and rage at having been born

in such a state as Piedmont;"—after all this, —after giving up his estates to escape from this bondage, and after writing his books on the Tirannide, and his odes on American liberty, — we really were prepared to find him taking the popular side, at the outset at least of the French Revolution, and exulting in the downfall of one of those hateful despotisms, against the whole system of which he had previously inveighed with no extraordinary moderation. Instead of this, however, we find him abusing the revolutionists, and extolling their opponents with all the zeal of a professed antijacobin, — writing an eulogium on the dethroned monarch like Mr. Pybus, and an Antigallican like Peter Porcupine. Now, we are certainly very far from saying, that a true friend of liberty might not execrate the proceedings of the French revolutionists; but a professed hater of royalty might have felt more indulgence for the new republic; such a crazy zealot for liberty, as Alfieri showed himself in Italy, both by his writings and his conduct, might well have been carried away by that promise of emancipation to France, which deluded sounder heads than his in all the countries of Europe. There are two keys, we think, in the work before us, to this apparent inconsistency. Alfieri, with all his abhorrence of tyrants, was, in his heart, a great lover of aristocracy; and, he had a great spite and antipathy at the French nation, collectively and individually.

Though professedly a republican, it is easy to see, that the republic he wanted was one on the Roman model, — where there were Patricians as well as Plebeians, and where a man of great talents had even a good chance of being one day appointed Dictator. He did not admire kings indeed, — because he did not happen to be born one, and because they were the only beings to whom he was born inferior: but he had the utmost veneration for nobles, — because fortune had placed him in that order, and because the power and distinction which belonged to it were agreeable to him, and, he thought, would be exercised for the good of his inferiors. When he heard that Voltaire had written a tragedy on the story of Brutus, he fell into a great passion, and exclaimed, that the subject was too lofty for "a French plebeian, who, during twenty years, had subscribed himself gentleman in ordinary to the King!"

This love of aristocracy, however, will not explain the defence of monarchy and the abuse of republics, which formed the substance of his Antigallican. But the truth is, that he was antigallican from his youth up; and would never have forgiven that nation, if they had succeeded in establishing a free government, — especially while Italy was in bondage. The contempt which Voltaire had expressed for Italian literature, and the general degradation into which the national character had fallen, had sunk deep into his fierce and haughty spirit, and inspired him with an antipathy towards that people by whom his own countrymen had been subdued, ridiculed, and outshone. This paltry and vindictive feeling leads him, throughout this whole work, to speak of them in the most unjust and uncandid terms. There may be some truth in his remarks on the mean and meagre articulation of their language, and on their "horrible *u*, with their thin lips drawn in to pronounce it, as if they were blowing hot soup." Nay, we could even excuse the nationality which leads him to declare, that "he would rather be the author of ten good Italian verses, than of volumes written in *English* or *French*, or any such harsh and unharmonious jargon, — though their cannon and their armies should continue to render these languages fashionable." But we cannot believe in the sincerity of an amorous Italian, who declares, that he never could get through the first volume of Rousseau's Héloise; or of a modern author of regular dramas, who professes to see nothing at all admirable in the tragedies of Racine or Voltaire. It is evident to us, that he grudged those great writers the glory that was due to them, out of a vindictive feeling of national resentment; and that, for the same reason, he grudged the French nation the freedom in which he would otherwise have been among the first to believe and to exult.

It only remains to say a word or two of the literary productions of this extraordinary person; — a theme, however interesting and attractive, upon which we can scarcely pretend to enter on the present occasion. We have not yet been able to procure a complete copy of the works of Alfieri; and, even of those

which have been lately transmitted to us, we will confess that a considerable portion remains to be perused. We have seen enough, however, to satisfy us that they are deserving of a careful analysis, and that a free and enlightened estimate of their merit may be rendered both interesting and instructive to the greater part of our readers. We hope soon to be in a condition to attempt this task; and shall, in the mean time, confine ourselves to a very few observations suggested by the style and character of the tragedies with which we have been for some time acquainted.

These pieces approach much nearer to the ancient Grecian model, than any other modern production with which we are acquainted; in the simplicity of the plot, the fewness of the persons, the directness of the action, and the uniformity and elaborate gravity of the composition. Infinitely less declamatory than the French tragedies, they have less brilliancy and variety, and a deeper tone of dignity and nature. As they have not adopted the choral songs of the Greek stage, however, they are, on the whole, less poetical than those ancient compositions; although they are worked throughout with a fine and careful hand, and diligently purified from every thing ignoble or feeble in the expression. The author's anxiety to keep clear of figures of mere ostentation, and to exclude all showpieces of fine writing in a dialogue of deep interest or impetuous passion, has betrayed him, on some occasions, into too sententious and strained a diction, and given an air of labour and heaviness to many parts of his composition. He has felt, perhaps a little too constantly, that the cardinal virtue of a dramatic writer is to keep his personages to the business and the concerns that lie before them; and by no means to let them turn to moral philosophers, or rhetorical describers of their own emotions. But, in his zealous adherence to this good maxim, he seems sometimes to have forgotten, that certain passions are declamatory in nature as well as on the stage; and that, at any rate, they do not all vent themselves in concise and pithy sayings, but run occasionally into hyperbole and amplification. As it is the great excellence, so it is occasionally the chief fault of Alfieri's dialogue, that every word is honestly employed to help forward the action of the play, by serious argument, necessary narrative, or the direct expression of natural emotion. There are no excursions or digressions, — no episodical conversations, — and none but the most brief moralizings. This gives a certain air of solidity to the whole structure of the piece, that is apt to prove oppressive to an ordinary reader, and reduces the entire drama to too great uniformity.

We make these remarks chiefly with a reference to French tragedy. For our own part, we believe that those who are duly sensible of the merit of Shakspeare, will never be much struck with any other dramatical compositions. There are no other plays, indeed, that paint human nature, — that strike off the characters of men with all the freshness and sharpness of the original, — and speak the language of all the passions, not like a mimic, but an echo — neither softer nor louder, nor differently modulated from the spontaneous utterance of the art. In these respects he disdains all comparison with Alfieri, or with any other mortal: nor is it fair, perhaps, to suggest a comparison, where no rivalry can be imagined. Alfieri, like all the continental dramatists, considers a tragedy as a poem. In England, we look upon it rather as a representation of character and passion. With them, of course, the style and diction, and the congruity and proportions of the piece, are the main objects; — with us, the truth and the force of the imitation. It is sufficient for them, if there be character and action enough to prevent the composition from languishing, and to give spirit and propriety to the polished dialogue of which it consists; — we are satisfied, if there be management enough in the story not to shock credibility entirely, and beauty and polish enough in the diction to exclude disgust or derision. In his own way, Alfieri, we think, is excellent. His fables are all admirably contrived and completely developed; his dialogue is copious and progressive; and his characters all deliver natural sentiments with great beauty, and often with great force of expression. In our eyes, however, *it is* a fault that the fable is too simple, and the incidents too scanty; and that all the characters express themselves with equal felicity, and urge their opposite views and pretensions with equal skill and plausibility. We see at once, that an ingenious author has ver-

sified the sum of a dialogue; and never, for a moment, imagine that we hear the real persons contending. There may be more eloquence and dignity in this style of dramatising; — there is infinitely more deception in ours.

With regard to the diction of these pieces, it is not for *tramontane* critics to presume to offer any opinion. They are considered, in Italy, we believe, as the purest specimens of the *favella Toscana* that late ages have produced. To us they certainly seem to want something of that flow and sweetness to which we have been accustomed in Italian poetry, and to be formed rather upon the model of Dante than of Petrarca. At all events, it is obvious that the style is highly elaborate and artificial; and that the author is constantly striving to give it a sort of factitious force and energy, by the use of condensed and emphatic expressions, interrogatories, antitheses, and short and inverted sentences. In all these respects, as well as in the chastised gravity of the sentiments, and the temperance and propriety of all the delineations of passion, these pieces are exactly the reverse of what we should have expected from the fiery, fickle, and impatient character of the author. From all that Alfieri has told us of himself, we should have expected to find in his plays great vehemence and irregular eloquence — sublime and extravagant sentiments — passions rising to frenzy — and poetry swelling into bombast. Instead of this we have a subdued and concise representation of energetic discourses — passions, not loud but deep — and a style so severely correct and scrupulously pure, as to indicate, even to unskilful eyes, the great labour which must have been bestowed on its purification. No characters can be more different than that which we should infer from reading the tragedies of Alfieri, and that which he has assigned to himself in these authentic memoirs.

POSTHUMOUS WRITINGS OF COWPER.

(APRIL, 1803.)

The Life and Posthumous Writings of WILLIAM COWPER, Esq. *With an Introductory Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Cowper.* By WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq. 2 vols. 4to. Chichester: 1803.

THIS book is too long; but it is composed on a plan that makes prolixity unavoidable. Instead of an account of the poet's life, and a view of his character and performances, the biographer has laid before the public a large selection from his private correspondence, and merely inserted as much narrative between each series of letters as was necessary to preserve their connection, and make the subject of them intelligible.

This scheme of biography, which was first introduced, we believe, by Mason, in his life of Gray, has many evident advantages in point of liveliness of colouring, and fidelity of representation. It is something intermediate between the egotism of *confessions*, and the questionable narrative of a surviving friend, who must be partial, and may be mistaken: it enables the reader to judge for himself, from materials that were not provided for the purpose of determining his judgment; and holds up to him, instead of a flattering or unfaithful portrait, the living lineaments and features of the person it intends to commemorate. It is a plan, however, that requires so much room for its execution, and consequently so much money and so much leisure in those who wish to be masters of it, that it ought to be reserved, we conceive, for those great and eminent characters that are likely to excite an interest among all orders and generations of mankind. While the biography of Shakspeare and Bacon shrinks into the corner of an octavo, we can scarcely help wondering that the history of the sequestered life and solitary studies of Cowper should have extended into two quarto volumes.

The little Mr. Hayley writes in these volumes is by no means well written; though certainly distinguished by a very amiable gentleness of temper, and the strongest appearance of sincere veneration and affection for the departed friend to whose memory it is consecrated. It will be very hard, too, if they do not become popular; as Mr. Hayley

seems to have exerted himself to conciliate readers of every description, not only by the most lavish and indiscriminate praise of every individual he has occasion to mention, but by a general spirit of approbation and indulgence towards every practice and opinion which he has found it necessary to speak of. Among the other symptoms of *book making* which this publication contains, we can scarcely forbear reckoning the expressions of this too obsequious and offending philanthropy.

The constitutional shyness and diffidence of Cowper appeared in his earliest childhood, and was not subdued in any degree by the bustle and contention of a Westminster education; where, though he acquired a considerable portion of classical learning, he has himself declared that "he was never able to raise his eye above the shoe-buckles of the elder boys, who tyrannized over him." From this seminary, he seems to have passed, without any academical preparation, into the Society of the Inner Temple, where he continued to reside to the age of thirty-three. Neither his biographer nor his letters give any satisfactory account of the way in which this large and most important part of his life was spent. Although Lord Thurlow was one of his most intimate associates, it is certain that he never made any proficiency in the study of the law; and the few slight pieces of composition, in which he appears to have been engaged in this interval, are but a scanty produce for fifteen years of literary leisure. That a part of those years was very idly spent, indeed, appears from his own account of them. In a letter to his cousin, in 1786, he says,

"I did actually live three years with Mr. Chapman, a solicitor; that is to say, I slept three years in his house; but I lived, that is to say, I spent my days in Southampton Row, as you very well remember. There was I, and the future Lord Chancellor, constantly employed from morning to night, in giggling, and making giggle, instead of studying the law." — Vol. i. p. 178.

And in a more serious letter to Mr. Rose, he makes the following just observations.

"The colour of our whole life is generally such as the three or four first years, in which we are our own masters, make it. Then it is that we may be said to shape our own destiny, and to treasure up for ourselves a series of future successes or disappointments. Had I employed my time as wisely as you, in a situation very similar to yours, I had never been a poet perhaps, but I might by this time have acquired a character of more importance in society; a situation in which my friends would have been better pleased to see me. But three years misspent in an attorney's office, were almost of course followed by several more equally misspent in the Temple; and the consequence has been, as the Italian epitaph says, 'Sto qui.'—The only use I can make of myself now, at least the best, is to serve *in terrorem* to others, when occasion may happen to offer, that they may escape (so far as my admonitions can have any weight with them) my folly and my fate." — Vol. i. pp. 333, 334.

Neither the idleness of this period, however, nor the gaiety in which it appears to have been wasted, had corrected that radical defect in his constitution, by which he was disabled from making any public display of his acquisitions; and it was the excess of this diffidence, if we rightly understand his biographer, that was the immediate cause of the unfortunate derangement that overclouded the remainder of his life. In his thirty-first year, his friends procured for him the office of reading-clerk to the House of Lords; but the idea of reading in public, was the source of such torture and apprehension to him, that he very soon resigned that place, and had interest enough to exchange it for that of clerk of the journals, which was supposed to require no personal attendance. An unlucky dispute in Parliament, however, made it necessary for him to appear in his place; and the consequences of this requisition are stated by Mr. Hayley, in the following, not very lucid, account.

"His terrors on this occasion arose to such an astonishing height, that they utterly overwhelmed his reason: for although he had endeavoured to prepare himself for his public duty, by attending closely at the office for several months, to examine the parliamentary journals, his application was rendered useless by that excess of diffidence, which made him conceive, that whatever knowledge he might previously acquire, it would all forsake him at the bar of the House. This distressing apprehension increased to such a degree, as the time for his appearance approached, that when the day so anxiously dreaded arrived, he was unable to make the experiment. The very friends, who called on him for the purpose of attending him to the House of Lords, acquiesced in the cruel necessity of relinquishing the prospect of a station so severely formidable to a frame of such singular sensibility."

"The conflict between the wishes of just affectionate ambition, and the terrors of diffidence, so entirely

overwhelmed his health and faculties, that after two learned and benevolent divines (Mr. John Cowper, his brother, and the celebrated Mr. Martin Madan, his first cousin) had vainly endeavoured to establish a lasting tranquillity in his mind, by friendly and religious conversation, it was found necessary to remove him to St. Albans, where he resided a considerable time, under the care of that eminent physician Dr. Cotton, a scholar and a poet, who added to many accomplishments a peculiar sweetness of manners, in very advanced life, when I had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with him."—Vol. i. pp. 25, 26.

In this melancholy state he continued for upwards of a year, when his mind began slowly to emerge from the depression under which it had laboured, and to seek for consolation in the study of the Scriptures, and other religious occupations. In the city of Huntingdon, to which he had been removed in his illness, he now formed an acquaintance with the family of the Reverend Mr. Unwin, with whose widow the greater part of his after life was passed. The series of letters, which Mr. Hayley has introduced in this place, are altogether of a devotional cast, and bear evident symptoms of continuing depression and anxiety. He talks a great deal of his *conversion*, of the levity and worldliness of his former life, and of the *grace* which had at last been vouchsafed to him; and seems so entirely and constantly absorbed in those awful meditations, as to consider not only the occupations of his earlier days, but all temporal business or amusement, as utterly unworthy of his attention. We do not think it necessary to make any extract from this part of the publication; and perhaps Mr. Hayley might have spared some of the methodistical raptures and dissertations that are contained in those letters, without any injury either to the memory of his *friend*, or the reputation of his own performance.

After the death of Mr. Unwin, he retired with his widow to the village of Olney, in 1768, where he continued in the same pious and sequestered habits of life till the year 1772, when a second and more protracted visitation of the same tremendous malady obscured his faculties for a melancholy period of eight years; during which he was attended by Mrs. Unwin with a constancy and tenderness of affection which it was the great business of his after life to repay. In 1780, he began gradually to recover: and in a letter of that year to his cousin, describes himself in this manner:

"You see me sixteen years older, at the least, than when I saw you last; but the effects of time seem to have taken place rather on the outside of my head, than within it. What was brown is become grey, but what was foolish remains foolish still. Green fruit must rot before it ripens, if the season is such as to afford it nothing but cold winds and dark clouds, that interrupt every ray of sunshine. My days steal away silently, and march on (as poor mad King Lear would have made his soldiers march) as if they were shod with felt! Not so silently but that I hear them; yet were it not that I am always listening to their flight, having no infirmity that I had not when I was much younger, I should deceive myself with an imagination that I am still young."—Vol. i. pp. 96, 97.

One of the first applications of his returning powers was to the taming and education of the three young hares, which he has since celebrated in his poetry: and very soon after, the solicitations of his affectionate companion first induced him to prepare some moral pieces for publication, in the hope of giving a salutary employment to his mind. At the age of fifty, therefore, and at a distance from all the excitements that emulation and ambition usually hold out to a poet, Cowper began to write for the public, with the view of diverting his own melancholy, and doing service to the cause of morality. Whatever effect his publications had on the world, the composition of them certainly had a most beneficial one on himself. In a letter to his cousin, he says,

"Dejection of spirits, which I suppose may have prevented many a man from becoming an author, made me one. I find constant employment necessary, and therefore take care to be constantly employed. — Manual occupations do not engage the mind sufficiently, as I know by experience, having tried many. But composition, especially of verse, absorbs it wholly. I write, therefore, generally three hours in a morning, and in an evening I transcribe. I read also, but less than I write."—Vol. i. p. 147.

There is another passage in which he talks of his performance in so light and easy a manner, and assumes so much of the pleasing, though antiquated language of Pope and Addison, that we cannot resist extracting it.

"My labours are principally the production of the last winter; all indeed, except a few of the minor pieces. When I can find no other occupation, I think; and when I think, I am very apt to do it in rhyme. Hence it comes to pass, that the season of the year

which generally pinches off the flowers of poetry, unfolds mine, such as they are, and crowns me with a winter garland. In this respect, therefore, I and my contemporary bards are by no means upon a par. They write when the delightful influence of fine weather, fine prospects, and a brisk motion of the animal spirits, make poetry almost the language of nature; and I, when icicles depend from all the leaves of the Parnassian laurel, and when a reasonable man would as little expect to succeed in verse, as to hear a blackbird whistle. This must be my apology to you for whatever want of fire and animation you may observe in what you will shortly have the perusal of. As to the public, if they like me not, there is no remedy." — Vol. i. pp. 105, 106.

The success of his first volume, which appeared in the end of the year 1781, was by no means such as to encourage him to proceed to a second; and, indeed, it seems now to be admitted by every body but Mr. Hayley, that it was not well calculated for becoming popular. Too serious for the general reader, it had too much satire, wit, and criticism, to be a favourite with the devout and enthusiastic; the principal poems were also too long and desultory, and the versification throughout was more harsh and negligent, than the public had yet been accustomed to, The book, therefore, was very little read, till the increasing fame of the author brought all his works into notice; and then, indeed, it was discovered, that it contained many traits of strong and original genius, and a richness of idiomatical phraseology, that has been but seldom equalled in our language.

In the end of this year, Cowper formed an accidental acquaintance with the widow of Sir Thomas Austen, which, in spite of his insuperable shyness, ripened gradually into a mutual and cordial friendship, and was the immediate source of some of his happiest hours, and most celebrated productions. — The facetious history of "John Gilpin" arose from a suggestion of that lady, in circumstances and in a way that marks the perilous and moody state of Cowper's understanding more strikingly perhaps than any general description.

"It happened one afternoon, in those years, when his accomplished friend Lady Austen made a part of his little evening circle, that she observed him sinking into increasing dejection; it was her custom, on these occasions, to try all the resources of her sprightly powers for his immediate relief. She told him the story of John Gilpin (which had been treasured in her memory from her childhood) to dissipate the gloom of the passing hour. Its effects on the fancy of Cowper had the air of enchantment. He informed her the next morning, that *convulsions of laughter*, brought on by his recollection of her story, had kept him waking during the greatest part of the night! and that he had turned it into a ballad. — So arose the pleasant poem of John Gilpin." — Vol. i. pp. 128, 129.

In the course of the year 1783, however, Lady Austen was fortunate enough to direct the poet to a work of much greater importance; and to engage him, from a very accidental circumstance, in the composition of "The Task," by far the best and the most popular of all his performances. The anecdote, which is such as the introduction of that poem has probably suggested to most readers, is given in this manner by Mr. Hayley.

"This lady happened, as an admirer of Milton, to be partial to blank verse, and often solicited her poetical friend to try his powers in that species of composition. After repeated solicitation, he promised her, if she would furnish the subject, to comply with her request. 'Oh!' she replied, 'you can never be in want of a subject; — you can write upon any — write upon this sofa!' The poet obeyed her command; and, from the lively repartee of familiar conversation, arose a poem of many thousand verses, unexampled, perhaps, both in its origin and its excellence." — Vol. i. p. 135.

This extraordinary production was finished in less than a year, and became extremely popular from the very first month of its publication. The charm of reputation, however, could not draw Cowper from his seclusion; and his solitude became still more dreary about this period, by the cessation of his intercourse with Lady Austen, with whom certain little jealousies on the part of Mrs. Unwin (which the biographer might as well have passed over in silence) obliged him to renounce any farther connection. Besides The Task and John Gilpin, he appears to have composed several smaller poems for this lady, which are published, for the first time, in the work now before us. We were particularly struck with a ballad on the unfortunate loss of the Royal George, of which the following stanzas may serve as a specimen.

"Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last seafight is fought;
His work of glory done.

"It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

"His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down,
With twice four hundred men."
Vol. i. p. 127.

The same year that saw the conclusion of "The Task," found Cowper engaged in the translation of Homer. This laborious undertaking is said, by Mr. Hayley, to have been first suggested to him by Lady Austen also; though there is nothing in the correspondence he has published, that seems to countenance that idea. The work was pretty far advanced before he appears to have confided the secret of it to any one. In a letter to Mr. Hill, he explains his design in this manner:

"Knowing it to have been universally the opinion of the literati, ever since they have allowed themselves to consider the matter coolly, that a translation, properly so called, of Homer, is, notwithstanding what Pope has done, a desideratum in the English language, it struck me, that an attempt to supply the deficiency would be an honourable one; and having made myself, in former years, somewhat critically a master of the original, I was, by this double translation, induced to make the attempt myself. I am now translating into blank verse the last book of the Iliad, and mean to publish by subscription." — Vol. i. p. 154.

Some observations that were made by Dr. Maty and others, upon a specimen of his translation, about this time, seem to have drawn from him the following curious and unaffected delineation of his own thoughts and feelings.

"I am not ashamed to confess, that having commenced an author, I am most abundantly desirous to succeed as such. *I have (what perhaps you little suspect me of) in my nature, an infinite share of ambition.* But with it, I have at the same time, as you well know, an equal share of diffidence. To this combination of opposite qualities it has been owing, that, till lately, I stole through life without undertaking any thing, yet always wishing to distinguish myself. At last I ventured: ventured, too, in the only path that, at so late a period, was yet open to me; and I am determined, if God hath not determined otherwise, to work my way through the obscurity that hath been so long my portion, into notice." — Vol. i. p. 190.

As he advanced in his work, however, he seems to have become better pleased with the execution of it; and in the year 1790, addresses to his cousin the following candid and interesting observations: though we cannot but regret that we have not some specimens at least of what he calls the quaint and antiquated style of our earlier poets: and are not without our suspicions that we should have liked it better than that which he ultimately adopted.

"To say the truth, I have now no fears about the success of my translation, though in time past I have had many. I knew there was a style somewhere, could I but find it, in which Homer ought to be rendered, and which alone would suit him. Long time I blundered about it, ere I could attain to any decided judgment on the matter. At first I was betrayed, by a desire of accommodating my language to the simplicity of his, into much of the quaintness that belonged to our writers of the fifteenth century. In the course of many revisals, I have delivered myself from this evil, I believe entirely: but I have done it slowly, and as a man separates himself from his mistress, when he is going to marry. I had so strong a predilection in favour of this style, at first, that I was crazed to find that others were not as much enamoured with it as myself. At every passage of that sort, which I obliterated, I groaned bitterly, and said to myself, I am spoiling my work to please those who have no taste for the simple graces of antiquity. But in measure, as I adopted a more modern phraseology, I became a convert to their opinion; and in the last revisal which I am now making, am not sensible of having spared a single expression of the obsolete kind. I see my work so much improved by this alteration, that I am filled with wonder at my own backwardness to assent to the necessity of it; and the more, when I consider, that Milton, with whose manner I account myself intimately acquainted, is never quaint, never twangs through the nose, but is every where grand and elegant, without resorting to musty antiquity for his beauties. On the contrary, he took a long stride forward, left the language of his own day far behind him, and anticipated the expressions of a century yet to come." — Vol. i. pp. 360, 361.

The translation was finished in the year 1791, and published by subscription immediately after. Several applications were made to the University of Oxford for the honour of their subscription, but without success. Their answer was, "That they subscribed to nothing."—"It seems not a little extraordinary," says the offended poet on this occasion, "that persons so nobly patronised themselves on the score of literature, should resolve to give no encouragement to it in return." We think so too.

The period that elapsed from the publica-

tion of his first volume in 1781, to that of his Homer in 1791, seems to have been by far the happiest and most brilliant part of Cowper's existence. It was not only animated by the vigorous and successful exertions in which he was engaged, but enlivened, in a very pleasing manner, by the correspondence and society of his cousin, Lady Hesketh, who renewed, about this time, an intimacy that seems to have endeared the earlier days of their childhood. In his letters to this lady, we have found the most interesting traits of his simple and affectionate character, combined with an innocent playfulness, and vivacity, that charms the more, when contrasted with the gloom and horror to which it succeeded, and by which it was unfortunately replaced. Our limits will not allow us to make any extracts from this part of the publication. We insert, however, the following delightful letter, in answer to one from Lady Hesketh, promising to pay him a visit during the summer.

"I shall see you again! — I shall hear your voice — we shall take walks together; I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks, every thing that I have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days not very far distant, and feel a part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn; mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors, but we could easily accommodate them all, though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us; and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with mats, and spread the floor with mats, and there you shall sit with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jesmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention, the country will not be in complete beauty. And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. *Imprimis*, As soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author. It was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made; but a merciless servant having scrubbed until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament: and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour into which I shall conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin (unless we should meet her before) — and where we will be as happy as the day is long! Order yourself, my cousin, to the Swan at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

"My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns: and have asked him whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be any thing better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too." — Vol. i. pp. 161—163.

The following is very much in the same style.

"This house, accordingly, since it has been occupied by us and our *Meubles*, is as much superior to what it was when you saw it as you can imagine. The parlour is even elegant. When I say that the parlour is elegant, I do not mean to insinuate that the study is not so. It is neat, warm, and silent, and a much better study than I deserve, if I do not produce in it an incomparable translation of Homer. I think every day of those lines of Milton, and congratulate myself on having obtained, before I am quite superannuated, what he seems not to have hoped for sooner.

'And may at length my weary age,
Find out the peaceful hermitage.'

For if it is not a hermitage, at least it is a much better thing; and you must always understand, my dear, that when poets talk of cottages, hermitages, and such like things, they mean a house with six sashes in front, two comfortable parlours, a smart staircase, and three bedchambers of convenient dimensions; in short, exactly such a house as this." — Vol. i. pp. 227, 228.

In another letter, in a graver humour, he says —

"I am almost the only person at Weston, known to you, who have enjoyed tolerable health this winter. In your next letter give us some account of your own state of health, for I have had my anxieties about you. The winter has been mild; but our winters are in general such, that, when a friend leaves us in the beginning of that season, I always feel in my heart a *perhaps*, importing that we have possibly met for the last time, and that the robins may whistle on the grave of one of us before the return of summer.

"Many thanks for the cuckow, which arrived perfectly safe, and goes well, to the amusement and amazement of all who hear it. Hannah lies awake to hear it; and I am not sure that we have not others in the house that admire his music as much as she." — Vol. i. p. 331.

In the following passage, we have all the calmness of a sequestered and good-natured man, and we doubt whether there was another

educated and reflecting individual to be found in the kingdom, who could think and speak so dispassionately of the events which were passing in 1792.

"The French, who, like all lively folks, are extreme in every thing, are such in their zeal for freedom; and if it were possible to make so noble a cause ridiculous, their manner of promoting it could not fail to do so. Princes and peers reduced to plain gentlemanship, and gentles reduced to a level with their own lackeys, are excesses of which they will repent hereafter. Difference of rank and subordination are, I believe, of God's appointment, and, consequently, essential to the well-being of society: but what we mean by fanaticism in religion, is exactly that which animates their politics; and, unless time should sober them, they will, after all, be an unhappy people. Perhaps it deserves not much to be wondered at, that at their first escape from tyrannic shackles, they should act extravagantly, and treat their kings as they have sometimes treated their idols. To these, however, they are reconciled in due time again; but their respect for monarchy is at an end. They want nothing now but a little English sobriety, and that they want extremely. I heartily wish them some wit in their anger; for it were a great pity that so many millions should be miserable for want of it."—Vol. i. p. 379.

Homer was scarcely finished, when a proposal was made to the indefatigable translator, to engage in a magnificent edition of Milton, for which he was to furnish a version of his Latin and Italian poetry, and a critical commentary upon his whole works. Mr. Hayley had, at this time, undertaken to write a life of Milton; and some groundless reports, as to an intended rivalry between him and Cowper, led to a friendly explanation, and to a very cordial and affectionate intimacy. In the year 1792, Mr. Hayley paid a visit to his newly-acquired friend at Weston; and happened to be providentially present with him when the agony which he experienced from the sight of a paralytic attack upon Mrs. Unwin, had very nearly affected his understanding. The anxious attention of his friend, and the gradual recovery of the unfortunate patient, prevented any very calamitous effect from this unhappy occurrence: but his spirits appear never to have recovered the shock; and the solicitude and apprehension which he constantly felt for his long tried and affectionate companion, suspended his literary exertions, aggravated the depression to which he had always been occasionally liable, and rendered the remainder of his life a very precarious struggle against that overwhelming malady by which it was at last obscured. In the end of summer, he returned Mr. Hayley's visit at Eartham; but came back again to Weston, with spirits as much depressed and forebodings as gloomy as ever. His constant and tender attention to Mrs. Unwin, was one cause of his neglect of every thing else. "I cannot sit," he says in one of his letters, "with my pen in my hand, and my books before me, while she is, in effect, in solitude—silent, and looking in the fire." A still more powerful cause was, the constant and oppressive dejection of spirits that now began again to overwhelm him. "It is in vain," he says, "that I have made several attempts to write since I came from Sussex. Unless more comfortable days arrive, than I have now the confidence to look for, there is an end of all writing with me! I have no spirits. When Rose came, I was obliged to prepare for his coming, by a nightly dose of laudanum."

In the course of the year 1793, he seems to have done little but revise his translation of Homer, of which he meditated an improved edition. Mr. Hayley came to see him a second time at Weston, in the month of November; and gives this affecting and prophetic account of his situation—

"He possessed completely at this period all the admirable faculties of his mind, and all the native tenderness of his heart; but there was something indescribable in his appearance, which led me to apprehend, that, without some signal event in his favour, to re-animate his spirits, they would gradually sink into hopeless dejection. The state of his aged infirm companion, afforded additional ground for increasing solicitude. Her cheerful and beneficent spirit could hardly resist her own accumulated maladies, so far as to preserve ability sufficient to watch over the tender health of him whom she had watched and guarded so long. Imbecility of body and mind must gradually render this tender and heroic woman unfit for the charge which she had so laudably sustained. The signs of such imbecility were beginning to be painfully visible; nor can nature present a spectacle more truly pitiable, than imbecility in such a shape, eagerly grasping for dominion, which it knows not either how to retain, or how to relinquish."—Vol. ii. pp. 161, 162.

From a part of these evils, however, the poet was relieved, by the generous compassion of Lady Hesketh, who nobly took upon herself

the task of superintending this melancholy household. We will not withhold from our readers the encomium she has so well earned from the biographer.

"Those only, who have lived with the superannuated and the melancholy, can properly appreciate the value of such magnanimous friendship; or perfectly apprehend, what personal sufferings it must cost the mortal who exerts it, if that mortal has received from nature a frame of compassionate sensibility. The lady, to whom I allude, has felt but too severely, in her own health, the heavy tax that mortality is forced to pay for a resolute perseverance in such painful duty." — Vol. ii. p. 177.

It was impossible, however, for any care or attention to arrest the progress of that dreadful depression, by which the faculties of this excellent man were destined to be extinguished. In the beginning of the year 1794, he became utterly incapable of any sort of exertion, and ceased to receive pleasure from the company or conversation of his friends. Neither a visit from Mr. Hayley, nor his Majesty's order for a pension of 300*l*. a-year, was able to rouse him from that languid and melancholy state into which he had gradually been sinking; and, at length, it was thought necessary to remove him from the village of Weston to Tuddenham in Norfolk, where he could be under the immediate superintendence of his kinsman, the Reverend Mr. Johnson. After a long cessation of all correspondence, he addressed the following very moving lines to the clergyman of the favourite village, to which he was no more to return:

"I will forget, for a moment, that to whomsoever I may address myself, a letter from me can no otherwise be welcome, than as a curiosity. To you, sir, I address this, urged by extreme penury of employment, and the desire I feel to learn something of what is doing, and has been done, at Weston (my beloved Weston!) since I left it? No situation, at least when the weather is clear and bright, can be pleasanter than what we have here; which you will easily credit when I add, that it imparts something a little resembling pleasure even to me. — Gratify me with news of Weston! — If Mr. Gregson and the Courtneys are there, mention me to them in such terms as you see good. Tell me if my poor birds are living! I never see the herbs I used to give them without a recollection of them, and sometimes am ready to gather them, forgetting that I am not at home. — Pardon this intrusion."

In summer 1796, there were some faint glimmerings of returning vigour, and he again applied himself, for some time, to the revisal of his translation of Homer. In December, Mrs. Unwin died; and such was the severe depression under which her companion then laboured, that he seems to have suffered but little on the occasion. He never afterwards mentioned her name! At intervals, in the summer, he continued to work at the revisal of his Homer, which he at length finished in 1799; and afterwards translated some of Gay's Fables into Latin verse, and made English translations of several Greek and Latin Epigrams. This languid exercise of his once-vigorous powers was continued till the month of January, 1800, when symptoms of dropsy became visible in his person, and soon assumed a very formidable appearance. After a very rapid but gradual decline, which did not seem to affect the general state of his spirits, he expired, without struggle or agitation, on the 25th of April, 1800.

Of the volumes now before us, we have little more to say. The biography of Cowper naturally terminates with this account of his death; and the posthumous works that are now given to the public, require very few observations. They consist chiefly of short and occasional poems, that do not seem to have been very carefully finished, and will not add much to the reputation of their author. The longest is a sort of ode upon Friendship, in which the language seems to be studiously plain and familiar, and to which Mr. Hayley certainly has not given the highest poetical praise, by saying that it "contains the essence of every thing that has been said on the subject, by the best writers of different countries." Some of the occasional songs and sonnets are good; and the translations from the *anthologia*, which were the employment of his last melancholy days, have a remarkable closeness and facility of expression. There are two or three little poetical pieces, written by him in the careless days of his youth, while he resided in the Temple, that are, upon the whole, extremely poor and unpromising. It is almost inconceivable, that the author of the Task should ever have been guilty of such verses as the following:

"'Tis not with either of these views,
That I presume to address the Muse;

But to divert a fierce banditti,
(Sworn foes to every thing that's witty!)
That, with a black infernal train,
Make cruel inroads in my brain,
And daily threaten to drive thence
My little garrison of sense:
The fierce banditti which I mean,
Are gloomy thoughts, led on by spleen.
There's another reason yet,
Which is, that I may fairly quit
The debt which justly became due
The moment when I heard from you:
And you might grumble, crony mine,
If paid in any other coin." Vol. i. p. 15.

It is remarkable, however, that his prose was at this time uncommonly easy and elegant. Mr. Hayley has preserved three numbers of the Connoisseur, which were written by him in 1796, and which exhibit a great deal of that point and politeness, which has been aimed at by the best of our periodical essayists since the days of Addison.

The personal character of Cowper is easily estimated, from the writings he has left, and the anecdotes contained in this publication. He seems to have been chiefly remarkable for a certain feminine gentleness, and delicacy of nature, that shrunk back from all that was boisterous, presumptuous, or rude. His secluded life, and awful impressions of religion, concurred in fixing upon his manners something of a saintly purity and decorum, and in cherishing that pensive and contemplative turn of mind, by which he was so much distinguished. His temper appears to have been yielding and benevolent; and though sufficiently steady and confident in the opinions he had adopted, he was very little inclined, in general, to force them upon the conviction of others. The warmth of his religious zeal made an occasional exception: but the habitual temper of his mind was toleration and indulgence; and it would be difficult, perhaps, to name a satirical and popular author so entirely free from jealousy and fastidiousness, or so much disposed to make the most liberal and impartial estimate of the merit of others, in literature, in politics, and in the virtues and accomplishments of social life. No angry or uneasy passions, indeed, seem at any time to have found a place in his bosom; and, being incapable of malevolence himself, he probably passed through life, without having once excited that feeling in the breast of another.

As the whole of Cowper's works are now before the public, and as death has finally closed the account of his defects and excellencies, the public voice may soon be expected to proclaim the balance; and to pronounce that impartial and irrevocable sentence which is to assign him his just rank and station in the poetical commonwealth, and to ascertain the value and extent of his future reputation. As the success of his works has, in a great measure, anticipated this sentence, it is the less presumptuous in us to offer our opinion of them.

The great merit of this writer appears to us to consist in the boldness and originality of his composition, and in the fortunate audacity with which he has carried the dominion of poetry into regions that had been considered as inaccessible to her ambition. The gradual refinement of taste had, for nearly a century, been weakening the force of original genius. Our poets had become timid and fastidious, and circumscribed themselves both in the choice and the management of their subjects, by the observance of a limited number of models, who were thought to have exhausted all the legitimate resources of the art. Cowper was one of the first who crossed this enchanted circle; who reclaimed the natural liberty of invention, and walked abroad in the open field of observation as freely as those by whom it was originally trodden. He passed from the imitation of poets to the imitation of nature, and ventured boldly upon the representation of objects that had not been sanctified by the description of any of his predecessors. In the ordinary occupations, and duties of domestic life, and the consequences of modern manners, in the common scenery of a rustic situation, and the obvious contemplation of our public institutions, he has found a multitude of subjects for ridicule and reflection, for pathetic and picturesque description, for moral declamation, and devotional rapture, that would have been looked upon with disdain, or with despair, by most of our poetical adventurers. He took as wide a range in language, too, as in matter; and, shaking off the tawdry incumbrance of that poetical diction which had nearly reduced the

art to the skilful collocation of a set of conventional phrases, he made no scruple to set down in verse every expression that would have been admitted in prose, and to take advantage of all the varieties with which our language could supply him.

But while, by the use of this double licence, he extended the sphere of poetical composition, and communicated a singular character of freedom, force, and originality to his own performances, it must not be dissembled, that the presumption which belongs to most innovators has betrayed him into many defects. In disdaining to follow the footsteps of others, he has frequently mistaken the way, and has been exasperated, by their blunders, to rush into opposite extremes. In his contempt for their scrupulous selection of topics, he has introduced some that are unquestionably low and uninteresting; and in his zeal to strip off the tinsel and embroidery of their language, he has sometimes torn it (like Jack's coat in the Tale of a Tub) into terrible rents and beggarly tatters. He is a great master of English, and evidently values himself upon his skill and facility in the application of its rich and diversified idioms: but he has indulged himself in this exercise a little too fondly, and has degraded some grave and animated passages by the unlucky introduction of expressions unquestionably too colloquial and familiar. His impatience of control, and his desire to have a great scope and variety in his compositions, have led him not only to disregard all order and method so entirely in their construction, as to have made each of his larger poems professedly a complete miscellany, but also to introduce into them a number of subjects, that prove not to be very susceptible of poetical discussion. There are specimens of argument, and dialogue, and declamation, in his works, that partake very little of the poetical character, and make rather an awkward appearance in a metrical production, though they might have had a lively and brilliant effect in an essay or a sermon. The structure of his sentences, in like manner, has frequently much more of the copiousness and looseness of oratory, than the brilliant compactness of poetry; and he heaps up phrases and circumstances upon each other, with a profusion that is frequently dazzling, but which reminds us as often of the exuberance of a practised speaker, as of the holy inspiration of a poet.

Mr. Hayley has pronounced a warm eulogium on the satirical talents of his friend: but it does not appear to us, either that this was the style in which he was qualified to excel, or that he has made a judicious selection of subjects upon which to exercise it. There is something too keen and vehement in his invective, and an excess of austerity in his doctrines, that is not atoned for by the truth or the beauty of his descriptions. Foppery and affectation are not such hateful and gigantic vices, as to deserve all the anathemas that are bestowed upon them; nor can we believe that soldiership, or Sunday music, have produced all the terrible effects which he ascribes to them: there is something very undignified, too, to say no worse of them, in the protracted parodies and mock-heroic passages with which he seeks to enliven some of his gravest productions. The *Sofa* (for instance, in the *Task*) is but a feeble imitation of "The Splendid Shilling;" the *Monitor* is a copy of something still lower; and the tedious directions for *raising cucumbers*, which begin with calling a hotbed "a *stercorarious* heap," seem to have been intended as a counterpart to the tragedy of Tom Thumb. All his serious pieces contain some fine devotional passages; but they are not without a taint of that enthusiastic intolerance which religious zeal seems but too often to produce.

It is impossible to say any thing of the defects of Cowper's writings, without taking notice of the occasional harshness and inelegance of his versification. From his correspondence, however, it appears that this was not with him the effect of negligence merely, but that he really imagined that a rough and incorrect line now and then had a very agreeable effect in a composition of any length. This prejudice, we believe, is as old as Cowley among English writers; but we do not know that it has of late received the sanction of any one poet of eminence. In truth, it does not appear to us to be at all capable of defence. The very essence of versification is uniformity; and while any thing like versification is preserved, it must be evident that uniformity continues to be aimed at. What pleasure is

to be derived from an occasional failure in this aim, we cannot exactly understand. It must afford the same gratification, we should imagine, to have one of the buttons on a coat a little larger than the rest, or one or two of the pillars in a colonnade a little out of the perpendicular. If variety is wanted, let it be variety of excellence, and not a relief of imperfection: let the writer alter the measure of his piece, if he thinks its uniformity disagreeable; or let him interchange it every now and then, if he thinks proper, with passages of plain and professed prose; but do not let him torture an intractable scrap of prose into the appearance of verse, nor slip in an illegitimate line or two among the genuine currency of his poem.

There is another view of the matter, no doubt, that has a little more reason in it. A smooth and harmonious verse is not so easily written as a harsh and clumsy one; and in order to make it smooth and elegant, the strength and force of the expression must often be sacrificed. This seems to have been Cowper's view of the subject, at least in one passage. "Give me," says he, in a letter to his publisher, "a manly rough line, with a deal of meaning in it, rather than a whole poem full of musical periods, that have nothing but their smoothness to recommend them." It is obvious, however, that this is not a defence of harsh versification, but a confession of inability to write smoothly. Why should not harmony and meaning go together? It is difficult, to be sure; and so it is, to make meaning and verse of any kind go together: but it is the business of a poet to overcome these difficulties, and if he do not overcome them both, he is plainly deficient in an accomplishment that others have attained. To those who find it impossible to pay due attention both to the sound and the sense, we would not only address the preceding exhortation of Cowper, but should have no scruple to exclaim, "Give us a sentence of plain prose, full of spirit and meaning, rather than a poem of any kind that has nothing but its versification to recommend it."

Though it be impossible, therefore, to read the productions of Cowper, without being delighted with his force, his originality, and his variety; and although the enchantment of his moral enthusiasm frequently carries us insensibly through all the mazes of his digressions, it is equally true, that we can scarcely read a single page with attention, without being offended at some coarseness or lowness of expression, or disappointed by some "most lame and impotent conclusion." The dignity of his rhetorical periods is often violated by the intrusion of some vulgar and colloquial idiom, and the full and transparent stream of his diction broken upon some obstreperous verse, or lost in the dull stagnation of a piece of absolute prose. The effect of his ridicule is sometimes impaired by the acrimony with which it is attended; and the exquisite beauty of his moral painting and religious views, is injured in a still greater degree by the darkness of the shades which his enthusiasm and austerity have occasionally thrown upon the canvas. With all these defects, however, Cowper will probably very long retain his popularity with the readers of English poetry. The great variety and truth of his descriptions; the minute and correct painting of those home scenes, and private feelings with which every one is internally familiar; the sterling weight and sense of most of his observations, and, above all, the great appearance of facility with which every thing is executed, and the happy use he has so often made of the most common and ordinary language; all concur to stamp upon his poems the character of original genius, and remind us of the merits that have secured immortality to Shakspeare.

After having said so much upon the original writings of Cowper, we cannot take our leave of him without adding a few words upon the merits of the translation with which we have found him engaged for so considerable a portion of his life. The views with which it was undertaken have already been very fully explained in the extracts we have given from his correspondence; and it is impossible to deny that his chief object has been obtained in a very considerable degree. That the translation is a great deal more close and literal than any that had previously been attempted in English verse, probably will not be disputed by those who are the least disposed to admire it; that the style into which it is translated, is a true English style, though not perhaps a very elegant or poetical one, may also be assumed; but we are not sure that a rigid and

candid criticism will go farther in its commendation. The language is often very tame, and even vulgar; and there is by far too great a profusion of antiquated and colloquial forms of expression. In the dialogue part, the idiomatical and familiar turn of the language has often an animated and happy effect; but in orations of dignity, this dramatical licence is frequently abused, and the translation approaches to a parody. In the course of one page, we observe that Nestor undertakes "to entreat Achilles *to a calm.*" Agamemnon calls him, "this wrangler here." And the godlike Achilles himself complains of being treated "like a *fellow* of no worth."

"Ye critics say,
How poor to this was Homer's style!"

In translating a poetical writer, there are two kinds of fidelity to be aimed at. Fidelity to the *matter*, and fidelity to the *manner* of the original. The best translation would be that, certainly, which preserved both. But, as this is generally impracticable, some concessions must be made upon both sides; and the largest upon that which will be least regretted by the common readers of the translation. Now, though antiquaries and moral philosophers may take great delight in contemplating the state of manners, opinions, and civilization, that prevailed in the age of Homer, and be offended, of course, at any disguise or modern embellishment that may be thrown over his representations, still, this will be but a secondary consideration with most readers of poetry; and if the smoothness of the verse, the perspicuity of the expression, or the vigour of the sentiment, must be sacrificed to the observance of this rigid fidelity, they will generally be of opinion, that it ought rather to have been sacrificed to them; and that the *poetical beauty* of the original was better worth preserving than the literal import of the expressions. The splendour and magnificence of the Homeric diction and versification is altogether as essential a part of his composition, as the sense and the meaning which they convey. His poetical reputation depends quite as much on the one as on the other; and a translator must give but a very imperfect and unfaithful copy of his original, if he leave out half of those qualities in which the excellence of the original consisted. It is an indispensable part of his duty, therefore, to imitate the harmony and elevation of his author's language, as well as to express his meaning; and he is equally unjust and unfaithful to his original, in passing over the beauties of his diction, as in omitting or disguising his sentiments. In Cowper's elaborate version, there are certainly some striking and vigorous passages, and the closeness of the translation continually recals the original to the memory of a classical reader; but he will look in vain for the melodious and elevated language of Homer in the unpolished verses and colloquial phraseology of his translator.

POSTHUMOUS WRITINGS OF COWPER.

(July, 1804.)

The Life and Posthumous Writings of William Cowper, Esq. *With an Introductory Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Cowper.* By William Hayley, Esq. Vol. III. 4to. pp. 416. Johnson, London: 1804.

This is the continuation of a work of which we recently submitted a very ample account and a very full character to our readers. On that occasion, we took the liberty of observing, that two quarto volumes seemed to be almost as much as the biography of a secluded scholar was entitled to occupy; and, with a little judicious compression, we are still of opinion that the life and correspondence of Cowper might be advantageously included in somewhat narrower limits. We are by no means disposed, however, to quarrel with this *third* volume, which is more interesting, if possible, than either of the two former, and will be read, we have no doubt, with general admiration and delight.

Though it still bears the title of the Life of Cowper, this volume contains no further particulars of his history; but is entirely made up of a collection of his letters, introduced by a long, rambling dissertation on letter-writing in general, from the pen of his biographer. This prologue, we think, possesses no peculiar merit. The writer has no vigour, and very little vivacity; his mind seems to be cultivated, but not at all fertile; and, while he always keeps at a safe distance from extravagance or absurdity, he does not seem to be uniformly capable of distinguishing affectation from elegance, or

dulness from good judgment. This discourse upon letter-writing, in short, contains nothing that might not have been omitted with considerable advantage to the publication; and we are rather inclined to think, that those who are ambitious of being introduced to the presence of Cowper, will do well not to linger very long in the antechamber with Mr. Hayley.

Of the letters themselves, we may safely assert, that we have rarely met with any similar collection, of superior interest or beauty. Though the incidents to which they relate be of no public magnitude or moment, and the remarks which they contain are not uniformly profound or original, yet there is something in the sweetness and facility of the diction, and more, perhaps, in the glimpses they afford of a pure and benevolent mind, that diffuses a charm over the whole collection, and communicates an interest that is not often commanded by performances of greater dignity and pretension. This interest was promoted and assisted, no doubt, in a considerable degree, by that curiosity which always seeks to penetrate into the privacy of celebrated men, and which had been almost entirely frustrated in the instance of Cowper, till the appearance of this publication. Though his writings had long been extremely popular, the author himself was scarcely known to the public; and having lived in a state of entire seclusion from the world, there were no anecdotes of his conversation, his habits or opinions, in circulation among his admirers. The publication of his correspondence has in a great measure supplied this deficiency; and we now know almost as much of Cowper as we do of those authors who have spent their days in the centre and glare of literary or fashionable notoriety. These letters, however, will continue to be read, long after the curiosity is gratified to which perhaps they owed their first celebrity: for the character with which they make us acquainted, will always attract by its rarity, and engage by its elegance. The feminine delicacy and purity of Cowper's manners and disposition, the romantic and unbroken retirement in which his innocent life was passed, and the singular gentleness and modesty of his whole character, disarm him of those terrors that so often shed an atmosphere of repulsion around the persons of celebrated writers, and make us more indulgent to his weaknesses, and more delighted with his excellences, than if he had been the centre of a circle of wits, or the oracle of a literary confederacy. The interest of this picture is still further heightened by the recollection of that tremendous malady, to the visitations of which he was subject, and by the spectacle of that perpetual conflict which was maintained, through the greater part of his life, between the depression of those constitutional horrors, and the gaiety that resulted from a playful imagination, and a heart animated by the mildest affections.

In the letters now before us, Cowper displays a great deal of all those peculiarities by which his character was adorned or distinguished; he is frequently the subject of his own observations, and often delineates the finer features of his understanding with all the industry and impartiality of a stranger. But the most interesting traits are those which are unintentionally discovered, and which the reader collects from expressions that were employed for very different purposes. Among the most obvious, perhaps, as well as the most important of these, is that extraordinary combination of shyness and ambition, to which we are probably indebted for the very existence of his poetry. Being disqualified, by the former, from vindicating his proper place in the ordinary scenes either of business or of society, he was excited, by the latter, to attempt the only other avenue to reputation that appeared to be open, and to assert the real dignity of the talents with which he felt that he was gifted. If he could only have mustered courage enough to read the journals of the House of Lords, or been able to get over the diffidence which fettered his utterance in general society, his genius would probably have evaporated in conversation, or been contented with the humbler glory of contributing to the Rolliad or the Connoisseur.

As the present collection relates to no particular set of subjects or occurrences, but exhibits a view of the author's miscellaneous correspondence with the few intimate friends he had retained, it is impossible to give any abstract of its contents, or to observe any order in the extracts that may be made from it. We shall endeavour, however, to introduce as great a variety as possible.

Though living altogether in retirement, Cowper appears to have retained a very nice perception of the proprieties of conduct and manners, and to have exercised a great deal of acuteness and sagacity upon the few subjects of practical importance which he had occasion to consider. The following sketch is by a fine and masterly hand; and proves how much a bashful recluse may excel a gentleman from the grand tour in delicacy of observation and just notions of politeness.

"Since I wrote last, we had a visit from ——. I did not feel myself vehemently disposed to receive him with that complaisance, from which a stranger generally infers that he is welcome. By his manner, which was rather bold than easy, I judged that there was no occasion for it; and that it was a trifle which, if he did not meet with, neither would he feel the want of. He has the air of a travelled man, but not of a travelled gentleman; is quite delivered from that reserve, which is so common an ingredient in the English character, yet does not open himself gently and gradually, as men of polite behaviour do, but bursts upon you all at once. He talks very loud; and when our poor little robins hear a great noise, they are immediately seized with an ambition to surpass it — the increase of their vociferation occasioned an increase of his; and his, in return, acted as a stimulus upon theirs — neither side entertained a thought of giving up the contest, which became continually more interesting to our ears during the whole visit. The birds, however, survived it, — and so did we. They perhaps flatter themselves they gained a complete victory, but I believe Mr. —— would have killed them both in another hour." — Pp. 17, 18.

Cowper's antipathy to public schools is well known to all readers of his poetry. There are many excellent remarks on that subject in these letters. We can only find room for the following.

"A public education is often recommended as the most effectual remedy for that bashful and awkward restraint, so epidemical among the youth of our country. But I verily believe, that, instead of being a cure, it is often the cause of it. For seven or eight years of his life, the boy has hardly seen or conversed with a man, or a woman, except the maids at his boarding-house. A gentleman or a lady are consequently such novelties to him, that he is perfectly at a loss to know what sort of behaviour he should preserve before them. He plays with his buttons, or the strings of his hat, he blows his nose, and hangs down his head, is conscious of his own deficiency to a degree that makes him quite unhappy, and trembles lest any one should speak to him, because that would quite overwhelm him. Is not all this miserable shyness the effect of his education? To me it appears to be so. If he saw good company every day, he would never be terrified at the sight of it, and a room full of ladies and gentlemen would alarm him no more than the chairs they sit on. Such is the effect of custom." — P. 60.

There is much acuteness in the following examination of Dr. Paley's argument in favour of the English hierarchy.

"He says first, that the appointment of various orders in the church is attended with this good consequence, that each class of people is supplied with a clergy of their own level and description, with whom they may live and associate on terms of equality. But in order to effect this good purpose, there ought to be at least three parsons in every parish; one for the gentry, one for the traders and mechanics, and one for the lowest of the vulgar. Neither is it easy to find many parishes, where the laity at large have any society with their minister at all: this therefore is fanciful, and a mere invention. In the next place, he says it gives a dignity to the ministry itself; and the clergy share in the respect paid to their superiors. Much good may such participation do them! They themselves know how little it amounts to. The dignity a curate derives from the lawn sleeves and square cap of his diocesan, will never endanger his humility. Again — 'Rich and splendid situations in the church, have been justly regarded as prizes, held out to invite persons of good hopes and ingenious attainments.' Agreed. But the prize held out in the Scripture is of a very different kind: and our ecclesiastical baits are too often snapped by the worthless, and persons of no attainments at all. They are indeed incentives to avarice and ambition, but not to those acquirements, by which only the ministerial function can be adorned, zeal for the salvation of men, humility, and self-denial. Mr. Paley and I therefore cannot agree."—Pp. 172, 173.

One of the most remarkable things in this volume, is the great profusion of witty and humorous passages which it contains; though they are usually so short, and stand so much connected with more indifferent matter, that it is not easy to give any tolerable notion of them by an extract. His style of narrative is particularly gay and pleasing, though the incidents are generally too trifling to bear a separation from the whole tissue of the correspondence. We venture on the following account of an election visit.

"As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard-side, where in general we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water-mark, by the usual dashing of the

waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion, in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise, a mob appeared before the window, a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr. G——. Puss* was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach.

"Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at the window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour were filled. Mr. G——, advancing toward me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he, and as many as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less no doubt because Mr. G——, addressing himself to me at that moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any, I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. G—— squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen; and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he had a third also, which he wore suspended by a ribbon from his button-hole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered; the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly, that I had not that influence for which he sued, and for which, had I been possessed of it, with my present views of the dispute between the crown and the Commons, I must have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disobliging somebody." — Pp. 242—244.

Melancholy and dejected men often amuse themselves with pursuits that seem to indicate the greatest levity. Swift wrote all sorts of doggrel and absurdity while tormented with spleen, giddiness, and misanthropy. Cowper composed John Gilpin during a season of most deplorable depression, and probably indited the rhyming letter which appears in this collection, in a moment equally gloomy. For the amusement of our readers, we annex the concluding paragraph, containing a simile, of which we think they must immediately feel the propriety.

"I have heard before of a room, with a floor laid upon springs, and such like things, with so much art, in every part, that when you went in, you were forced to begin a minuet pace, with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in and now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing; and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you dance, and as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay, till you come to an end of what I have penn'd; which that you may do, ere madam and you, are quite worn out, with jiggling about, I take my leave; and here you receive a bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me — W. C." — P. 89.

As a contrast to this ridiculous effusion, we add the following brief statement, which, notwithstanding its humble simplicity, appears to us to be an example of the true pathetic.

"You never said a better thing in your life, than when you assured Mr. —— of the expedience of a gift of bedding to the poor of Olney. There is no one article of this world's comforts with which, as Falstaff says, they are so heinously unprovided. When a poor woman, whom we know well, carried home two pair of blankets, a pair for herself and husband, and a pair for her six children, as soon as the children saw them, they jumped out of their straw, caught them in their arms, kissed them, blessed them, and danced for joy. Another old woman, a very old one, the first night that she found herself so comfortably covered, could not sleep a wink, being kept awake by the contrary emotions, of transport on the one hand, and the fear of not being thankful enough on the other." — Pp. 347, 348.

The correspondence of a poet may be expected to abound in poetical imagery and sentiments. They do not form the most prominent parts of this collection, but they occur in sufficient profusion; and we have been agreeably surprised to find in these letters the germs of many of the finest passages in the "Task." There is all the ardour of poetry and devotion in the following passages.

"Oh! I could spend whole days, and moon-light nights, in feeding upon a lovely prospect! My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour, as

* His tame hare.

I have done for many years, there might perhaps be many miserable men among them, but not an unawakened one could be found, from the arctic to the antarctic circle. At present, the difference between them and me is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so; for, rested in, and viewed without a reference to their Author, what is the earth, what are the planets, what is the sun itself, but a bauble? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, 'The Maker of all these wonders is my friend!' Their eyes have never been opened, to see that they are trifles; mine have been, and will be, till they are closed for ever. They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hot-house rich as a West Indian garden, things of consequence; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with ten times more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains will ever be worth a farthing; amuse myself with a greenhouse, which Lord Bute's gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with; and when I have paid it the accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself — This is not mine, 'tis a plaything lent me for the present, I must leave it soon." — Pp. 19, 20.

"We keep no bees; but if I lived in a hive, I should hardly hear more of their music. All the bees in the neighbourhood resort to a bed of mignonette, opposite to the window, and pay me for the honey they get out of it by a hum, which, though rather monotonous, is as agreeable to my ear, as the whistling of my linnets. All the sounds that nature utters are delightful, at least in this country. I should not perhaps find the roaring of lions in Africa, or of bears in Russia, very pleasing; but I know no beast in England whose voice I do not account musical, save and except always the braying of an ass. The notes of all our birds and fowls please me, without one exception. I should not indeed think of keeping a goose in a cage, that I might hang him up in the parlour, for the sake of his melody; but a goose upon a common, or in a farm yard, is no bad performer. And as to insects, if the black beetle, and beetles indeed of all hues, will keep out of my way, I have no objection to any of the rest; on the contrary, in whatever key they sing, from the gnat's fine treble to the bass of the humble-bee, I admire them all. Seriously, however, it strikes me as a very observable instance of providential kindness to man, that such an exact accord has been contrived between his ear and the sounds with which, at least in a rural situation, it is almost every moment visited. All the world is sensible of the uncomfortable effect that certain sounds have upon the nerves, and consequently upon the spirits; and if a sinful world had been filled with such as would have curdled the blood, and have made the sense of hearing a perpetual inconvenience, I do not know that we should have had a right to complain. — *There is somewhere* in infinite space, a world that does not roll within the precincts of mercy; and as it is reasonable, and even scriptural, to suppose that there is music in heaven, in those dismal regions perhaps the reverse of it is found Tones so dismal, as to make woe itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair. But my paper admonishes me in good time to draw the reins, and to check the descent of my fancy into deeps with which she is but too familiar." — Pp. 287—289.

The following short sketches, though not marked with so much enthusiasm, are conceived with the same vigour and distinctness.

"When we look back upon our forefathers, we seem to look back upon the people of another nation, almost upon creatures of another species. Their vast rambling mansions, spacious halls, and painted casements, their Gothic porches smothered with honeysuckles, their little gardens and high walls, their box-edgings, balls of holly, and yew-tree statues, are become so entirely unfashionable now, that we can hardly believe it possible that a people who resembled us so little in their taste, should resemble us in any thing else. But in every thing else, I suppose, they were our counterparts exactly; and time, that has sewed up the slashed sleeve, and reduced the large trunk-hose to a neat pair of silk stockings, has left human nature just where it found it. The inside of the man, at least, has undergone no change. His passions, appetites, and aims are just what they ever were. They wear perhaps a handsomer disguise than they did in days of yore; for philosophy and literature will have their effect upon the exterior; but in every other respect a modern is only an ancient in a different dress." — P. 48.

"I am much obliged to you for the voyages, which I received, and began to read last night. My imagination is so captivated upon these occasions, that I seem to partake with the navigators in all the dangers they encountered. I lose my anchor; my main-sail is rent into shreds; I kill a shark, and by signs converse with a Patagonian, — and all this without moving from the fire-side. The principal fruits of these circuits that have been made around the globe, seem likely to be the amusement of those that staid at home. Discoveries have been made, but such discoveries as will hardly satisfy the expense of such undertakings. We brought away an Indian, and, having debauched him, we sent him home again to communicate the infection to his country — fine sport to be sure, but such as will not defray the cost. Nations that live upon bread-fruit, and have no mines to make them worthy of our acquaintance, will be but little visited for the future. So much the better for them; their poverty is indeed their mercy." — Pp. 201, 202.

Cowper's religious impressions occupied too great a portion of his thoughts, and exercised too great an influence on his character, not to make a prominent figure in his correspondence

They form the subject of many eloquent and glowing passages; and have sometimes suggested sentiments and expressions that cannot be perused without compassion and regret. The following passage, however, is liberal and important.

"No man was ever scolded out of his sins. The heart, corrupt as it is, and because it is so, grows angry if it be not treated with some management and good manners, and scolds again. A surly mastiff will bear perhaps to be stroked, though he will growl even under that operation; but if you touch him roughly, he will bite. There is no grace that the spirit of self can counterfeit with more success than a religious zeal. A man thinks he is fighting for Christ, when he is fighting for his own notions. He thinks that he is skilfully searching the hearts of others, while he is only gratifying the malignity of his own; and charitably supposes his hearers destitute of all grace, that he may shine the more in his own eyes by comparison." — Pp. 179, 180.

The following, too, is in a fine style of eloquence.

"We have exchanged a zeal that was no better than madness, for an indifference equally pitiable and absurd. The holy sepulchre has lost its importance in the eyes of nations called Christian; not because the light of true wisdom has delivered them from a superstitious attachment to the spot, but because he that was buried in it is no longer regarded by them as the Saviour of the world. The exercise of reason, enlightened by philosophy, has cured them indeed of the misery of an abused understanding: but, together with the delusion, they have lost the substance, and, for the sake of the lies that were grafted upon it, have quarrelled with the truth itself. Here, then, we see the *ne plus ultra* of human wisdom, at least in affairs of religion. It enlightens the mind with respect to non-essentials; but, with respect to that in which the essence of Christianity consists, leaves it perfectly in the dark. It can discover many errors, that in different ages have disgraced the faith; but it is only to make way for the admission of one more fatal than them all, which represents that faith itself as a delusion. Why those evils have been permitted, shall be known hereafter. One thing in the mean time is certain; that the folly and frenzy of the professed disciples of the gospel have been more dangerous to its interest than all the avowed hostilities of its adversaries."— Pp. 200, 201.

There are many passages that breathe the very spirit of Christian gentleness and sober judgment. But when he talks of his friend Mr. Newton's *prophetic* intimations (p. 35.), and maintains that a great proportion of the ladies and gentlemen who amuse themselves with dancing at Brighthelmstone, must necessarily be damned (p. 100.), we cannot feel the same respect for his understanding, and are repelled by the austerity of his faith. The most remarkable passage of this kind, however, is that in which he supposes the death of the celebrated Captain Cook to have been *a judgment* on him for having allowed himself to be *worshipped* at Owhyhee. Mr. Hayley assures us, in a note, that Cowper proceeded altogether on a misapprehension of the fact. The passage, however, is curious, and shows with what eagerness his powerful mind followed that train of superstition into which his devotion was sometimes so unfortunately betrayed.

"The reading of those volumes afforded me much amusement, and I hope some instruction. No observation, however, forced itself upon me with more violence than one, that I could not help making, on the death of Captain Cook. God is a jealous God; and at Owhyhee the poor man was content to be worshipped! From that moment, the remarkable interposition of Providence in his favour, was converted into an opposition that thwarted all his purposes. He left the scene of his deification, but was driven back to it by a most violent storm, in which he suffered more than in any that had preceded it. When he departed, he left his worshippers still infatuated with an idea of his godship, consequently well disposed to serve him. At his return, he found them sullen, distrustful, and mysterious. A trifling theft was committed, which, by a blunder of his own in pursuing the thief after the property had been restored, was magnified to an affair of the last importance. One of their favourite chiefs was killed, too, by a blunder. Nothing, in short, but blunder and mistake attended him, till he fell breathless into the water — and then all was smooth again! The world indeed will not take notice, or see that the dispensation bore evident marks of divine displeasure; but a mind, I think, in any degree spiritual, cannot overlook them."—Pp. 293, 294.

From these extracts, our readers will now be able to form a pretty accurate notion of the contents and composition of this volume. Its chief merit consists in the singular ease, elegance, and familiarity with which every thing is expressed, and in the simplicity and sincerity in which every thing appears to be conceived. Its chief fault, perhaps, is the too frequent recurrence of those apologies for dull letters, and complaints of the want of subjects, that seem occasionally to bring it down to the level of an ordinary correspondence, and to represent Cowper as one of those who make every letter its own subject, and correspond

with their friends by talking about their correspondence.

Besides the subjects, of which we have exhibited some specimens, it contains a good deal of occasional criticism, of which we do not think very highly. It is not easy, indeed, to say to what degree the judgments of those who live in the world are biassed by the opinions that prevail in it; but, in matters of this kind, the general prevalence of an opinion is almost the only test we can have of its truth; and the judgment of a secluded man is almost as justly convicted of error, when it runs counter to that opinion, as it is extolled for sagacity, when it happens to coincide with it. The critical remarks of Cowper furnish us with instances of both sorts; but perhaps with most of the former. His admiration of Mrs. Macaulay's History, and the rapture with which he speaks of the Henry and Emma of Prior, and the compositions of Churchill, will not, we should imagine, attract the sympathy of many readers, or suspend the sentence which time appears to be passing on those performances. As there is scarcely any thing of love in the poetry of Cowper, it is not very wonderful that there should be nothing of it in his correspondence. There is something very tender and amiable in his affection for his cousin Lady Hesketh; but we do not remember any passage where he approaches to the language of gallantry, or appears to have indulged in the sentiments that might have led to its employment. It is also somewhat remarkable, that during the whole course of his retirement, though a good deal embarrassed in his circumstances, and frequently very much distressed for want of employment, he never seems to have had an idea of betaking himself to a profession. The solution of this difficulty is probably to be found in the infirmity of his mental health: but there were ten or twelve years of his life, when he seems to have been fit for any exertion that did not require a public appearance, and to have suffered very much from the want of all occupation.

This volume closes with a fragment of a poem by Cowper, which Mr. Hayley was fortunate enough to discover by accident among some loose papers which had been found in the poet's study. It consists of something less than two hundred lines, and is addressed to a very ancient and decayed oak in the vicinity of Weston. We do not think quite so highly of this production as the editor appears to do; at the same time that we confess it to be impressed with all the marks of Cowper's most vigorous hand: we do not know any of his compositions, indeed, that affords a more striking exemplification of most of the excellences and defects in his peculiar style, or might be more fairly quoted as a specimen of his *manner*. It is full of the conceptions of a vigorous and poetical fancy, expressed in nervous and familiar language; but it is rendered harsh by unnecessary inversions, and debased in several places by the use of antiquated and vulgar phrases. The following are about the best lines which it contains.

"Thou wast a bauble once; a cup and ball,
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs,
And all thine embryo vastness, at a gulp!
But fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains,
Beneath thy parent tree, mellow'd the soil,
Design'd thy cradle, and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepar'd
The soft receptacle, in which secure
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through."

"Time made thee what thou wast—King of the woods!
And time hath made thee what thou art — a cave
For owls to roost in! Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign, and the numerous flock
That graz'd it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm!
No flock frequents thee now; thou hast outliv'd
Thy popularity; and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth!"

"One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman; never gaz'd,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor ow'd articulation to his ear;
But moulded by his Maker into man
At once, upstood intelligent; survey'd
All creatures; with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties; assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to heaven.
In praise harmonious, the first air he drew!
He was excus'd the penalties of dull
Minority; no tutor charg'd his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind

With problems; History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course
Eventful, should supply her with a theme!"
Pp. 415, 416.

On the whole, though we complain a little of the size and the price of the volumes now before us, we take our leave of them with reluctance; and lay down our pen with no little regret, to think that we shall review no more of this author's productions.

HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MEMOIRS.

COLONEL HUTCHINSON.

(OCTOBER, 1808.)

Memoirs of the Life of COLONEL HUTCHINSON, *Governor of Nottingham Castle and Town, Representative of the County of Nottingham in the Long Parliament, and of the Town of Nottingham in the First Parliament of Charles II. &c.; with original Anecdotes of many of the most distinguished of his Contemporaries, and a summary Review of Public Affairs: Written by his Widow,* LUCY, *daughter of* SIR ALLEN APSLEY, *Lieutenant of the Tower, &c.* Now first published from the Original Manuscript, by the Rev. JULIUS HUTCHINSON, &c. &c. To which is prefixed, the Life of MRS. HUTCHINSON, written by Herself, a Fragment. Pp. 446. 4to. London, Longman and Co.: 1806.

WE have not often met with any thing more interesting and curious than this volume. Independent of its being a contemporary narrative of by far the most animating and important part of our history, it challenges our attention as containing an accurate and luminous account of military and political affairs from the hand of a woman; as exhibiting the most liberal and enlightened sentiments in the person of a Puritan; and sustaining a high tone of aristocratical dignity and pretension, though the work of a decided republican. The views which it opens into the character of the writer, and the manners of the age, will be to many a still more powerful attraction.

Of the times to which this narrative belongs —times to which England owes all her freedom and all her glory—we can never hear too much, or too often: and though their story has been transmitted to us, both with more fulness of detail and more vivacity of colouring than any other portion of our annals, every reflecting reader must be aware that our information is still extremely defective, and exposes us to the hazard of great misconception. The work before us, we think, is calculated in a good degree to supply these deficiencies, and to rectify these errors.

By far the most important part of history, as we have formerly endeavoured to explain, is that which makes us acquainted with the character, dispositions, and opinions of the great and efficient population by whose motion or consent all things are ultimately governed. After a nation has attained to any degree of intelligence, every other principle of action becomes subordinate; and, with relation to our own country in particular, it may be said with safety, that we can know nothing of its past history, or of the applications of that history to more recent transactions, if we have not a tolerably correct notion of the character of the people of England in the reign of Charles I., and the momentous periods which ensued. This character depended very much on that of the landed proprietors and resident gentry; and Mrs. Hutchinson's memoirs are chiefly valuable, as containing a picture of that class of the community.

Agriculture was at this period still the chief occupation of the people; and the truly governing part of society was consequently the rustic aristocracy. The country gentlemen— who have since been worn down by luxury and taxation, superseded by the activity of office, and eclipsed by the opulence of trade— were then all and all in England; and the nation at large derived from them its habits, prejudices, and opinions. Educated almost entirely at home, their manners were not yet accommodated to a general European standard, but retained all those national peculiarities which united and endeared them to the rest of their countrymen. Constitutionally serious, and living much with their families, they had in general more solid learning, and more steady morality than the gentry of other countries. Exercised in local magistracies, and frequently assembled for purposes of national co-operation, they became conscious of their power, and jealous of their privileges: and having

been trained up in a dread and detestation of that popery which had been the recent cause of so many wars and persecutions, their religious sentiments had contracted somewhat of an austere and polemical character, and had not yet settled from the ferment of reformation into tranquil and regulated piety. It was upon this side, accordingly, that they were most liable to error: and the extravagancies into which a part of them was actually betrayed, has been the chief cause of the misrepresentations to which they were then exposed, and of the misconception which still prevails as to their character and principles of action.

In the middle of the reign of Charles I. almost the whole nation was serious and devout. Any licence and excess which existed was mostly encouraged and patronised by the Royalists; who made it a point of duty to deride the sanctity and rigid morality of their opponents; and they again exaggerated out of party hatred, the peculiarities by which they were most obviously distinguished from their antagonists. Thus mutually receding from each other, from feelings of general hostility, they were gradually led to realize the imputations of which they were reciprocally the subjects. The cavaliers gave way to a certain degree of licentiousness; and the adherents of the parliament became, for the most part, really morose and enthusiastic. At the Restoration, the cavaliers obtained a complete and final triumph over their sanctimonious opponents; and the exiled monarch and his nobles imported from the Continent a taste for dissipation, and a toleration for debauchery, far exceeding any thing that had previously been known in England. It is from the wits of that court, however, and the writers of that party, that the succeeding and the present age have derived their notions of the Puritans. In reducing these notions to the standard of truth, it is not easy to determine how large an allowance ought to be made for the exaggerations of party hatred, the perversions of witty malice, and the illusions of habitual superiority. It is certain, however, that ridicule, toleration, and luxury gradually annihilated.the Puritans in the higher ranks of society: and after-times, seeing their practices and principles exemplified only among the lowest and most illiterate of mankind, readily caught the tone of contempt which had been assumed by their triumphant enemies; and found no absurdity in believing that the base and contemptible beings who were described under the name of Puritans by the courtiers of Charles II., were true representatives of that valiant and conscientious party which once numbered half the gentry of England among its votaries and adherents.

That the popular conceptions of the austerities and absurdities of the old Roundheads and Presbyterians are greatly exaggerated, will probably be allowed by every one at all conversant with the subject; but we know of nothing so well calculated to dissipate the existing prejudices on the subject, as this book of Mrs. Hutchinson. Instead of a set of gloomy bigots waging war with all the elegancies and gaieties of life, we find in this calumniated order, ladies of the first birth and fashion, at once converting their husbands to Anabaptism, and instructing their children in music and dancing, — valiant Presbyterian colonels refuting the errors of Arminius, collecting pictures, and practising, with great applause, on the violin, — stout esquires, at the same time, praying and quaffing October with their godly tenants, — and noble lords disputing with their chaplains on points of theology in the evening, and taking them out a-hunting in the morning. There is nothing, in short, more curious and instructive, than the glimpses which we here catch of the old hospitable and orderly life of the country gentlemen of England, in those days when the national character was so high and so peculiar, — when civilization had produced all its effects but that of corruption, — and when serious studies and dignified pursuits had not yet been abandoned to a paltry and effeminate derision. Undoubtedly, in reviewing the annals of those times, we are struck with a loftier air of manhood than presents itself in any after era; and recognize the same characters of deep thought and steady enthusiasm, and the same principles of fidelity and self-command, which ennobled the better days of the Roman Republic, and have made every thing else appear childish and frivolous in the comparison.

One of the most striking and valuable things in Mrs. Hutchinson's performance, is the information which it affords us as to the manners

and condition of women in the period with which she is occupied. This is a point in which all histories of public events are almost necessarily defective; though it is evident that, without attending to it, our notions of the state and character of any people must be extremely imperfect and erroneous. Mrs. Hutchinson, however, enters into no formal disquisition upon this subject. What we learn from her in relation to it, is learnt incidentally—partly on occasion of some anecdotes which it falls in her way to recite—but chiefly from what she is led to narrate or disclose as to her own education, conduct, or opinions. If it were allowable to take the portrait which she has thus indirectly given of herself, as a just representation of her fair contemporaries, we should form a most exalted notion of the republican matrons of England. Making a slight deduction for a few traits of austerity, borrowed from the bigotry of the age, we do not know where to look for a more noble and engaging character than that under which this lady presents herself to her readers; nor do we believe that any age of the world has produced so worthy a counterpart to the Valerias and Portias of antiquity. With a high-minded feeling of patriotism and public honour, she seems to have been possessed by the most dutiful and devoted attachment to her husband; and to have combined a taste for learning and the arts with the most active kindness and munificent hospitality to all who came within the sphere of her bounty. To a quick perception of character, she appears to have united a masculine force of understanding, and a singular capacity for affairs; and to have possessed and exercised all those talents, without affecting any superiority over the rest of her sex, or abandoning for a single instant the delicacy and reserve which were then its most indispensable ornaments. Education, certainly, is far more generally diffused in our days, and accomplishments infinitely more common: but the perusal of this volume has taught us to doubt, whether the better sort of women were not fashioned of old by a better and more exalted standard, and whether the most eminent female of the present day would not appear to disadvantage by the side of Mrs. Hutchinson. There is, for the most part, something intriguing and profligate and theatrical in the clever women of this generation; and if we are dazzled by their brilliancy, and delighted with their talent, we can scarcely ever guard against some distrust of their judgment or some suspicion of their purity. There is something, in short, in the domestic virtue, and the calm and commanding mind of our English matron, that makes the Corinnes and Heloises appear small and insignificant.

The admirers of modern talent will not accuse us of choosing an ignoble competitor, if we desire them to weigh the merits of Mrs. Hutchinson against those of Madame Roland. The English revolutionist did not indeed compose weekly pamphlets and addresses to the municipalities;—because it was not the fashion, in her days, to print every thing that entered into the heads of politicians. But she shut herself up with her husband in the garrison with which he was intrusted, and shared his counsels as well as his hazards. She encouraged the troops by her cheerfulness and heroism—ministered to the sick—and dressed with her own hands the wounds of the captives, as well as of their victors. When her husband was imprisoned on groundless suspicions, she laboured, without ceasing, for his deliverance—confounded his oppressors by her eloquence and arguments—tended him with unshaken fortitude in sickness and solitude—and, after his decease, dedicated herself to form his children to the example of his virtues; and drew up the memorial which is now before us, of his worth and her own genius and affection. All this, too, she did without stepping beyond the province of a private woman—without hunting after compliments to her own genius or beauty—without sneering at the dulness, or murmuring at the coldness of her husband—without hazarding the fate of her country on the dictates of her own enthusiasm, or fancying for a moment that she was born with talents to enchant and regenerate the world. With equal power of discriminating character, with equal candour and eloquence and zeal for the general good, she is elevated beyond her French competitor by superior prudence and modesty, and by a certain simplicity and purity of character, of which it appears to us that the other was unable to form a conception.

After detaining the reader so long with

these general observations, we shall only withhold him from the quotations which we mean to lay before him, while we announce, that Mrs. Hutchinson writes in a sort of lofty, classical, translated style; which is occasionally diffuse and pedantic, but often attains to great dignity and vigour, and still more frequently charms us by a sort of antique simplicity and sweetness, admirably in unison with the sentiments and manners it is employed to represent.

The fragment of her own history, with which the volume opens, is not the least interesting, and perhaps the most characteristic part of its contents. The following brief account of her nativity, will at once make the reader acquainted with the pitch of this lady's sentiments and expressions.

"It was on the 29th day of January, in the yeare of our Lord $16\frac{19}{20}$, that in the Tower of London, the principall citie of the English Isle, I was about 4 of the clock in the morning brought forth to behold the ensuing light. My father was Sr. Allen Apsley, leiftenant of the Tower of London; my mother, his third wife, was Lucy, the youngest daughter of Sr. John St. John, of Lidiard Tregoz, in Wiltshire, by his second wife. My father had then living a sonne and a daughter by his former wives, and by my mother three sonns, I being her eldest daughter. The land was then att peace (it being towards the latter end of the reigne of King James), if that quiettnesse may be call'd a peace, which was rather like the calm and smooth surface of the sea, whose darke womb is allready impregnated of a horrid tempest." — Pp. 2, 3.

She then draws the character of both her parents in a very graceful and engaging manner, but on a scale somewhat too large to admit of their being transferred entire into our pages. We give the following as a specimen of the style and execution.

"He was a most indulgent husband, and no lesse kind to his children; a most noble master; who thought it not enough to maintaine his servants honorably while they were with him, but, for all that deserv'd it, provided offices or settlements as for children. He was a father to all his prisoners, sweetning with such compassionate kindnesse their restraint, that the afliction of a prison was not felt in his dayes. He had a singular kindnesse for all persons that were eminent either in learning or armes; and when, through the ingratitude and vice of that age, many of the wives and children of Queene Elizabeth's glorious captaines were reduced to poverty, his purse was their common treasury, and they knew not the inconvenience of decay'd fortunes till he was dead: many of those valiant seamen he maintain'd in prison; many he redeem'd out of prison and cherish'd with an extraordinary bounty. He was severe in the regulating of his famely; especially would not endure the least immodest behaviour or dresse in any woman under his roofe. There was nothing he hated more then an insignificant gallant that could *only make his leggs and prune himself, and court a lady*, but had not braines to employe himselfe in things more suteable to man's nobler sex. — Fidelity in his trust, love and loyalty to his prince, were not the least of his vertues, but those wherein he was not excell'd by any of his owne or succeeding times. He gave my mother a noble allowance of 300*l.* a yeare for her owne private expence, and had given her all her owne portion to dispose of how she pleas'd, as soon as she was married; which she suffer'd to encrease in her friend's hands; and what my father allowed her she spent not in vanities, although she had what was rich and requisite upon occasions, but she lay'd most of it out in pious and charitable uses. Sr. Walter Rawleigh and Mr. Ruthin, being prisoners in the Tower, and addicting themselves to chimistrie, she suffer'd them to make their rare experiments at her cost, partly to comfort and divert the poore prisoners, and partly to gaine the knowledge of their experiments, and the medicines to helpe such poore people as were not able to seeke to phisitians. By these means she acquir'd a greate deale of skill, which was very profitable to many all her life. She was not only to these, but to all the other prisoners that came into the Tower, as a mother. All the time she dwelt in the Tower, if any were sick she made them broths and restoratives with her owne hands, visited and took care of them, and provided them all necessaries: If any were aflicted she comforted them, so that they felt not the inconvenience of a prison who were in that place. She was not lesse bountifull to many poore widows and orphans, whom officers of higher and lower rank had left behind them as objects of charity. Her owne house was fill'd with distressed families of her relations, whom she supplied and maintained in a noble way." — Pp. 12—15.

For herself, being her mother's first daughter, unusual pains were bestowed on her education; so that, when she was seven years of age, she was attended, she informs us, by no fewer than eight several tutors. In consequence of all this, she became very grave and thoughtful; and withal very pious. But her early attainments in religion seem to have been by no means answerable to the notions of sanctity which she imbibed in her maturer years. There is something very innocent and natural in the Puritanism of the following passage.

"It pleas'd God that thro' the good instructions of my mother, and the sermons she carried me to, I was convinc'd that the knowledge of God was the most excellent study; and accordingly applied myselfe to

it, and to practise as I was taught. I us'd to exhort my mother's maides much, and to turne their idle discourses to good subjects; but I thought, when I had done this on the Lord's day, and every day performed my due taskes of reading and praying, that I was free to anie thing that was not sin; for I was not at that time convinc'd of the vanity of conversation which was not scandalously wicked; I thought it no sin to learne or heare wittie songs and amorous sonnetts or poems, and twenty things of that kind; wherein I was so apt that I became the confident in all the loves that were managed among my mother's young women; and there was none of them but had many lovers and some particular friends belov'd above the rest; among these I have ——." — Pp. 17, 18.

Here the same spirit of austerity which dictated the preceding passage, had moved the fair writer, as the editor informs us, to tear away many pages immediately following the words with which it concludes — and thus to defraud the reader of the only love story with which he had any chance of being regaled in the course of this narrative. Although Mrs. Hutchinson's abhorrence of any thing like earthly or unsanctified love, has withheld her on all occasions from the insertion of any thing that related to such feelings, yet it is not difficult, we think, to perceive that she was originally constituted with an extraordinary sensibility to all powerful emotions; and that the suppression of those deep and natural impressions has given a singular warmth and animation to her descriptions of romantic and conjugal affection. In illustration of this, we may refer to the following story of her husband's grandfather and grandmother, which she recounts with much feeling and credulity. After a very ample account of their mutual love and loveliness, she proceeds —

"But while the incomparable mother shin'd in all the humane glorie she wisht, and had the crowne of all outward felicity to the full, in the injoyment of the mutuall love of her most beloved husband, God in one moment tooke it away, and alienated her most excellent understanding in a difficult childbirth, wherein she brought forth two daughters, which liv'd to be married, and one more that died, I think, assoone or before it was borne. But after that, all the art of the best physitians in England could never restore her understanding. Yet she was not frantick, but had such a pretty deliration, that her ravings were more delightfull that other weomen's most rationall conversations. Upon this occasion her husband gave himselfe up to live retired with her, as became her condition. The daughters and the rest of the children as soon as they grew up were married and disperst. I think I have heard she had some children after that childbirth which distemper'd her; and then my lady Hutchinson must have bene one of them. I have heard her servants say, that even after her marriage, she would steale many melancholy houres to sitt and weepe in remembrance of her. Meanewhile her parents were driving on their age, in no lesse constancy of love to each other, when even that distemper which had estrang'd her mind in all things elce, had left her love and obedience entire to her husband, and he retein'd the same fondnesse and respect for her, after she was distemper'd, as when she was the glory of her age! He had two beds in one chamber, and she being a little sick, two weomen watcht by her, some time before she died. It was his custome, as soon as ever he unclos'd his eies, to aske how she did; but one night, he being as they thought in a deep sleepe, she quietly departed towards the morning. He was that day to have gone a-hunting, his usuall exercise for his health; and it was his custome to have his chaplaine pray with him before he went out: the weomen, fearfull to surprise him with the ill newes, knowing his deare affection to her, had stollen out and acquainted the chaplaine, desiring him to informe him of it. Sr. John waking, did not that day, as was his custome, ask for her; but call'd the chaplaine to prayers, and ioyning with him, in the middst of the prayer, expir'd! — and both of them were buried together in the same grave. Whether he perceiv'd her death and would not take notice, or whether some strange sympathy in love or nature tied up their lives in one, or whether God was pleased to exercise an unusuall providence towards them, preventing them both from that bitter sorrow which such separations cause, it can be but conjectur'd," &c. — Pp. 26—28.

The same romantic and suppressed sensibility is discernible, we think, in her whole account of the origin and progress of her husband's attachment to her. As the story is in many respects extremely characteristic of the times as well as the persons to which it relates, we shall make a pretty large extract from it. Mr. Hutchinson had learned, it seems, to "dance and vault" with great agility, and also attained to "great mastery on the violl" at the University; and upon his return to Nottingham, in the twentieth year of his age, spent much of his time with a licentious but most accomplished gentleman, a witty but profane physician, and a pleasant but cynical old schoolmaster. In spite of these worldly associations, however, we are assured that he was a most godly and incorruptible person; and, in particular, proof against all the allurements of the fair sex, whom he frequently "reproved, but in a handsome way of raillery, for their

pride and vanity." In this hopeful frame of mind, it was proposed to him to spend a few summer months at Richmond, where the young princes then held their court.

"Mr. Hutchinson considering this, resolv'd to accept his offer; and that day telling a gentleman of the house whither he was going, the gentleman bid him take heed of the place, for it was so fatall for love, that never any young disengaged person went thither, who return'd againe free. Mr. Hutchinson laugh't at him; but he, to confirme it, told him a very true story of a gentleman, who not long before had come for some time to lodge there, and found all the people he came in company with, bewailing the death of a gentlewoman that had liv'd there. Hearing her so much deplor'd, he made enquiry after her, and grew so in love with the description, that no other discourse could at first please him, nor could he at last endure any other; he grew desperately melancholly, and would goe to a mount where the print of her foote was cutt, and lie their pining and kissing of it all the day long, till at length death in some months space concluded his languishment. This story was very true; but Mr. Hutchinson was neither easie to believe it, nor frighted at the example; thinking himselfe not likely to make another." — Pp. 37, 38.

He goes accordingly to Richmond, and boards with his music-master; in whose house a younger sister of his future wife happened then to be placed, — she herself having gone into Wiltshire with her mother, with some expectation of being married before her return.

"This gentlewoman, that was left in the house with Mr. Hutchinson, was a very child, her elder sister being at that time scarcely past it; but a child of such pleasantnesse and vivacity of spiritt, and ingenuity in the quality she practis'd, that Mr. Hutchinson tooke pleasure in hearing her practise, and would fall in discourse with her. She having the keyes of her mother's house, some halfe a mile distant, would some times aske Mr. Hutchinson, when she went over, to walk along with her: one day when he was there, looking upon an odde byshelf, in her sister's closett, he found a few Latine bookes; asking whose they were, he was told they were her elder sister's; whereupon, enquiring more after her, he began first to be sorrie she was gone, before he had seene her, and gone upon such an account, that he was not likely to see her; then he grew to love to heare mention of her; and the other gentleweomen who had bene her companions, used to talke much to him of her, telling him how reserv'd and studious she was, and other things which they esteem'd no advantage; but it so much inflam'd Mr. Hutchinson's desire of seeing her, that he began to wonder at himselfe, that his heart, which had ever had such an indifferency for the most excellent of weomenkind, should have so strong impulses towards a stranger he never saw." — "While he was exercis'd in this, many days past not, but a footeboy of my lady her mothers came to young Mrs. Apsley as they were at dinner, bringing newes that her mother and sister would in few dayes return; and when they enquir'd of him, whether Mrs. Apsley was married, having before bene instructed to make them believe it, he smiled, and pull'd out some bride laces, which were given at a wedding in the house where she was, and gave them to the young gentlewoman and the gentleman's daughter of the house, and told them Mrs. Apsley bade him tell no news, but give them those tokens, and carried the matter so, that all the companie believ'd she had been married. Mr. Hutchinson immediately turned pale as ashes, and felt a fainting to seize his spiritts, in that extraordinary manner, that finding himselfe ready to sinke att table, he was faine to pretend something had offended his stomach, and to retire from the table into the garden, where the gentleman of the house going with him, it was not necessary for him to feigne sickness, for the distemper of his mind had infected his body with a cold sweate and such a dispersion of spiritt, that all the courage he could at present recollect was little enough to keep him allive. While she so ran in his thoughts, meeting the boye againe, he found out upon a little stricter examination of him, that she was not married, and pleas'd himselfe in the hopes of her speedy returne, when one day, having bene invited by one of the ladies of that neighbourhood, to a noble treatment at Sion Garden, which a courtier, *that was her servant*, had made for her and whom she would bring, Mr. Hutchinson, Mrs. Apsley, and Mr. Coleman's daughter were of the partie, and having spent the day in severall pleasant divertisements, att evening they were att supper, when a messenger came to tell Mrs. Apsley her mother was come. She would immediately have gone; but Mr. Hutchinson pretending civility to conduct her home, made her stay 'till the supper was ended, of which he eate no more, now only longing for that sight, which he had with such perplexity expected. This at length he obteined; but his heart being prepossest with his owne fancy, was not free to discerne how little there was in her to answer so greate an expectation. She was not ugly — in a carelesse riding-habitt, she had a melancholly negligence both of herself and others, as if she neither affected to please others, nor tooke notice of anie thing before her; yet spite of all her indifferency, she was surpris'd with some unusual liking in her soule, when she saw this gentleman, who had haire, eies, shape, and countenance enough to begett love in any one at the first, and these sett off with a gracefull and a generous mine, which promis'd an extraordinary person. Although he had but an evening sight of her he had so long desir'd, and that at disadvantage enough for her, yett the prevailing sympathie of his soule, made him thinke all his paynes well pay'd, and this first did whett his desire to a second sight, which he had by accident the next day, and to his ioy found she was wholly dis-

engaged from that treaty which he so much fear'd had been accomplisht; he found withall, that though she was modest, she was accostable, and willing to entertaine his acquaintance. This soone past into a mutuall friendship betweene them, and though she innocently thought nothing of love, yet was she glad to have acquir'd such a friend, who had wisedome and vertue enough to be trusted with her councells. Mr. Hutchinson, on the other side, having bene told, and seeing how she shunn'd all other men, and how civilly she entertain'd him, believ'd that a secret power had wrought a mutuall inclination betweene them, and dayly frequented her mother's house, and had the opportunitie of conversing with her in those pleasant walkes, which, at that sweete season of the spring, invited all the neighbouring inhabitants to seeke their ioys; where, though they were never alone, yet they had every day opportunity for converse with each other, which the rest shar'd not in while every one minded their own delights." — Pp. 38—44.

Here the lady breaks off her account of this romantic courtship, as of "matters that are to be forgotten as the vanities of youth, and not worthy mention among the greater transactions of their lives." The consent of parents having been obtained on both sides, she was married at the age of eighteen.

"That day that the friends on both sides met to conclude the marriage, she fell sick of the small-pox, which was many ways a greate triall upon him; first her life was allmost in desperate hazard, and then the disease, for the present, made her the most deformed person that could be seene, for a greate while after she recover'd; yett he was nothing troubled at it, but married her as soone as she was able to quitt the chamber, when the priest and all that saw her were affrighted to looke on her! but God recompenc'd his iustice and constancy, by restoring her, though she was longer than ordinary before she recover'd, as well as before."— Pp. 45, 46.

There is a good deal more of this affectionate and romantic style of writing throughout the book; but the Shade of Mrs. Hutchinson would not forgive us, if we were to detain the reader longer with these "vanities of her youth." We proceed, therefore, to graver matters.

We might cull many striking specimens of eloquence from her summary account of the English Constitution and of the Reformation; but the following view of the changes which took place on the accession of James and of Charles, are more characteristic of the age and of the party to which she belongs.

"The honor, wealth, and glory of the nation, wherein Queene Elizabeth left it, were soone prodigally wasted by this thriftlesse heire, the nobility of the land utterly debas'd by setting honors to publick sale, and conferring them on persons that had neither blood nor meritt fitt to weare, nor estates to beare up their titles, but were faine to invent proiects to pill* the people, and pick their purses for the maintenance of vice and lewdnesse. The generality of the gentry of the land soone learnt the court fashion, and every greate house in the country became a sty of uncleannesse. To keep the people in their deplorable security, till vengeance overtook them, they were entertain'd with masks, stage playes, and sorts of ruder sports. Then began murther, incest, adultery, drunkennesse, swearing, fornication, and all sort of ribaldry, to be no conceal'd but countenanc'd vices; because they held such conformity with the court example."—"And now the ready way to preferment there, was to declare an opposition to the power of godlinesse, under that name; so that their pulpits might iustly be called the scorner's chair, those sermons only pleasing that flatter'd them in their vices, and told the poore king that he was Solomon! — that his sloth and cowardize, by which he betrey'd the cause of God and honour of the nation, was gospell meekenesse and peaceablenesse, for which they rays'd him up above the heavens, while he lay wallowing like a swine in the mire of his lusts. He had a little learning, — and this they call'd the spirit of wisedome, and so magnified him, so falsely flatter'd him, that he could not endure the words of truth and soundnesse, but rewarded these base, wicked, unfaithfull fawners with rich preferments, attended with pomps and titles, which heav'd them up above a humane heighth: With their pride their envie swell'd against the people of God, whom they began to proiect how they might roote out of the land; and when they had once given them a name, whatever was odious or dreadfull to the king, that they fixt upon the Puritane, which, according to their character, was nothing but a factious hypocrite."— Pp. 59—61.

"The face of the court was much chang'd in the change of the king; for King Charles was temperate, chaste, and serious; so that the fooles and bawds, mimicks and catamites of the former court grew out of fashion; and the nobility and courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debosheries, had yet that reverence to the king, to retire into corners to practise them: Men of learning and ingenuity in all arts were in esteeme, and receiv'd encouragement from the king, who was a most excellent iudge and a greate lover of paintings; carvings, gravings, and many other ingenuities, less offensive than the prophane abusive witt, which was the only exercise of the other court."— P. 65.

The characters of this king's counsellors are drawn, in general, with great force and liveliness; and with a degree of candour scarcely

* "Pill — pillage, plunder."

to have been expected in the widow of a regicide. We give that of Lord Strafford as an example.

"But there were two above all the rest, who led the van of the king's evill councellors, and these were Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, a fellow of meane extraction and arrogant pride, and the earle of Strafford, who as much outstript all the rest in favour as he did in abilities, being a man of deep pollicy, sterne resolution, and ambitious zeale to keepe up the glory of his own greatnesse. In the beginning of this king's reigne, this man had bene a strong assertor of the liberties of the people, among whom he had gain'd himselfe an honorable reputation, and was dreadfull to the court party, who thereupon strew'd snares in his way, and when they found a breach at his ambition, his soule was that way enter'd and captivated. He was advanc'd first to be lord president of the councell in the north, to be a baron, after an earle, then deputy of Ireland; the neerest to a favourite of any man since the death of the Duke of Buckingham, who was rays'd by his first master, and kept up by the second, upon no account of personall worth or any deserving abillities in him, but only upon violent and private inclinations of the princes; but the earle of Strafford wanted not any accomplishment that could be desir'd in the most serviceable minister of state: besides, he having made himselfe odious to the people, by his revolt from their interest to that of the oppressive court, he was now oblig'd to keep up his owne interest with his new party, by all the mallitious practices that pride and revenge could inspire him with."—Pp. 68, 69.

One of Mrs. Hutchinson's great talents, indeed, is the delineation of characters; and though her affections are apt to throw rather too gloomy or too dark a tint over the canvas, yet this very warmth carries with it an impression of sincerity, which adds not a little to the interest of her pictures. We pass by her short sketches, — of the Earl of Newcastle, who was "a prince in his own country, till a foolish ambition of glorious slavery carried him to court;" — the Earl of Kingston, "whose covetousness made him divide his sons between the two parties, till his fate drew him over to the king's side, where he behaved himself honourably, and died remarkably;" — the Earl of Clare, "who was very often of both parties, and, I think, never advantaged either," — and a great number of other persons, who are despatched with equal brevity; and venture to put her talents to a severer test, by trying whether they can interest the reader in a description of the burghers and private gentlemen of Nottingham, at the breaking out of these great disturbances.

"There were seven aldermen in the towne, and of these only alderman James, then mayor, own'd the parliament. He was a very honest bold man, but had no more but a burgher's discretion; he was yett very well assisted by his wife, a weoman of greate zeal and courage, and more understanding than weomen of her ranke usually have. All the devout people of the towne were very vigorous and ready to offer their lives and famelies, but there was not halfe the halfe of the towne that consisted of these. The ordinary civill sort of people coldly adher'd to the better; but all the debosht, and such as had liv'd upon the bishops persecuting courts, and bene the lacqueys of proiectors and monopolizers, and the like, they were all bitterly malignant. Yett God awed them, that they could not at that time hinder his people, whom he overrul'd some of their greatest enemies to assist, such as were one Chadwick and Plumptre, two who, at the first, put themselves most forward into the businesse.

"Plumptre was a doctor of phisick, an inhabitant of Nottingham, who had learning, naturall parts, and understanding enough to discerne betweene naturall civill righteousnesse and iniustice, but he was a horrible atheist, and had such an intolerable pride, that he brook'd no superiours, and having some witt, tooke the boldness to exercise it, in the abuse of all the gentlemen wherever he came" — "This man had sence enough to approove the parliament's cause, in poynt of civill right, and pride enough to desire to breake the bonds of slavery whereby the king endeavour'd to chaine up a free people; and upon these scores, appearing high for the parliament's interest, he was admitted into the consultations of those who were then putting the country into a posture of defence.

"Chadwick was a fellow of a most pragmaticall temper, and, to say truth, had strangely wrought himselfe into a station unfit for him. He was at first a boy that scraped trenchers in the house of one of the poorest iustices in the county, but yet such a one as had a great deale of formality and understanding of the statute law, from whom this boy pick'd such ends of law, that he became first the iustice's, then a lawyer's, clearke. Then, I know not how, gott to be a parcell-iudge in Ireland, and came over to his owne country swell'd with the reputation of it, and sett on foote a base, absolute, arbitrary court there, which the Conqueror of old had given to one Peverel his bastard," &c. — "When the king was in towne a little before, this man so insinuated into the court that, comming to kisse the king's hand, the king told him he was a very honest man; yet by flatteries and dissimulations he kept up his creditt with the godly, cutting his haire, and taking up a forme of godlinesse, the better to deceive. In some of the corrupt times he had purchas'd the honor of a barrister, though he had neither law nor learning, but he had a voluble tongue, and was crafty; and it is allmost incredible that one of his

meane education and poverty should arrive to such things as he reacht. This baseness he had, that all the iust reproaches in the world could not moove him, but he would fawne upon any man that told him of his villanies to his face, even at the very time. Never was a truer Judas, since Iscariott's time, than he; for he would kisse the man he had in his heart to kill; he naturally delighted in mischiefe and treachery, and was so exquisite a villaine, that he destroy'd those designes he might have thriven by, with overlaying them with fresh knaveries."—Pp. 110—113.

We have not room for many of the more favourable delineations with which these are contrasted; but we give the following short sketch of Mr. Thornhagh, who seems to have been a great favourite of Mrs. Hutchinson's.

"Mr. Francis Thornhagh, the eldest sonne of Sr. Francis Thornhagh, was a man of a most upright faithfull heart to God and God's people, and to his countrie's true interest, comprehended in the parliament's cause: a man of greater vallour or more noble daring fought not for them; nor indeed ever drew sword in any cause; he was of a most excellent good nature to all men, and zealous for his friend; he wanted councell and deliberation, and was sometimes too facile to flatterers, but had judgment enough to discerne his errors when they were represented to him, and worth enough not to persist in an iniurious mistake because he had once entertained it."—P. 114.

This gallant gentleman afterwards fell at the battle of Preston. Mrs. Hutchinson has given the following animated description of his fate.

"In the beginning of this battle, the valliant Coll. Thornhagh was wounded to death. Being at the beginning of the charge on a horse as courageous as became such a master, he made such furious speed, to sett upon a company of Scotch lanciers, that he was singly engaged and mortally wounded, before it was possible for his regiment, though as brave men as ever drew sword, and too afectionate to their collonell to be slack in following him, to come time enough to breake the furie of that body, which shamed not to unite all their force against one man. His soule was hovering to take her flight out of his body, but that an eager desire to know the successe of that battle kept it within, till the end of the day, when the newes being brought him, he clear'd his dying countenance, and say'd, 'I now reioyce to die, since God hath lett me see the overthrow of this perfidious enemy; I could not lose my life in a better cause, and I have the favour from God to see my blood aveng'd.' So he died; with a large testimony of love to his souldiers, but more to the cause, and was by mercy remoov'd, that the temptations of future times might not prevaile to corrupt his pure soule. A man of greater courage and integritie fell not nor fought not in this glorious cause; he had also an excellent good nature, but easie to be wrought upon by flatterers, yett as flexible to the admonitions of his friends; and this virtue he had, that if sometimes a cunning insinuation prevail'd upon his easie faith, when his error was made known to him, notwithstanding all his greate courage he was readier to acknowledge and repaire, then to pursue his mistake."—Pp. 289, 290.

The most conspicuous person by far, of the age to which Mrs. Hutchinson belongs, was Cromwell; and there is no character accordingly, which she appears to have studied more, or better comprehended. Her work contains a great number of original anecdotes with regard to him; and with all the advantages which later times have derived from the collation of various authorities, and from considering, at a dispassionate distance, the various turns of his policy, we doubt whether any historian has yet given a more just or satisfactory account of this extraordinary personage than this woman, who saw him only in the course of his obliquities, and through the varying medium of her own hopes and apprehensions. The profound duplicity and great ambition of his nature, appear to have been very early detected by Colonel Hutchinson, whose biographer gives this account of his demeanour to the Levellers and Presbyterians, who were then at the height of their rivalry:

"These were they," says she, speaking of the former, "who first began to discover the ambition of Lieftenant-general Cromwell and his idolaters, and to suspect and dislike it. About this time, he was sent downe, after his victory in Wales, to encounter Hamilton in the north. When he went downe, the chiefe of these levellers following him out of the towne, to take their leaves of him, receiv'd such professions from him, of a spiritt bent to pursue the same iust and honest things that they desir'd, as they went away with greate satisfaction,—till they heard that a coachfull of *Presbyterian priests* comming after them went away no less pleas'd; by which it was apparent he dissembled with one or the other, and by so doing lost his creditt with both.

"When he came to Nottingham, Coll. Hutchinson went to see him, whom he embrac'd with all the expressions of kindnesse that one friend could make to another, and then retiring with him, prest him to tell him what thoughts his friends, the levellers, had of him. The collonell, who was the freest man in the world from concealing truth from his friend, especially, when it was requir'd of him in love and plainnesse not only told him what others thought of him, but what he himselfe conceiv'd, and how much it would darken all his glories, if he should become a slave to

his owne ambition, and be guilty of what he gave the world iust cause to suspect, and therefore begg'd of him to weare his heart in his face, and to scorne to delude his enemies, but to make use of his noble courage to maintaine what he believ'd iust, against all greate oposers. Cromwell made mighty professions of a sincere heart to him, but it is certeine that for this and such like plaine dealing with him, he dreaded the collonell, and made it his particular businesse to keepe him out of the armie; but the collonell, never desiring command, to serve himselfe, but his country, would not use that art he detested in others, to procure himselfe any advantage."—Pp. 285—287.

An after scene is still more remarkable, and more characteristic of both the actors. After Cromwell had possessed himself of the sovereignty, Colonel Hutchinson came accidentally to the knowledge of a plot which had been laid for his assassination; and was moved, by the nobleness of his own nature, and his regard for the Protector's great qualities — though he had openly testified against his usurpation, and avoided his presence since the time of it — to give such warning of it to Fleetwood, as might enable him to escape that hazard, but at the same time without betraying the names of any of the conspirators.

"After Collonell Hutchinson had given Fleetwood that caution, he was going into the country, when the protector sent to search him out with all the earnestnesse and haste that could possibly be, and the collonell went to him; who mett him in one of the galleries, and receiv'd him with open armes and the kindest embraces that could be given, and complain'd that the collonell should be so unkind as never to give him a visitt, professing how wellcome he should have bene, the most welcome person in the land: and with these smooth insinuations led him allong to a private place, giving him thankes for the advertisement he had received from Fleetwood, and using all his art to gett out of the collonell the knowledge of the persons engag'd in the conspiracy against him. But none of his cunning, nor promises, nor flatteries, could prevaile with the collonell to informe him more than he thought necessary to prevent the execution of the designe; which when the protector perceiv'd, he gave his most infinite thankes for what he had told him, and acknowledg'd it open'd to him some misteries that had perplext him, and agreed so with other intelligence he had, that he must owe his preservation to him: 'But,' says he, 'deare collonell, why will not you come in and act among us?' The collonell told him plainly, because he liked not any of his wayes since he broke the parliament, as being those which led to certeine and unavoydable destruction, not only of themselves, but of the whole parliament party and cause, and thereupon tooke occasion, with his usuall freedom, to tell him into what a sad hazard all things were put, and how apparent a way was made for the restitution of all former tyranny and bondage. Cromwell seem'd to receive this honest plainnesse with the greatest affection that could be, and acknowledg'd his precipitatenesse in some things, and *with teares* complained how Lambert had put him upon all those violent actions, for which he now accus'd him and sought his ruine. He expresst an earnest desire to restore the people's liberties, and to take and pursue more safe and sober councells, and wound up all with a very fair courtship of the collonell to engage with him, offering him any thing he would account worthy of him. The collonell told him, he could not be forward to make his owne advantage, by serving to the enslaving of his country. The other told him he intended nothing more then the restoring and confirming the liberties of the good people, in order to which he would employ such men of honour and interest as the people should rejoyce, and he should not refuse to be one of them. And after, with all his arts, he had endeavour'd to excuse his publique actions, and to draw in the collonell, he dismist him with such expressions as were publickely taken notice of by all his little courtiers then about him; when he went to the end of the gallery with the collonell, and there, embracing him, sayd allowd to him, 'Well, collonell, satisfied or dissatisfied, you shall be one of us, for wee can no longer exempt a person so able and faithfull from the publique service, and you shall be satisfied in all honest things.' The collonell left him with that respect that became the place he was in; when immediately the same courtiers who had some of them passed him by without knowing him when he came in, although they had beene once of his familiar acquaintance; and the rest, who had look'd upon him with such disdainfull neglect as those little people use to those who are not of their faction, now flockt about him, striving who should expresse most respect, and, by an extraordinary officiousnesse, redeeme their late slightings. Some of them desir'd he would command their service in any businesse he had with their lord, and a thousand such frivolous compliments, which the collonell smiled att, and, quitting himselfe of them as soone as he could, made haste to returne into the country. There he had not long bene but that he was inform'd, notwithstanding all these faire shews, the protector, finding him too constant to be wrought upon to serve his tirannie, had resolv'd to secure his person, least he should head the people, who now grew very weary of his bondage. But though it was certainly confirm'd to the collonell how much he was afraid of his honesty and freedome, and that he was resolv'd not to let him longer be att liberty, yet, before his guards apprehended the collonell, death imprison'd himselfe, and confin'd all his vast ambition, and all his cruell designes into the narrow compasse of a grave." — Pp. 340—342.

Two other anecdotes, one very discreditable to Cromwell, the other affording a striking

proof of his bravery and knowledge of mankind, may be found at pp. 308 and 316. But we dismiss the subject of this "great bad man," with the following eloquent representation of his government after he had attained the height of his ambition; — a representation in which the keen regrets of disappointed patriotism are finely mingled with an indignant contempt for those who submitted to tyranny, and a generous admission of the talents and magnanimity of the tyrant.

"In the interim Cromwell and his armie grew wanton with their power, and invented a thousand tricks of government, which, when nobody oppos'd, they themselves fell to dislike and vary every day. First he calls a parliament out of his owne pockett, himselfe naming a sort of godly men for every county, who meeting and not agreeing, a part of them, in the name of the people, gave up the sovereignty to him. Shortly after, he makes up severall sorts of mock parliaments, but not finding one of them absolutely for his turne, turn'd them off againe. He soone quitted himselfe of his triumvirs, and first thrust out Harrison, then tooke away Lambert's commission, and would have bene king but for feare of quitting his generallship. He weeded, in a few months' time, above a hundred and fifty godly officers out of the armie, with whom many of the religious souldiers went off, and in their roome abundance of the king's dissolute souldiers were entertain'd, and the armie was almost chang'd from that godly religious armie, whose vallour God had crown'd with triumph, into the dissolute armie they had beaten, bearing yett a better name. His wife and children too, were setting up for principality, which suited no better with any of them then scarlett on the ape; only, to speak the truth of himselfe, he had much naturall greatnesse; and well became the place he had usurp'd. His daughter Fleetwood was humbled, and not exalted, with these things; but the rest were insolent fooles. Cleypoole, who married his daughter, and his son Henry, were two debauch'd ungodly cavaliers. Richard was a peasant in his nature; yet gentle and vertuous; but became not greatnesse. His court was full of sinne and vanity, and the more abominable, because they had not yett quite cast away the name of God, but prophan'd it by taking it in vaine upon them. True religion was now almost lost, even among the religious party, and hipocrisie became an epidemicall disease, to the sad griefe of Collonell Hutchinson, and all true-hearted Christians and Englishmen. Allmost all the ministers every where fell in and worshipt this beast, and courted and made addresses to him. So did the city of London, and many of the degenerate lords of the land, with the poore spirited gentry. The cavaliers, in pollicy, who saw that while Cromwell reduc'd all the exercise of tirannicall power under another name, there was a doore open'd for the restoring of their party, fell much in with Cromwell, and heighten'd all his disorders. He at last exercis'd such an arbitrary power, that the whole land grew weary of him, while he sett up a companie of silly meane fellows, call'd maior-generalls, as governors in every county. These rul'd, according to their wills, by no law but what seem'd good in their owne eies; imprisoning men, obstructing the course of iustice betweene man and man, perverting right through partiallity, acquitting some that were guilty, and punishing some that were innocent as guilty. Then he exercised another proiect to rayse mony, by decimation of the estates of all the king's party, of which actions 'tis said Lambert was the instigator. At last he tooke upon him to make lords and knights; and wanted not many fooles, both of the armie and gentry, to accept of and strutt in his mock titles. Then the Earle of Warwick's grandchild and the Lord Falconbridge married his two daughters; such pittifull slaves were the nobles of those dayes. Att last Lambert, perceiving himselfe to have bene all this while deluded with hopes and promises of succession, and seeing that Cromwell now intended to confirme the government in his owne famely, fell off from him, but behav'd himselfe very pittifully and meanly, was turn'd out of all his places, and return'd again to plott new vengeance at his house at Wimbledon, where he fell to dresse his flowers in his garden, and worke at the needle with his wife and his maides! while he was watching an opportunity to serve againe his ambition, which had this difference from the protector's; the one was gallant and greate, the other had nothing but an unworthy pride, most insolent in prosperity, and as abiect and base in adversity."— Pp. 335—338.

In making these miscellaneous extracts, for the amusement of our readers, we are afraid that we have too far lost sight of the worthy colonel, for whose honour the whole record was designed; and though the biography of a private person, however eminent, is seldom of much consequence to the general reader, except where it illustrates the manners of the times, or connects with the public history of the nation, there is something in this account of Colonel Hutchinson which appears to us deserving of notice with reference to both these particulars.

Soon after his marriage, he retired to his house at Owthorpe, where he took to the study of divinity; and having his attention roused to the state of public affairs, by the dreadful massacres of Ireland, in 1641, set himself diligently to read and consider all the disputes which were then begun between the King and parliament; the result of which was, a steady

conviction of the justice of the pretensions maintained by the latter, with a strong anxiety for the preservation of peace. His first achievement (we are sorry to say) was, to persuade the parson of his parish to deface the images, and break the painted glass in the windows of his church, in obedience to an injunction of the parliament; his next, to resist Lord Newark in an illegal attempt to carry off the ammunition belonging to the county, for the use of the King. His deportment upon this last occasion, when he was only twenty-five years of age, affords a very singular proof of temper and firmness — perfect good breeding, and great powers of reasoning.

When the King set up his standard at Nottingham, Mr. Hutchinson repaired to the camp of Essex, the parliamentary general; but "did not then find a clear call from the Lord to join with him." His irresolution, however, was speedily dissipated by the persecutions of the Royalists, who made various efforts to seize him as a disaffected person. He accordingly began to consult with others in the same predicament: and having resolved to try to defend the town and castle of Nottingham against the assaults of the enemy, he was first elected governor by his associates, and afterwards had his nomination confirmed by Fairfax and by the Parliament. A great deal too much of the book is occupied with an account of the petty enterprises in which this little garrison was engaged; the various feuds and dissensions which arose among the different officers and the committees who were appointed as their council; the occasional desertion and treachery of various individuals, and the many contrivances, and sacrifices, and exertions by which Colonel Hutchinson was enabled to maintain his post till the final discomfiture of the Royal party. This narrative contains, no doubt, many splendid examples of courage and fidelity on both sides; and for the variety of intrigues, cabals, and successful and unsuccessful attempts at corruption which it exhibits, may be considered as a complete miniature of a greater history. But the insignificance of the events and the obscurity of the persons take away all interest from the story; and our admiration of Colonel Hutchinson's firmness, and disinterestedness and valour, is scarcely sufficient to keep our attention alive through the languishing narrative of the obscure warfare in which he was employed.

It has often been remarked, and for the honour of our country can never be too often repeated, that history affords no example of a civil contest carried on for years at the point of the sword, and yet producing so little ferocity in the body of the people, and so few instances of particular violence or cruelty. No proscriptions — no executions — no sacking of cities, or laying waste of provinces — no vengeance wreaked, and indeed scarcely any severity inflicted, upon those who were notoriously hostile, unless found actually in arms. Some passages in the wars of Henry IV., as narrated by Sully, approach to this character; but the horrible massacres with which that contest was at other stages attended, exclude it from all parallel with the generous hostility of England. This book is full of instances, not merely of mutual toleration, but of the most cordial friendship subsisting between individuals actually engaged in the opposite parties. In particular, Sir Allan Apsley, Mrs. Hutchinson's brother, who commanded a troop of horse for the King, and was frequently employed in the same part of the country where Colonel Hutchinson commanded for the Parliament, is represented throughout as living on a footing of the greatest friendship and cordiality with this valiant relative. Under the protection of mutual passes, they pay frequent visits to each other, and exchange various civilities and pieces of service, without any attempt on either side to seduce the other from the cause to which his conscience had attached him. In the same way, the houses and families of various royalists are left unmolested in the district commanded by Colonel Hutchinson's forces; and officers conducting troops to the siege of the castle, are repeatedly invited to partake of entertainments with the garrison. It is no less curious and unique to find Mrs. Hutchinson officiating as a surgeon to the wounded; and the Colonel administering spiritual consolation to some of the captives who had been mortally hurt by the men whom he had led into action.

After the termination of the war, Colonel Hutchinson was returned to Parliament for the town which he had so resolutely defended.

He was appointed a member of the High Court of Justice, for the trial of the King; — and after long hesitation, and frequent prayer to God to direct him aright in an affair of so much moment, he deliberately concurred in the sentence which was pronounced by it; — Mrs. Hutchinson proudly disclaiming for him the apology, afterwards so familiar in the mouths of his associates, of having been overawed by Cromwell. His opinion of the Protector, and of his government, has been pretty fully explained in the extracts we have already given. During that usurpation, he lived in almost unbroken retirement, at Owthorpe; where he occupied himself in superintending the education of his children, whom he himself instructed in music and other elegant accomplishments; in the embellishment of his residence by building and planting; in administering justice to his neighbours, and in making a very choice collection of painting and sculpture, for which he had purchased a number of articles out of the cabinet of the late King. Such were the liberal pursuits and elegant recreations of one whom all our recent histories would lead us to consider as a gloomy fanatic, and barbarous bigot!

Upon the death of the Protector he again took his seat in Parliament for the county of Nottingham; and was an indignant spectator of the base proceedings of Monk, and the headlong and improvident zeal of the people in the matter of the Restoration. In the course of the debate on the treatment to be dealt to the regicides, such of them as were members of the House rose in their places, and made such a defence of their conduct as they respectively thought it admitted of. The following passage is very curious, and gives us a high idea of the readiness and address of Colonel Hutchinson in a situation of extraordinary difficulty.

"When it came to Inglesbies turne, he, *with many teares*, profest his repentance for that murther; and told a false tale, how Cromwell held his hand, and forc'd him to subscribe the sentence! and made a most whining recantation; after which he retir'd, and another had almost ended, when Collonell Hutchinson, who was not there at the beginning, came in, and was told what they were about, and that it would be expected he should say something. He was surpriz'd with a thing he expected not; yet neither then, nor in any the like occasion, did he ever faile himselfe, but told them, 'That for his actings in those dayes, if he had err'd, it was the inexperience of his age, and the defect of his iudgement, and not the mallice of his heart, which had ever prompted him to persue the generall advantage of his country more than his owne; and if the sacrifice of him might conduce to the publick peace and settlement, he should freely submit his life and fortunes to their dispose; that the vain expence of his age, and the greate debts his publick employments had runne him into, as they were testimonies that neither avarice nor any other interest had carried him on, so they yielded him iust cause to repent that he ever forsooke his owne blessed quiett, to embarke in such a troubled sea, where he had made shipwrack of all things but a good conscience; *and as to that particular action of the king, he desir'd them to believe he had that sence of it that befitted an Englishman, a Christian, and a gentleman.*' As soone as the collonell had spoken, he retir'd into a roome, where Inglesbie was, with his eies yet red, who had call'd up a little spirite to succeed his whinings, and embracing Collonell Hutchinson, 'O collonell,' say'd he, 'did I ever imagine wee could be brought to this? Could I have suspected it, when I brought them Lambert in the other day, this sword should have redeem'd us from being dealt with as criminalls, by that people, for whom we had so gloriously exposed ourselves.' The collonell told him, he had foresecne, ever since those usurpers thrust out the lawfull authority of the land, to enthrone themselves, it could end in nothing else, but the integrity of his heart, in all he had done, made him as chearefully ready to suffer as to triumph in a good cause. The result of the house that day was to suspend Collonell Hutchinson and the rest from sitting in the house. Monke, after all his greate professions, now sate still, and had not one word to interpose for any person, but was as forward to sett vengeance on foot as any man."— Pp. 367—369.

He was afterwards comprehended in the act of amnesty, and with some difficulty obtained his pardon; upon which he retired to the country; but was soon afterwards brought to town, in order to see if he could not be prevailed on to give evidence against such of the regicides as it was resolved to bring to trial. The Inglesby who is commemorated in the preceding extract, is known to have been the chief informer on that occasion; and Colonel Hutchinson understood, that it was by his instigation that he also had been called as a witness. His deportment, when privately examined by the Attorney-General, is extremely characteristic, and includes a very fine and bitter piece of irony on his base associate, who did not disdain to save himself by falsehood and treachery. When pressed to specify some overt acts against the prisoners,

—"the collonell answered him, that in a businesse transacted so many years agoe, wherein life was con-

cern'd, he durst not beare a testimony; having at that time bene so little an observer, *that he could not remember the least title of that most eminent circumstance, of Cromwell's forcing Collonell Inglesby to sett to his unwilling hand, which, if his life had depended on that circumstance, he could not have affirm'd!* 'And then, sir,' sayd he, 'if I have lost so great a thing as that, it cannot be expected lesse eminent passages remaine with me.'"—P. 379.

It was not thought proper to examine him on the trial; and he was allowed, for about a year, to pursue his innocent occupations in the retirement of a country life. At last he was seized, upon suspicion of being concerned in some treasonable conspiracy; and, though no formal accusation was *ever* exhibited against him, and no sort of evidence specified as the ground of his detention, was conveyed to London, and committed a close prisoner to the Tower. In this situation, he was treated with the most brutal harshness; all which he bore with great meekness of spirit, and consoled himself in the constant study of the Scriptures, and the society of his magnanimous consort, who, by the powerful intercession of her brother, was at last admitted to his presence. After an imprisonment of ten months, during which the most urgent solicitations could neither obtain his deliverance, nor the specification of the charges against him, he was suddenly ordered down to Sandown castle in Kent, and found, upon his arrival, that he was to be closely confined in a damp and unwholesome apartment, in which another prisoner, of the meanest rank and most brutal manners, was already established. This aggravated oppression and indignity, however, he endured with a cheerful magnanimity; and conversed with his wife and daughter, as she expresses it, "with as pleasant and contented a spirit as ever in his whole life." Sir Allan Apsley at last procured an order for permitting him to walk a certain time every day on the beach; but this mitigation came too late. A sort of aguish fever, brought on by damp and confinement, had settled on his constitution; and, in little more than a month after his removal from the Tower, he was delivered by death from the mean and cowardly oppression of those whom he had always disdained either to flatter or betray.

England should be proud, we think, of having given birth to Mrs. Hutchinson and her husband; and chiefly because their characters are truly and peculiarly English; according to the standard of those times in which national characters were most distinguishable. Not exempt, certainly, from errors and defects, they yet seem to us to hold out a lofty example of substantial dignity and virtue; and to possess most of those talents and principles by which public life is made honourable, and privacy delightful. Bigotry must at all times debase, and civil dissension embitter our existence; but, in the ordinary course of events, we may safely venture to assert, that a nation which produces many such wives and mothers as Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, must be both great and happy.

For the Reverend Julius Hutchinson, the editor of these Memoirs, it is easy to see that he is considerably perplexed and distracted, between a natural desire to extol those illustrious ancestors, and a fear of being himself mistaken for a republican. So he gives us alternate notes in laud of the English levellers, and in vituperation of the atheists and jacobins of France. From all this, our charity leads us to infer, that the said Reverend Julius Hutchinson has not yet obtained that preferment in the Church which it would be convenient for him to possess; and that, when he is promoted according to his merits, he will speak more uniformly in a manner becoming his descent. In the mean time, we are very much obliged to him for this book, and for the pains he has taken to satisfy us of its authenticity and of the accuracy of the publication. We do not object to the old spelling, which occasions no perplexity; but when the work comes to another edition, we would recommend it to him to add a few dates on the margin, to break his pages into more paragraphs, and to revise his punctuation. He would make the book infinitely more saleable, too, if, without making the slightest variation in what is retained, he would omit about 200 pages of the siege of Nottingham, and other parish business; especially as the whole is now put beyond the reach of loss or corruption by the present full publication.

LADY FANSHAWE.

(October, 1829.)

Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, *Wife of the Right Honourable Sir Richard Fanshawe, Baronet, Ambassador from Charles the Second to the Court of Madrid in* 1665. Written by Herself. *To which are added, Extracts from the Correspondence of Sir Richard Fanshawe.* 8vo. pp. 360. London: 1829.

There is not much in this book, either of individual character, or public story. It is, indeed, but a small affair — any way; but yet pleasing, and not altogether without interest or instruction. Though it presents us with no traits of historical importance, and but few of personal passion or adventure, it still gives us a peep at a scene of surpassing interest from a new quarter; and at all events adds one other item to the great and growing store of those contemporary notices which are every day familiarizing us more and more with the living character of by-gone ages; and without which we begin, at last, to be sensible that we can neither enter into their spirit, nor even understand their public transactions. Writings not meant for publication, nor prepared for purposes of vanity or contention, are the only memorials in which the true " form and pressure" of the ages which produce them are ever completely preserved; and, indeed, the only documents from which the great events which are blazoned on their records can ever be satisfactorily explained. It is in such writings alone, — confidential letters —private diaries—family anecdotes — and personal remonstrances, apologies, or explanations,— that the true springs of actions are disclosed — as well as the obstructions and impediments, whether in the scruples of individuals or the general temper of society, by which their operation is so capriciously, and, but for these revelations, so unaccountably controlled. They are the true key to the cipher in which public annals are almost necessarily written; and their disclosure, after long intervals of time, is almost as good as the revocation of their writers from the dead — to abide our interrogatories, and to act over again, before us, in the very dress and accents of the time, a portion of the scenes which they once guided or adorned. It is not a very striking portion, perhaps, that is thus recalled by the publication before us; but whatever interest it possesses is mainly of this character. It belongs to an era, to which, of all others in our history, curiosity will always be most eagerly directed; and it constantly rivets our attention, by exciting expectations which it ought, in truth, to have fulfilled; and suggesting how much more interesting and instructive it might so easily have been made.

Lady Fanshawe was, as is generally known, the wife of a distinguished cavalier, in the Heroic Age of the civil wars and the Protectorate; and survived till long after the Restoration. Her husband was a person of no mean figure in those great transactions; and she, who adhered to him with the most devoted attachment, and participated not unworthily in all his fortunes and designs, was, consequently, in continual contact with the movements which then agitated society; and had her full share of the troubles and triumphs which belonged to such an existence. Her memoirs *ought*, therefore, to have formed an interesting counterpart to those of Mrs. Hutchinson; and to have recalled to us, with equal force and vivacity, the aspect under which those great events presented themselves to a female spectatress and sufferer, of the opposite faction. But, though the title of the book, and the announcements of the editor, hold out this promise, we must say that the body of it falls far short of performance: and, whether it be that her side of the question did not admit of the same force of delineation or loftiness of sentiment; or, that the individual chronicler has been less fortunately selected, it is certain that, in point both of interest and instruction, in traits of character, warmth of colouring, or exaltation of feeling, there is no sort of comparison between these gossiping, and, though affectionate, yet relatively cold and feeble memoranda, and the earnest, eloquent, and graphic representations of the Puritan heroine. Nor should it be forgotten, even in hinting at such a parallel, that, in one important respect, the royalist cause also must be allowed to have been singularly happy in its female representative. Since, if it may be said with some show of reason, that Lucy Hutchinson and her husband had too many elegant tastes and accomplishments to be taken as fair specimens of the austere and godly republicans; it certainly

may be retorted, with at least equal justice, that the chaste and decorous Lady Fanshawe, and her sober diplomatic lord, shadow out rather too favourably the general manners and morals of the cavaliers.

After all, perhaps, the true secret of her inferiority, in all at least that relates to political interest, may be found in the fact, that the fair writer, though born and bred a royalist, and faithfully adhering to her husband in his efforts and sufferings in the cause, was not naturally, or of herself, particularly studious of such matters; or disposed to occupy herself more than was necessary with any public concern. She seems to have followed, like a good wife and daughter, where her parents or her husband led her; and to have adopted their opinions with a dutiful and implicit confidence, but without being very deeply moved by the principles or passions which actuated those from whom they were derived; while Lucy Hutchinson not only threw her whole heart and soul into the cause of her party, but, like Lady Macbeth or Madame Roland, imparted her own fire to her more phlegmatic helpmate, — "chastised him," when necessary, "with the valour of her tongue," and cheered him on, by the encouragement of her high example, to all the ventures and sacrifices, the triumphs or the martyrdoms, that lay visibly across her daring and lofty course. The Lady Fanshawe, we take it, was of a less passionate temperament; and her book, accordingly, is more like that of an ordinary woman, though living in extraordinary times. She begins, no doubt, with a good deal of love and domestic devotion, and even echoes, from that sanctuary, certain notes of loyalty; but, in very truth, is chiefly occupied, for the best part of her life, with the sage and serious business of some nineteen or twenty *accouchemens*, which are happily accomplished in different parts of Europe; and seems, at last, to be wholly engrossed in the ceremonial of diplomatic presentations, —the description of court dresses, state coaches, liveries, and jewellery, — the solemnity of processions, and receptions by sovereign princes, — and the due interchange of presents and compliments with persons of worship and dignity. Fully one third of her book is taken up with such goodly matter; and nearly as much with the genealogy of her kindred, and a faithful record of their marriages, deaths, and burials. From the remainder, however, some curious things may be gathered; and we shall try to extract what strikes us as most characteristic. We may begin with something that preceded her own recollection. The following singular legend relates to her mother; and is given, it will be observed, on very venerable authority:

"Dr. Howlsworth preached her funeral sermon, in which, upon his own knowledge, he told, before many hundreds of people, this accident following: That my mother, being sick to death of a fever three months after I was born, which was the occasion she gave me suck no longer, her friends and servants thought, to all outward appearance, that she was dead, and so lay almost two days and a night; but Dr. Winston, coming to comfort my father, went into my mother's room, and looking earnestly on her face, said she was so handsome, and now looks so lovely, I cannot think she is dead; and suddenly took a lancet out of his pocket, and with it cut the sole of her foot, which bled. Upon this, he immediately caused her to be laid upon the bed again and to be rubbed, and such means, as she came to life, and opening her eyes, saw two of her kinswomen stand by her, my Lady Knollys and my Lady Russell, both with great wide sleeves, as the fashion then was, and said, Did you not promise me fifteen years, and are you come again already? which they not understanding, persuaded her to keep her spirits quiet in that great weakness wherein she then was; but, some hours after, she desired my father and Dr. Howlsworth might be left alone with her, to whom she said, I will acquaint you, that, during the time of my trance, I was in great quiet, but in a place I could neither distinguish nor describe; but the sense of leaving my girl, who is dearer to me than all my children, remained a trouble upon my spirits. Suddenly I saw two by me, cloathed in long white garments, and methought I fell down with my face in the dust; and they asked me why I was troubled in so great happiness. I replied, O let me have the same grant given to Hezekiah, that I may live fifteen years, to see my daughter a woman: to which they answered, It is done: and then, at that instant, I awoke out of my trance; and Dr. Howlsworth did there affirm, that that day she died made just fifteen years from that time." — Pp. 26–28.

This gift of dreaming dreams, or seeing visions, seems, indeed, to have been hereditary in the family; for the following is given on the credit of the fair writer's own experience. When she and her husband went to Ireland, on their way to Portugal, they were honourably entertained by all the distinguished royalists who came in their way. Among others, she has recorded that,

"We went to the Lady Honor O'Brien's, a lady that went for a maid, but few believed it! She was the youngest daughter of the Earl of Thomond. There we staid three nights. The first of which I was surprised by being laid in a chamber, where, about one o'clock, I heard a voice that awakened me. I drew the curtain, and, in the casement of the window, I saw, by the light of the moon, a woman leaning into the window, through the casement, in white, with red hair, and pale and ghastly complexion. She spoke loud, and in a tone I had never heard, thrice, 'A horse!' and then, with a sigh more like the wind than breath, she vanished; and, to me, her body looked more like a thick cloud than substance. I was so much frightened, that my hair stood on end, and my night-clothes fell off. I pulled and pinched your father, who never woke during the disorder I was in; but at last was much surprised to see me in this fright, and more so when I related the story and showed him the window opened. Neither of us slept any more that night, but he entertained me with telling me how much more these apparitions were usual in this country than in England! and we concluded the cause to be the great superstition of the Irish, and the want of that knowing faith, which should defend them from the power of the devil, which he exercises among them very much."

Ingenious and orthodox as this solution of the mystery must be allowed to be, we confess we should have been inclined to prefer that of the fair sleeper having had a fit of nightmare; had it not been for the conclusive testimony of the putative virgin of the house of Thomond, who supplies the following astonishing confirmation; and leads us rather to suspect that the whole might have been a trick, to rid herself the sooner of their scrupulous and decorous company.

"About five o'clock," continues Lady Fanshawe, "the lady of the house came to see us, saying she had not been in bed all night, because a cousin O'Brien of hers, whose ancestors had owned that house, had desired her to stay with him in his chamber, and that he died at two o'clock, and she said, 'I wish you to have had no disturbance, for 'tis the custom of the place, that, when any of the family are dying, the shape of a woman appears in the window every night till they be dead. This woman was many ages ago got with child by the owner of this place, who murdered her in his garden, and flung her into the river under the window, but truly I thought not of it when I lodged you here, it being the best room in the house.' We made little reply to her speech, but disposed ourselves to be gone suddenly."

We shall close this chapter, of the supernatural, with the following rather remarkable ghost story, which is calculated, we think, to make a strong impression on the imagination. Our diligent chronicler picked it up, it seems, on her way through Canterbury in the year 1663; and it is thus honourably attested:

"And here I cannot omit relating the ensuing story, confirmed by Sir Thomas Batten, Sir Arnold Breames, the Dean of Canterbury, with many more gentlemen and persons of this town.

"There lives not far from Canterbury a gentleman called Colonel Colepeper, whose mother was widow unto the Lord Strangford: this gentleman had a sister, who lived with him, as the world said, in too much love. She married Mr. Porter. This brother and sister, being both atheists, and living a life according to their profession, went in a frolick into a vault of their ancestors, where, before they returned, they pulled some of their father's and mother's hairs! Within a very few days after, Mrs. Porter fell sick and died. Her brother kept her body in a coffin set up in his buttery, saying it would not be long before he died, and then they would be both buried together; but from the night after her death, until the time that we were told the story, which was three months, they say that a head, as cold as death, with curled hair like his sister's, did ever lie by him wherever he slept, notwithstanding he removed to several places and countries to avoid it; and several persons told us they also had felt this apparition."

We may now go back a little to the affairs of this world. Deep and devoted attachments are more frequently conceived in circumstances of distress and danger than in any other: and, accordingly, the love and marriage of Sir Richard Fanshawe and his lady befel during their anxious and perilous residence with the court at Oxford, in 1644. The following little sketch of the life they passed there is curious and interesting:

"My father commanded my sister and myself to come to him to Oxford, where the Court then was; but we, that had till that hour lived in great plenty and great order, found ourselves like fishes out of the water, and the scene so changed, that we knew not at all how to act any part but obedience; for, from as good a house as any gentleman of England had, we came to a baker's house in an obscure street; and from rooms well furnished, to lie in a very bad bed in a garret, to one dish of meat, and that not the best ordered, no money, for we were as poor as Job, nor clothes more than a man or two brought in their cloak bags: we had the perpetual discourse of losing and gaining towns and men: at the windows the sad spectacle of war, sometimes plagues, sometimes sicknesses of other kind, by reason of so many people being packed together, as, I believe, there never was before of that quality; always in want, yet I must needs say, that most bore it with a martyr-like cheer-

fulness. For my own part, I began to think we should all, like Abraham, live in tents all the days of our lives. The king sent my father a warrant for a baronet, but he returned it with thanks, saying he had too much honour of his knighthood, which his majesty had honoured him with some years before, for the fortune he now possessed."— Pp. 35—37.

They were married very privately the year after; and certainly entered upon life with little but their mutual love to cheer and support them; but it seems to have been sufficient.

"Both his fortune and my promised portion, which was made 10,000*l*., were both at that time in expectation; and we might truly be called merchant adventurers, for the stock we set up our trading with did not amount to twenty pounds betwixt us; but, however, it was to us as a little piece of armour is against a bullet, which, if it be right placed, though no bigger than a shilling, serves as well as a whole suit of armour; so our stock bought pen, ink, and paper, which was your father's trade, and by it, I assure you, we lived better than those who were born to 2000*l*. a year, as long as he had his liberty."—Pp. 37—38.

The next scene presents both of them in so amiable and respectable a light, that we think it but justice to extract it, though rather long, without any abridgment. It is, indeed, one of the most pleasing and interesting passages in the book. They had now gone to Bristol, in 1645.

"My husband had provided very good lodgings for us, and as soon as he could come home from the council, where he was at my arrival, he with all expressions of joy received me in his arms, and gave me a hundred pieces of gold, saying, 'I know thou that keeps my heart so well, will keep my fortune, which from this time I will ever put into thy hands as God shall bless me with increase:' and now I thought myself a perfect queen, and my husband so glorious a crown, that I more valued myself to be called by his name than born a princess; for I knew him very wise and very good, and his soul doated on me,—upon which confidence I will tell you what happened. My Lady Rivers, a brave woman, and one that had suffered many thousand pounds loss for the king, and whom I had a great reverence for, and she a kindness for me as a kinswoman, in discourse she tacitly commended the knowledge of state affairs; and that some women were very happy in a good understanding thereof, as my Lady Aubigny, Lady Isabel Thynne, and divers others, and yet none was at first more capable than I; that in the night she knew there came a post from Paris from the queen, and that she would be extremely glad to hear what the queen commanded the king in order to his affairs; saying, if I would ask my husband privately, he would tell me what he found in the packet, and I might tell her. I, that was young and innocent, and to that day had never in my mouth 'What news?' began to think there was more in inquiring into public affairs than I thought of; and that it being a fashionable thing would make me more beloved of my husband, if that had been possible, than I was. When my husband returned home from council, after welcoming him, as his custom ever was, he went with his handful of papers into his study for an hour or more; I followed him; he turned hastily, and said, 'What wouldst thou have, my life?' I told him, I heard the prince had received a packet from the queen, and I guessed it was that in his hand, and I desired to know what was in it; he smilingly replied, 'My love, I will immediately come to thee; pray thee go, for I am very busy:' when he came out of his closet I revived my suit; he kissed me, and talked of other things. At supper I would eat nothing; he as usual sat by me, and drank often to me, which was his custom, and was full of discourse to company that was at table. Going to bed I asked again; and said I could not believe he loved me if he refused to tell me all he knew; but he answered nothing, but stopped my mouth with kisses. So we went to bed; I cried, and he went to sleep! Next morning early, as his custom was, he called to rise, but began to discourse with me first, to which I made no reply; he rose, came on the other side of the bed and kissed me, and drew the curtains softly, and went to court. When he came home to dinner, he presently came to me as was usual, and when I had him by the hand, I said, 'Thou dost not care to see me troubled;' to which he, taking me in his arms, answered, 'My dearest soul, nothing upon earth can afflict me like that: but when you asked me of my business, it was wholly out of my power to satisfy thee; for my life and fortune shall be thine, and every thought of my heart in which the trust I am in may not be revealed: but my honour is my own; which I cannot preserve if I communicate the prince's affairs; and, pray thee, with this answer rest satisfied.' So great was his reason and goodness, that, upon consideration, it made my folly appear to me so vile, that from that day until the day of his death, I never thought fit to ask him any business, but what he communicated freely to me in order to his estate or family."

After the ill success of the royal arms had made it necessary for the Prince to retire beyond seas, Lady Fanshawe and her husband attended him to the Scilly Islands. We give this natural and simple picture of their discomforts on that expedition:—

"The next day, after having been pillaged, and extremely sick and big with child, I was set on shore, almost dead, in the island of Scilly; when we had got to our quarters near the castle, where the prince lay, I went immediately to bed, which was so vile, that my footman ever lay in a better, and we had but three in the whole house, which consisted of four rooms, or

rather partitions, two low rooms, and two little lofts, with a ladder to go up: in one of these they kept dried fish, which was his trade, and in this my husband's two clerks lay; one there was for my sister, and one for myself, and one amongst the rest of the servants; but when I waked in the morning, I was so cold I knew not what to do; but the daylight discovered that my bed was near swimming with the sea, which the owner told us afterwards it never did — *but at spring tides.*"

We must not omit her last interview with her unfortunate Sovereign, which took place at Hampton Court, when his star was hastening to its setting! It is the only interview with that unhappy Prince of which she has left any notice; and is, undoubtedly, very touching and amiable.

"During his stay at Hampton Court, my husband was with him; to whom he was pleased to talk much of his concerns, and gave him three credentials for Spain, with private instructions and letters for his service: but God, for our sins, disposed his Majesty's affairs otherwise. I went three times to pay my duty to him, both as I was the daughter of his servant, and wife of his servant. The last time I ever saw him, when I took my leave, I could not refrain weeping. When he had saluted me, I prayed to God to preserve his majesty, with long life and happy years; he stroked me on the cheek, and said, 'Child, if God pleaseth it shall be so! both you and I must submit to God's will, and you know in what hands I am in:' then turning to your father, he said, 'Be sure, Dick, to tell my son all that I have said, and deliver those letters to my wife; pray God bless her! I hope I shall do well:' and taking him in his arms, said, 'Thou hast ever been an honest man, and I hope God will bless thee, and make thee a happy servant to my son, whom I have charged in my letter to continue his love, and trust to you;' adding, 'I do promise you, that if ever I am restored to my dignity, I will bountifully reward you for both your service and sufferings.' Thus did we part from that glorious sun, that within a few months after was murdered, to the grief of all Christians that were not forsaken by God."

These are almost sufficient specimens of the work before us; for it would not be fair to extract the whole substance of it. However, we must add the following striking trait of heroism and devoted affection, especially as we have spoken rather too disparagingly of the fair writer's endowment of those qualities. In point of courage and love to her husband it is quite on a level, perhaps, with any of the darings of Mrs. Hutchinson, — though we cannot say that the occasion called so clearly for their display. During their voyage to Portugal, and —

"When we had just passed the Straits, we saw coming towards us, with full sails, a Turkish galley, well manned, and we believed we should be all carried away slaves, for this man had so laden his ship with goods for Spain, that his guns were useless, though the ship carried sixty guns. He called for brandy, and after he had well drunken, and all his men, which were near two hundred, he called for arms, and cleared the deck as well as he could, resolving to fight rather than lose his ship, which was worth 30,000*l.* This was sad for us passengers: but my husband bid us be sure to keep in the cabin, and not appear, the women, which would make the Turks think that we were a man-of-war; but if they saw women, they would take us for merchants, and board us. He went upon the deck and took a gun and bandoliers, and sword, and, with the rest of the ship's company, stood upon deck expecting the arrival of the Turkish man-of-war. This beast, the captain, had locked me up in the cabin; I knocked and called long to no purpose, until at length the cabin-boy came and opened the door. I, all in tears, desired him to be so good as to give me his blue thrum cap he wore, and his tarred coat, which he did, and I gave him half-a-crown, and putting them on, and flinging away my night-clothes, I crept up softly, and stood upon the deck by my husband's side, as free from sickness and fear as, I confess, from discretion; but it was the effect of that passion which I could never master.

"By this time the two vessels were engaged in parley, and so well satisfied with speech and sight of each other's forces, that the Turk's man-of-war tacked about, and we continued our course. But when your father saw it convenient to retreat, looking upon me, he blessed himself, and snatched me up in his arms, saying, 'Good God, that love can make this change!' and though he seemingly chid me, he would laugh at it as often as he remembered that voyage."

What follows is almost as strong a proof of that "love which casteth out fear;" while it is more unexceptionable on the score of prudence. Sir Richard, being in arms for the King at the fatal battle of Worcester, was afterwards taken prisoner, and brought to London; to which place his faithful consort immediately repaired, where, in the midst of her anxieties,

"I met a messenger from him with a letter, which advised me of his condition, and told me he was very civilly used, and said little more, but that I should be in some room at Charing Cross, where he had promise from his keeper that he should rest there in my company at dinner-time; this was meant to him as a great favour. I expected him with impatience, and on the day appointed provided a dinner and room, as ordered, in which I was with my father and some more of our friends, where, about eleven of the clock, we saw hundreds of poor soldiers, both English and Scotch, march all naked on foot, and many with your father, who was very cheerful in appearance; who, after he

had spoken and saluted me and his friends there, said, 'Pray let us not lose time, for I know not how little I have to spare; this is the chance of war; nothing venture, nothing have; so let us sit down and be merry whilst we may;' then taking my hand in his, and kissing me, 'Cease weeping, no other thing upon earth can move me; remember we are all at God's disposal.'

"During the time of his imprisonment, I failed not constantly to go, when the clock struck four in the morning, with a dark lantern in my hand all alone and on foot, from my lodging in Chancery Lane, at my cousin Young's, to Whitehall, in at the entry that went out of King Street into the bowling-green. There I would go under his window and softly call him; he, after the first time excepted, never failed to put out his head at the first call; thus we talked together, and sometimes I was so wet with the rain, that it went in at my neck and out at my heels. He directed how I should make my addresses, which I did ever to their general, Cromwell, who had a great respect for your father, and would have bought him off to his service, upon any terms.

"Being one day to solicit for my husband's liberty for a time, he bid me bring, the next day, a certificate from a physician, that he was really ill. Immediately I went to Dr. Batters, that was by chance both physician to Cromwell and to our family, who gave me one very favourable in my husband's behalf. I delivered it at the Council Chamber, at three of the clock that afternoon, as he commanded me, and he himself moved, that seeing they could make no use of his imprisonment, whereby to lighten them in their business, that he might have his liberty upon 4000*l.* bail, to take a course of physic, he being dangerously ill. Many spake against it; but most Sir Henry Vane, who said he would be as instrumental, for aught he knew, to hang them all that sat there, if ever he had opportunity; but if he had liberty for a time, that he might take the engagement before he went out; upon which Cromwell said, 'I never knew that the engagement was a medicine for the scorbutic!' They, hearing their general say so, thought it obliged him, and so ordered him his liberty upon bail."

These are specimens of what we think best in the work; but, as there may be readers who would take an interest in her description of court ceremonies, or, at least, like to see how she manages them, we shall conclude with a little fragment of such a description.

"This afternoon I went to pay my visit to the Duchess of Albuquerque. When I came to take coach, the soldiers stood to their arms, and the lieutenant that held the colours displaying them, which is never done to any one but to kings, or such as represent their persons: I stood still all the while, then at the lowering of the colours to the ground, they received for them a low courtesy from me, and for himself a bow; then taking coach, with very many persons both in coaches and on foot, I went to the duke's palace, where I was again received by a guard of his excellency's, with the same ceremony of the king's colours as before. Then I was received by the duke's brother and near a hundred persons of quality. I laid my hand upon the wrist of his excellency's right hand; he putting his cloak thereupon, as the Spanish fashion is, went up the stairs, upon the top of which stood the duchess and her daughter, who received me with great civility, putting me into every door, and all my children, till we came to sit down in her excellency's chamber, where she placed me on her right hand, upon cushions, as the fashion of this court is, being very rich, and laid upon Persia carpets.

"The two dukes embraced my husband with great kindness, welcoming him to the place, and the duke of Medina Celi led me to my coach, an honour that he had never done any but once, when he waited on your queen to help her on the like occasion. The Duke d'Alcala led my eldest daughter, and the younger led my second, and the Governor of Cadiz, Don Antonio de Pimentel, led the third. Mrs. Kestian carried Betty in her arms."

There is great choice of this sort for those who like it; and not a little of the more solemn and still duller discussion of diplomatic etiquette and precedence. But, independent of these, and of the genealogies and obituaries, which are not altogether without interest, there is enough both of heart, and sense, and observation, in these memoirs, at once to repay gentle and intelligent readers for the trouble of perusing them, and to stamp a character of amiableness and respectability on the memory of their author.

SAMUEL PEPYS.

(NOVEMBER, 1825.)

Memoirs of SAMUEL PEPYS, Esq. F.R.S., *Secretary to the Admiralty in the Reigns of Charles II. and James II., comprising his Diary from* 1659 *to* 1669, *deciphered by the Rev. John Smith, A.B., of St. John's College, Cambridge, from the original Short-hand MS. in the Pepysian Library, and a Selection from his Private Correspondence.* Edited by RICHARD LORD BRAYBROOKE. 2 vols. 4to. London: 1825.

WE have a great indulgence, we confess, for the taste, or curiosity, or whatever it may be called, that gives its value to such publications as this, and are inclined to think the desire of knowing, pretty minutely, the manners and habits of former times, — of understanding, in

all their details, the character and ordinary way of life and conversation of our forefathers — a very liberal and laudable desire; and by no means to be confounded with that hankering after contemporary slander, with which this age is so miserably infested, and so justly reproached. It is not only curious to see from what beginnings, and by what steps, we have come to be what we are: but it is most important, for the future and for the present, to ascertain what practices, and tastes, and principles, have been commonly found associated or disunited: and as, in uncultivated lands, we can often judge of their inherent fertility by the quality of the weeds they spontaneously produce — so we may learn, by such an inspection of the moral growths of a country, compared with its subsequent history, what prevailing manners are indicative of vice or of virtue — what existing follies foretell approaching wisdom — what forms of licentiousness give promise of coming purity, and what of deeper degradation — what uncertain lights, in short, announce the *rising*, and what the *setting* sun! While, in like manner, we may trace in the same records the connection of public and private morality, and the mutual action and reaction of government and manners; — and discover what individual corruptions spring from political dishonour — what domestic profligacy leads to the sacrifice of freedom — and what national virtues are most likely to resist the oppressions, or yield to the seductions of courts.

Of all these things History tells us little — and yet they are the most important that she could have been employed in recording. She has been contented, however, for the most part, with detailing merely the broad and apparent results — the great public events and transactions, in which the true working principles of its destiny have their end and consummation; and points only to the wrecks or the triumphs that float down the tide of human affairs, without giving us any light as to those *ground currents* by which its central masses are governed, and of which those superficial appearances are, in most cases, the necessary, though unsuspected effects.

Every one feels, we think, how necessary this information is, if we wish to understand what antiquity really was, and what manner of men existed in former generations. How vague and unsatisfactory, without it, are all public annals and records of dynasties and battles — of how little interest to private individuals — of how little use even to philosophers and statesmen! Before we can apply any example in history, or even comprehend its actual import, we must know something of the character, both of the age and of the persons to which it belongs — and understand a good deal of the temper, tastes, and occupations, both of the actors and the sufferers. Good and evil, in truth, change natures, with a change of those circumstances; and we may be lamenting as the most intolerable of calamities, what was scarcely felt as an infliction by those on whom it fell. Without this knowledge, therefore, the most striking and important events are mere wonders, to be stared at — altogether barren of instruction — and probably leading us astray, even as occasions of sympathy or moral emotion. Those minute details, in short, which History has so often rejected as below her dignity, are indispensable to give life, certainty, or reality to her delineations; and we should have little hesitation in asserting, that no history is really worth any thing, unless it relate to a people and an age of which we have also those humbler and more private memorials. It is not in the grand tragedy, or rather the epic fictions, of History, that we learn the true condition of former ages — the real character of past generations, or even the actual effects that were produced on society or individuals at the time, by the great events that are there so solemnly recorded. If we have not some remnants or some infusion of the Comedy of middle life, we neither have any idea of the state and colour of the general existence, nor any just understanding of the transactions about which we are reading.

For what we know of the ancient Greeks, for example — for all that enables us to imagine what sort of thing it would have been to have lived among them, or even what effects were produced on the society of Athens or Sparta by the battles of Marathon or Salamis, we are indebted not so much to the histories of Herodotus, Xenophon, or Thucydides, as to the Deipnosophists of Athenæus — the anec-

dotes of Plutarch — the introductory and incidental passages of the Platonic dialogues — the details of some of the private orations — and parts of the plays of Plautus and Terence, apparently copied from the Greek comedies. For our personal knowledge of the Romans, again, we do not look to Livy, or Dionysius — or even to Cæsar, Sallust, or Tacitus: but to Horace, Petronius, Juvenal, and the other satirists — to incidental notices in the Orations and Dialogues of Cicero — and above all to his invaluable letters, — followed up by those of Pliny, — to intimations in Plutarch, and Seneca, and Lucian — to the books of the Civil law — and the biographies and anecdotes of the Empire, from Suetonius to Procopius. Of the feudal times — the heroic age of modern Europe — we have fortunately more abundant and minute information, both in the Romances of chivalry, which embody all the details of upper life; and in the memoirs and chronicles of such writers as Commines and Froissart, which are filled with so many individual pictures and redundant particularities, as to leave us scarcely any thing more to learn or to wish for, as to the manners and character, the temper and habits, and even the daily life and conversation, of the predominating classes of society, who then stood for every thing in those countries: and, even with regard to their serfs and vassals, we are not without most distinct and intelligible lights — both in scattered passages of the works we have already referred to, in various ancient ballads and legends relating to their condition, and in such invaluable records as the humorous and more familiar tales of our immortal Chaucer. For the character and ordinary life of our more immediate ancestry, we may be said to owe our chief knowledge of it to Shakspeare, and the comic dramatists by whom he was succeeded — reinforced and supported by the infinite quantity of obscure and insignificant matter which the industry of his commentators has brought back to light for his elucidation — and which the matchless charm of his popularity has again rendered both interesting and familiar. The manners and habits of still later times are known to us, not by any means by our public histories, but by the writers of farces and comedies, polite essays, libels, and satires — by collections of private letters, like those of Gray, Swift, Arbuthnot, and Lord Orford — by private memoirs or journals, such as those of Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, Swift's Journal to Stella, and Doddington's Diary — and, in still later times, by the best of our gay and satirical novels — by caricature prints — by the better newspapers and magazines, — and by various minute accounts (in the manner of Boswell's Life of Johnson) of the private life and conversation of distinguished individuals.

The work before us relates to a period of which we have already very considerable memorials. But it is, notwithstanding, of very great interest and curiosity. A good deal of what it contains derives, no doubt, its chief interest from having happened 180 years ago: but there is little of it that does not, for that very reason, throw valuable lights on our intermediate history. It consists, as the title shows, of a very minute and copious Diary, continued from the year 1659 to 1669 — and a correspondence, much less perfect and continuous, down nearly to the death of the author in 1703. Fortunately for the public part of the story, the author was, from the very beginning, in immediate contact with persons in high office and about court — and, still more fortunately for the private part, seems to have been possessed of the most extraordinary activity, and the most indiscriminating, insatiable, and miscellaneous curiosity, that ever prompted the researches, or supplied the pen, of a daily chronicler. Although excessively busy and diligent in his attendance at his office, he finds time to go to every play, to every execution, to every procession, fire, concert, riot, trial, review, city feast, public dissection, or picture gallery that he can hear of. Nay, there seems scarcely to have been a school examination, a wedding, christening, charity sermon, bull-baiting, philosophical meeting, or private merry-making in his neighbourhood, at which he was not sure to make his appearance, and mindful to record all the particulars. He is the first to hear all the court scandal, and all the public news — to observe the changes of fashions, and the downfal of parties — to pick up family gossip, and to retail philosophical intelligence — to criticise every new house or carriage that is built — every new book or new beauty that appears

—every measure the King adopts, and every mistress he discards.

For the rest of his character, he appears to have been an easy-tempered, compassionate, and kind man; combining an extraordinary diligence and regularity in his official business and domestic economy, with a singular love of gossip, amusement, and all kinds of miscellaneous information—a devoted attachment, and almost ludicrous admiration of his wife, with a wonderful devotion to the King's mistresses, and the fair sex in general, and rather a suspicious familiarity with various pretty actresses and singers; and, above all, a practical sagacity and cunning in the management of affairs, with so much occasional credulity, puerility, and folly, as would often tempt us to set him down for a driveller. Though born with good blood in his veins, and a kinsman, indeed, of his great patron, the first Earl of Sandwich, he had nothing to boast of in his immediate progenitors, being born the son of a tailor in London, and entering on life in a state of the utmost poverty. It was probably from this ignoble vocation of his father, that he derived that hereditary taste for dress which makes such a conspicuous figure in his Diary; the critical and affectionate notices of doublets, cloaks, beavers, periwigs, and sword-belts, actually outnumbering, we think, all the entries on any other subject whatever, and plainly engrossing, even in the most agitating circumstances, no small share of the author's attention. Perhaps it is to the same blot in his scutcheon, that we should trace a certain want of manliness in his whole character and deportment. Certain it is, at least, that there is room for such an imputation. He appears before us, from first to last, with the true temper, habits, and manners of an *Underling*—obsequious to his superiors—civil and smooth to all men—lavish in attentions to persons of influence whom he dislikes—and afraid and ashamed of being seen with his best friends and benefactors, when they are supposed to be out of favour—most solicitous to keep out of quarrels of all sorts—and ensuring his own safety, not only by too humble and pacific a bearing in scenes of contention, but by such stretches of simulation and dissimulation as we cannot easily reconcile to our notion of a brave and honourable man.

To such an extent, indeed, is this carried, that, though living in times of great actual, and greater apprehended changes, it is with difficulty that we can guess, even from this most copious and unreserved record of his inmost thoughts, what were really his political opinions, or whether he ever had any. We learn, indeed, from one passage, that in his early youth he had been an ardent Roundhead, and had in that capacity attended with exultation the execution of the King—observing to one of his companions at the time, that if he had been to make a sermon on the occasion, he would have chosen for his text the words, "The memory of the wicked shall rot." This, to be sure, was when he was only in his eighteenth year—but he seems afterwards to have accepted of a small office in the Republican Court of Exchequer, of which he is in possession for some time after the commencement of his Diary. That work begins in January 1659, while Monk was on his march from Scotland; and yet, not only does he continue to frequent the society of Harrington, Hazlerigge, and other staunch republicans, but never once expresses any wish of his own, either for the restoration of the Royalty, or the continuance of the Protectorate, till after he is actually at sea with Lord Sandwich, with the ships that brought Charles back from Breda! After the Restoration is consolidated, indeed, and he has got a good office in the Admiralty, he has recorded, amply enough, his anxiety for the permanency of the ancient dynasty—though he cannot help, every now and then, reprobating the profligacy, wastefulness, and neglect of the new government, and contrasting them disadvantageously with the economy, energy, and popularity, of most of the measures of the Usurper. While we give him credit, therefore, for great candour and impartiality in the *private* judgments which he has here recorded, we can scarcely pay him the compliment of saying that he has any political principles whatever—or any, at least, for which he would ever have dreamed of hazarding his own worldly prosperity.

Another indication of the same low and ignoble turn of mind is to be found, we think, in his penurious anxiety about his money—the intense satisfaction with which he watches its increase, and the sordid and vulgar cares

to which he condescends, to check its expenditure. Even after he is in possession of a great income, he goes and sits by the tailor till he sees him sew all the buttons on his doublet — and spends four or five hours, of a very busy day, in watching the coach-maker laying on the coats of varnish on the body of his coach! When he gives a dinner, he knows exactly what every dish has cost him — and tells a long story of his paddling half the night with his fingers in the dirt, digging up some money he had buried in a garden, and conveying it with his own hands, with many fears and contrivances, safely back to his house. With all this, however, he is charitable to the poor, kind to his servants and dependents, and very indulgent to all the members of his family — though we find him chronicling his own munificence in helping to fit out his wife's brother, when he goes abroad to push his fortune, by presenting him with "ten shillings — and a coat that I had by me — a close-bodied, light-coloured, cloth coat — with a gold edging on each seam — that was the lace of my wife's best petticoat, when I married her!"

As we conceive a good deal, not only of the interest, but of the authority and just construction of the information contained in the work, depends on the reader having a correct knowledge of the individual by whom it is furnished, we think we cannot do better than begin our extracts with a few citations illustrative of the author's own character, habits, and condition, as we have already attempted to sketch them. The very first entry exhibits some of his peculiarities. He was then only twenty-seven years of age — and had been received, though not with much honour, into the house of his kinsman Sir Edward Montague, afterwards Earl of Sandwich. This is his condition in the beginning of 1659.

"Jan. 1st (Lord's day). This morning, (we living lately *in the garret*,) I rose, put on my suit with great skirts, having not lately worn any other clothes but them. Went to Mr. Gunning's chapel at Exeter House, &c. Dined at home *in the garret*, where my wife dressed the remains of a turkey, and in the doing of it she burned her hand. I staid at home the whole afternoon, looking over my accounts; then went with my wife to my father's, &c. —2d. From the Hall I called at home, and so went to Mr. Crewe's (my wife she was to go to her father's), and Mr. Moore and I and another gentleman went out and drank a cup of ale together in the new market, and there I eat some bread and cheese for my dinner."

His passion for dress breaks out in every page almost; but we shall insert only one or two of the early entries, to give the reader a notion of the style of it.

"10th. This day I put on my new silk suit, the first that ever I wore in my life.—12th. Home, and called my wife, and took her to Clodin's to a great wedding of Nan Hartlib to Mynheer Roder, which was kept at Goring House with very great state, cost, and noble company. But among all the beauties there, my wife was thought the greatest.— 13th. Up early, the first day that I put on my black camlett coat with silver buttons. To Mr. Spong, whom I found in his night-gown, &c. — 14th. To the Privy Seale, and thence to my Lord's, where Mr. Pim the tailor and I agreed upon making me a velvett coat. — 25th. This night W. Hewer brought me home from Mr. Pim's my velvett coat and cap, the first that ever I had. This the first day that ever I saw my wife wear black patches since we were married. — My wife seemed very pretty to-day, it being the first time I had given her leave to wear a black patch. — 22d. This morning, hearing that the Queene grows worse again, I sent to stop the making of my velvett cloak, till I see whether she lives or dies. — 30th. To my great sorrow find myself 43*l.* worse than I was the last month. which was then 760*l.*, and now it is but 717*l.* But it hath chiefly arisen from my layings out in clothes for myself and wife; viz. for her about 12*l.* and for myself 55*l.*, or thereabouts; having made myself a velvett cloak, two new cloth skirts, black, plain both; a new shag gown, trimmed with gold buttons and twist, with a new hat, and silk tops for my legs, and many other things, being resolved henceforward to go like myself. And also two perriwiggs, one whereof costs me 3*l.* and the other 40*s.* I have worn neither yet, but will begin next week, God willing. — 29th. Lord's day. This morning I put on my best black cloth suit, trimmed with scarlett ribbon, very neat, with my cloak lined with velvett, and a new beaver, which altogether is very noble, with my black silk knit canons I bought a month ago. — 30th. Up, and put on a new summer black bombazin suit; and being come now to an agreement with my barber to keep my perriwigg in good order at 20*s.* a year, I am like to go very spruce, more than I used to do. — 31st. This day I got a little rent in my new fine camlett cloak with the latch of Sir G. Carteret's door; but it is darned up at my tailor's, that it will be no great blemish to it; but it troubled me."

This, we suppose, is enough — though there are more than 500 such notices at the service of any curious reader. It may be supposed what a treat a coronation would be to such a fancier of fine clothes; and accordingly, we have a most rapturous description of it, in all

its glory. The King and the Duke of York in their morning dresses were, it seems, "but very plain men;" but, when attired in their "most rich embroidered suits and cloaks, they looked most noble." Indeed, after some time, he assures us, that "the show was so glorious with gold and silver, that we are not able to look at it any longer, our eyes being so much overcome!"

As a specimen of the credulity and *twaddle* which constitutes another of the staples of this collection, the reader may take the following.

"19th. Waked with a very high wind, and said to my wife, 'I pray God I hear not of the death of any great person, — THIS WIND IS SO HIGH!' fearing that the Queene might be dead. So up; and going by coach by Sir W. Batten and Sir J. Minnes to St. James's, they tell me that Sir W. Compton, who it is true had been a little sickly for a week or fortnight, but was very well upon Friday night last, at the Tangier Committee with us, was dead, — died yesterday: at which I was *most exceedingly surprised — he being*, and so all the world saying that he was, one *of the worthyest men and best officers of State now in England!*

"23rd. To Westminster Abbey, and there did see all the tombs very finely; having one with us alone (there being no other company this day to see the tombs, it being Shrove-Tuesday); and here we did see, by particular favour, the body of Queen Katherine of Valois; — and I had the upper part of her body in my hands, — and I did kiss her mouth! — reflecting upon it that I did kiss a queene, and that this was my birth day, — thirty-six years old! — that I did kiss a queene! But here this man, who seems to understand well, tells me that the saying is not true that she was never buried — for she was buried. — Only when Henry the Seventh built his chapel, she was taken up and laid in this wooden coffin; but I did there see that in it the body was buried in a leaden one, which remains under the body to this day, &c. &c. — 29th. We sat under the boxes, and saw the fine ladies; among others, my lady Kerneguy, who is most devilishly painted. And so home — it being mighty pleasure to go alone with my poor wife in a coach of our own to a play! and makes us appear mighty great, I think, in the world; at least, greater than ever I could, or my friends for me, have once expected; or, I think, than any of my family ever yet lived in my memory — but my cosen Pepys in Salisbury Court."

Or the following memorandums of his travels.

"A mighty cold and windy, but clear day; and had the pleasure of seeing the Medway running winding up and down mightily, — and a very fine country: and I went a little out of the way to have visited Sir John Bankes, but he at London; but here I had a sight of his seat and house, the outside, which is an old abbey just like Hinchingbroke, and as good at least, and mightily finely placed by the river; and he keeps the grounds about it, and walks and the house, very handsome: I was mightily pleased with the sight of it. Thence to Maydstone, which I had a mighty mind to see, having never been there; and walked all up and down the town, — and up to the top of the steeple — and had a noble view, and then down again: and in the town did see an old man beating of flax! and did step into the barn and give him money, and saw that piece of husbandry, which I never saw; and it is very pretty! In the street also I did buy and send to our inne, the Bell, a dish of fresh fish. And so having walked all round the town, and found it very pretty as most towns I ever saw, though not very big, and people of good fashion in it, we to our inne and had a good dinner; and a barber came to me and there trimmed me, that I might be clean against night to go to Mrs. Allen, &c.

"So all over the plain by the sight of the steeple (the plain high and low) to Salisbury by night; but before I came to the town, I saw a great fortification, and there light, and to it and in it! and find it prodigious! so *as to fright me* to be in it all alone, at that time of night — it being dark. I understand since it to be that that is called Old Sarum. Come to the George Inne, where lay in a silk bed; and very good diet, &c. &c. — 22nd. So the three women behind W. Hewer, Murford, and our guide, and I single to Stonehenge, over the plain, and *some great hills*, even *to fright us!* Come thither, and find them as prodigious as any tales I ever heard of them, and worth going this journey to see. God knows what their use was: they are hard to tell, but yet may be told. — 12th. Friday. Up, finding our beds good, *but lousy;* which made us merry! — 9th. Up, and got ready, and eat our breakfast; and then took coach: and the poor, as they did yesterday, did stand at the coach to have something given them, as they do to all great persons; and I did give them something! and the town music did also come and play; but, Lord! what sad music they made! So through the town, and observed at our College of Magdalene *the posts new painted!* and understand that the Vice-Chancellor is there this year."

Though a great playgoer, we cannot say much for his tas e in plays, or indeed in literature in general. Of the Midsummer's Dream, he says, it is the most "insipid, ridiculous play I ever saw in my life." And he is almost equally dissatisfied with the Merry Wives of Windsor, and Henry the IV. To make amends, however, for these misjudgments, he is often much moved by the concord of sweet sounds; and has, in the following passage, described the effects they produced on him, in a way that must be admitted to be original. The Virgin Martyr (of Massinger), he says, was "mighty pleasant! Not that the

play is worth much, but it is finely acted by Beck Marshall. But that which did please me beyond any thing in the whole world, was the wind-musique when the angel comes down; which is so sweet that it ravished me, and indeed, in a word, did wrap up my soul, so that it made me *really sick! —just as I have formerly been when in love with my wife!*"

Though "mighty merry" upon all occasions, and, like gentle dulness, ever loving a joke, we are afraid he had not much relish for wit. His perplexity at the success of Hudibras is exceedingly ludicrous. This is his own account of his first attempt on him:—

"Hither come Mr. Battersby; and we falling into discourse of *a new book of drollery* in use, called *Hudebras*, I would needs go find it out, and met with it at the Temple: cost me 2*s.* 6*d.* But when I come to read it, it is *so silly an* abuse of the Presbyter Knight going to the warrs, that *I am ashamed of it;* and by and by meeting at Mr. Townsend's at dinner, *I sold it to him for* 18*d.*!"

The second is not much more successful.

"To Paul's Church Yard, and there looked upon the second part of Hudibras—which *I buy not,* but *borrow* to read,—to see if it be as good as the first, which the world cried so mightily up; though it hath not a good liking in me, though I had tried twice or three times reading, to *bring myself to think it witty.*"

The following is a ludicrous instance of his parsimony and household meanness.

29th. (King's birth-day.) Rose early and put six spoons and a porringer of silver *in my pocket,* to give away to-day. Back to dinner at Sir William Batten's; and then, after a walk in the fine gardens, we went to Mrs. Brown's, where Sir W. Pen and I were godfathers, and Mrs. Jordan and Shipman godmothers to her boy. And there, before and after the christening, we were with the woman above in her chamber; but whether we carried ourselves well or ill, I know not; but I was directed by young Mrs. Batten. One passage, of a lady *that eate wafers with her dog,* did a little displease me. I did give the midwife 10*s.*, and the nurse 5*s.*, and the maid of the house 2*s.* But, for as much as I expected to give the name to the childe, but did not (it being called John), *I forebore then to give my plate.*"

On another occasion, when he had, according to the fashion of the time, sent a piece of plate, on a holiday, to his official superior, he records with great joy,

"After dinner Will. comes to tell me that he had presented my piece of plate to Mr. Coventry, who takes it very kindly, and sends me a very kind letter, *and the plate back again,*—of which *my heart is very glad.*"

Throughout the whole work, indeed, he is mainly occupied with reckoning up and securing his gains—turning them into good gold—and bagging and hiding them in holes and corners. His prosperity, indeed, is marvellous; and shows us how good a thing it was to be in office, even in the year 1660. When he goes with Lord Sandwich to bring over the King, he is overjoyed with his Majesty's bounty of a month's pay to all the ship's officers—and exultingly counts up his share, and "finding himself to be worth very *nearly* 100*l.*, blesses Almighty God for it—not having been worth 25*l.* clear when he left his home." And yet, having got the office of Clerk of the Acts in the Admiralty, and a few others, he thrives with such prodigious rapidity, that before the end of 1666, this is his own account of his condition.

"To my accounts, wherein at last I find them clear and right; but to my great discontent do find that my gettings this year have been 573*l.* less than my last: it being this year in all but 2986*l.*; *whereas the last I got* 3560*l.*! And then again my spendings this year have exceeded my spendings the last, by 644*l.*: my whole spendings last year being but 509*l.*; whereas this year it appears I have spent 1154*l.*,—which is a sum not fit to be said that ever I should spend in one year, before I am master of a better estate than I am. Yet, blessed be God! and I pray God make me thankful for it, I do find myself worth in money, *all good,* above 6200*l.*; which is above 1800*l.* more than I was the last year."

We have hinted, however, at a worse meanness than the care of money, and sordid household economy. When his friends and patrons seem falling into disgrace, this is the way he takes to countenance them.

"I found my Lord Sandwich there, poor man! I see with a melancholy face, and suffers his beard to grow on his upper lip more than usual. I took him a little aside to know when I should wait on him, and where: he told me, and that it would be best to meet at his lodgings *without being seen* to walk together. Which I liked very well; and, Lord! to see in what difficulty I stand, that *I dare not* walk with Sir W. Coventry, for fear my Lord or Sir G. Carteret should see me; nor with either of them, for fear Sir W. Coventry should! &c.

"To Sir W. Coventry's—after much discourse with him, I walked out with him into James's Park; where, *being afraid to be seen with him* (*he having not yet leave to kiss the King's hand,* but notice taken, as I hear, of all that go to him), I did take *the pretence* of my attending the Tangier Committee to take my leave of him."

It is but a small matter, after this, to find, that when the office is besieged by poor sailors' wives, clamouring for their arrears of pay, he and Mrs. Pepys are dreadfully "afraid to send a venison pasty, that we are to have for supper to-night, to the cook to be baked — for fear of their offering violence to it."

Notwithstanding his great admiration of his wife and her beauty, and his unremitting attention to business and money, he has a great deal of innocent (?) dalliance with various pretty actresses at the playhouses, and passes a large part of his time in very profligate society. Here is a touch of his ordinary life, which meets us by accident as we turn over the leaves.

"To the King's house; and there going in met with Knipp, and she took us up into the tireing-rooms; and to *the women's shift*, —where Nell (that is, Nell Gwyn) — was dressing herself, and was all unready, and is very pretty, prettier than I thought. And into the scene-room, and there sat down, and she gave us fruit: and here I read the questions to Knipp, while she answered me, through all her part of 'Flora's Figary's' which was acted to-day. But Lord! to see how they were both painted, would make a man mad, and did make me loath them! and what base company of men comes among them, and how lewdly they talk! and how poor the men are in clothes, and yet what a show they make on the stage by candle-light is very observable. But to see how Nell cursed, — for having so few people in the pit, was strange."

Now, whether it was *strange* or not, it was certainly very wrong in Nell to curse so unmercifully, even at a thin house. But we must say, that it was neither so wrong nor so strange, as for this grave man of office, to curse deliberately to himself in this his private Diary. And yet but a few pages after, we find this emphatic entry — "in fear of nothing but this *damned business* of the prizes. I fear my lord will receive a *cursed* deal of trouble by it."

The following affords a still stronger picture of the profligacy of the times.

"To Fox Hall, and there fell into the company of Harry Killigrew, a rogue newly come back out of France, but still in disgrace at our Court, and young Newport and others; as very rogues as any in the town, who were ready to take hold of every woman that come by them. And so to supper in an arbour: but Lord! their mad talk did make my heart ake! And here I first understood by their [illegible] the meaning of the company that lately were called Ballers; Harris telling how it was by a meeting of some young blades, where he was among them, and my Lady Bennet and her ladies; and there *dancing naked!* and all the roguish things in the world. But, Lord, what loose company was this that I was in to-night! though full of wit; and worth a man being in for once, — to know the nature of it, and their manner of talk and lives."

These however, we have no doubt, were all very blameless and accidental associations on his part. But there is one little *liaison* of which we discover some indications in the journal, as to which we do not feel so well assured, unreserved as his confessions undoubtedly are, that he has intrusted the whole truth even to his short-hand cipher. We allude to a certain Mrs. Mercer, his wife's maid and occasional companion, of whom he makes frequent and very particular mention. The following entry, it will be allowed, is a little suspicious, as well as exceedingly characteristic.

"Thence home — and to sing with my wife and Mercer in the garden; and coming in, I find my wife plainly dissatisfied with me, that I can spend so much time with Mercer, teaching her to sing, and could never take the pains with *her*. Which I acknowledge; but it is because the girl do take music mighty readily, and *she* do not, — and music is the thing of the world that I love most, *and all the pleasure almost that I can now take.* So to bed, in some little discontent,— *but no words from me!*"

We trace the effect of this jealousy very curiously, in a little incident chronicled with great simplicity a few days after, where he mentions that being out at supper the party returned in "*two* coaches — Mr. Batelier and his sister Mary, and my wife and I in one, — and *Mercer alone* in the other."

We are sorry to observe, however, that he seems very soon to have tired of this caution and forbearance; as the following, rather outrageous merry-making, which takes place on the fourth day after, may testify.

"After dinner with my wife *and Mercer* to the Beare-garden; where I had not been, I think, of many years, and saw some good sport of the bull's tossing of the dogs: one into the very boxes. But it is a very rude and nasty pleasure. We had a great many hectors in the same box with us, (and one, very fine, went into the pit, and played his dog for a wager, which was a strange sport for a gentleman,) where they drank wine, *and drank Mercer's health first; which I pledged with my hat off!* We supped at home, and very merry. And then about nine o'clock to Mrs. Mercer's gate, where the fire and boys expected us, and her son had provided abundance of serpents

and rockets: and there mighty merry, (my Lady Pen and Pegg going thither with us, and Nan Wright,) till about twelve at night, flinging our fireworks, and burning one another and the people over the way. And at last our businesses being most spent, we into Mrs. Mercer's, and there mighty merry, *smutting one another with candle-grease and soot,* till most of us were like devils! And that being done, then we broke up, and to my house; and there I made them drink, and up stairs we went, and then fell into dancing, (W. Batelier dancing well,) and dressing him and I and one Mr. Bannister (who with my wife come over also with us) like women; and *Mercer put on a suit of Tom's like a boy,* and mighty mirth we had — *and Mercer danced a jigg!* and Nan Wright, and my wife, and Pegg Pen put on perriwigs. Thus we spent till three or four in the morning — mighty merry!" — Vol. i. pp. 438, 439.

After all this, we confess, we are not very much surprised, though no doubt a little shocked, to find the matter come to the following natural and domestic, though not very dignified catastrophe.

"This day *Mercer* being not at home, but, against her mistress's order, gone to her mother's, and my wife, going thither to speak with W. Hewer, *beat her there!!* — and was angry; and her mother saying that she was not a prentice girl, to ask leave every time she goes abroad, my wife with good reason was angry, and when she came home *bid her be gone again.* And so she went away; *which troubled me,* — but yet less than it would, because of the condition we are in, in fear of coming in a little time to be less able to keep one in her quality."

Matters, however, we are happy to say, seem to have been wonderfully soon made up again — for we find her attending Mrs. P., as usual, in about six weeks after; and there are various subsequent, though very brief and discreet notices of her, to the end of the Diary.

It is scarcely fair, we confess, thus to drag to light the frailties of this worthy defunct secretary: but we really cannot well help it — he has laid the temptation so directly in our way. If a man will leave such things on record, people will read and laugh at them, although he should long before be laid snug in his grave. After what we have just extracted, the reader will not be surprised at the following ingenuous confession.

"The truth is, I do indulge myself a little the more in pleasure, knowing that this is the proper age of my life to do it; and out of my observation, that most men that do thrive in the world do *forget to take pleasure during the time* that they are getting their estate, but reserve that till they have got one, and then it is too late for them to enjoy it."

One of the most characteristic, and at the same time most creditable pieces of *naïveté* that we meet with in the book, is in the account he gives of the infinite success of a speech which he delivered at the bar of the House of Commons, in 1667, in explanation and defence of certain alleged mismanagements in the navy, then under discussion in that assembly. The honourable House probably knew but little about the business; and nobody, we can well believe, knew so much about it as our author, — and this, we have no doubt, was the great merit of his discourse, and the secret of his success: — for though we are disposed to give him every credit for industry, clearness, and practical judgment, we think it is no less plain, from his manner of writing, than from the fact of his subsequent obscurity in parliament, that he could never have had any pretensions to the character of an orator. Be that as it may, however, this speech seems to have made a great impression at the time; and certainly gave singular satisfaction to its worthy maker. It would be unjust to withhold from our readers his own account of this bright passage in his existence. In the morning, when he came down to Westminster, he had some natural qualms.

"And to comfort myself did go to the Dog and drink half a pint of mulled sack, — and in the hall did drink a dram of brandy at Mrs. Hewlett's! and with the warmth of this did find myself in better order as to courage, truly."

He spoke three hours and a half, "as comfortably as if I had been at my own table," and ended soon after three in the afternoon; but it was not thought fit to put the vote that day, "many members having gone out to dinner, and come in again half drunk." Next morning his glory opens on him.

"6th. Up betimes, and with Sir D. Gauden to Sir W. Coventry's chamber; where the first word he said to me was, 'Good-morrow, Mr. Pepys, that must be Speaker of the Parliament House:' and did protest I had got honour for ever in parliament. He said that his brother, that sat by him, admires me; and another gentleman said that I could not get less than a 1000*l.* a year, if I would *put on a gown and plead at the Chancery-bar.* But what pleases me most, he tells me that the Solicitor-generall did protest that he thought *I spoke the best of any man in England.* My

Lord Barkeley did cry me up for what they had heard of it; and others, Parliament-men there about the King, did say that *they never heard such a speech in their lives*, delivered in that manner. From thence I went to Westminster Hall; where I met with Mr. G. Montagu, who came to me and kissed me, and told me that he had often heretofore kissed my hands, but now he would *kiss my lips*; protesting that *I was another Cicero*; and said all the world *said the same* of me. Mr. Godolphin; Mr. Sands, who swore he would go twenty miles at any time to hear the like again, and that he never saw so many sit four hours together to hear any man in his life as there did to hear me. Mr. Chichly, Sir John Duncomb, and every body do say that *the kingdom will ring of my abilities*, and that I have done myself right for my whole life; and so Captain Coke and others of my friends say that *no man* had ever such an opportunity of making his abilities known. And that I may cite all at once, Mr. Lieutenant of the Tower did tell me that Mr. Vaughan did protest to him, and that in his hearing said so to the Duke of Albemarle, and afterwards to Sir W. Coventry, that he had sat twenty-six years in Parliament and *never heard such a speech there before!* for which the Lord God make me thankful! and that I may make use of it, not to pride and vainglory, but that, now I have this esteem, I may do nothing that may lessen it!"

There is a great deal more of this—but we have given rather too much space already to Mr. Pepys's individual concerns: and must turn now to something of more public interest. Before taking leave of private life, however, we may notice one or two things, that we collect incidentally, as to the manners and habits of the times. The playhouses, of which there seem to have been at least three, opened apparently soon after noon—though the entertainments often lasted till late in the night—but we cannot make out whether they were ever exhibited by daylight. The pit, in some of them at least, must have been uncovered; for our author speaks repeatedly of being annoyed in that place by rain and hail. For several years after the Restoration, women's parts were done by boys,—though there seem always to have been female singers. The hour of dinner was almost always twelve; and men seem generally to have sat at table with their hats on. The wines mostly in use appear to have been the Spanish white wines—both sweet and dry—some clarets—but no port. It seems still to have been a custom to go down to drink in the cellar. The Houses of Parliament met, like the courts of law, at nine, and generally adjourned at noon. The style of dress seems to have been very variable, and very costly—periwigs appear not to have been introduced, even at court, till 1663—and the still greater abomination of hair powder not to have been yet dreamed of. Much of the outskirts of the town, and the greater part of Westminster, were not paved—and the police seems to have been very deficient, as the author frequently speaks of the *danger* of returning from Whitehall and that neighbourbood to the city early in the evening—no lamps in the streets. Some curious notices of prices might be collected out of these volumes—but we have noted but a few. Coaches seem to have been common, and very cheap—our author gets a very handsome one for 32*l.* On the other hand, he pays 4*l.* 10*s.* for a beaver, and as much for a wig. Pictures too seem to have brought large prices, considering the value of money and the small proportion of the people who could then have any knowledge of the art. He pays 25*l.* for a portrait of his wife, and 30*l.* for a miniature, besides eight guineas for the setting—and mentions a flower-piece for which the painter refused 70*l.* We may take leave of him and his housekeeping, by inserting his account of two great dinners he seems to have given—both which he appears to have regarded as matters of very weighty concernment. As to the first he says—

"My head being full of to-morrow's dinner, went to my Lord Crewe's, there to invite Sir Thomas, &c. Thence home; and there find one laying of my napkins against to-morrow in figures of all sorts; which is mighty pretty; and it seems it is his trade, and he gets much money by it.—14th. Up very betimes, and with Jane to Levett's, there to conclude upon our dinner; and thence to the pewterer's to buy a pewter sesterne, which I have ever hitherto been without. Anon comes my company, viz. my Lord Hinchingbroke and his lady, Sir Philip Carteret and his .. y, Godolphin and my cosen Roger, and Creed: and mighty merry; and by and by to dinner, which was very good and plentiful (and I should have said, and Mr. George Montagu, who came at a very little warning, which was exceedingly kind of him). And there, among other things, my lord had Sir Samuel Morland's late invention for casting up of sums of £ *s.* *d.*; which is very pretty, but not very useful. Most of our discourse was of my Lord Sandwich and his family, as being all of us of the family. And with

extraordinary pleasure all the afternoon, thus together eating and looking over my closet."

The next seems to have been still more solemn and successful.

"23d. To the office till noon, when word brought me that my Lord Sandwich was come; so I presently rose, and there I found my Lords Sandwich, Peterborough, and Sir Charles Harbord; and presently after them comes my Lord Hinchingbroke, Mr. Sidney, and Sir William Godolphin. And after greeting them and some time spent in talk, dinner was brought up, one dish after another, but a dish at a time; but all so good! But, above all things, the variety of wines and excellent of their kind I had for them, and all in so good order, that they were mightily pleased, and myself full of content at it: and indeed it was, of a dinner of about six or eight dishes, as noble as any man need to have, I think; at least, all was done in the noblest manner that ever I had any, and I have rarely seen in my life better any where else, even at the Court. After dinner my lords to cards, and the rest of us sitting about them and talking, and looking on my books and pictures, and my wife's drawings, which they commended mightily: and mighty merry all day long, with exceeding great content, and so till seven at night; and so took their leaves, it being dark and foul weather. Thus was this entertainment over—the best of its kind and the fullest of honour and content to me that ever I had in my life; and I shall not easily have so good again."

On turning to the political or historical parts of this record, we are rather disappointed in finding so little that is curious or interesting in that earliest portion of it which carries us through the whole work of the Restoration. Though there are almost daily entries from the 1st of January 1659, and though the author was constantly in communication with persons in public situations — was personally introduced to the King at the Hague, and came home in the same ship with him, it is wonderful how few particulars of any moment he has been enabled to put down; and how little the tone of his journal exhibits of that interest and anxiety which we are apt to imagine must have been universal during the dependence of so momentous a revolution. Even this barrenness, however, is not without instruction — and illustrates by a new example how insensible the contemporaries of great transactions often are of their importance, and how much more posterity sees of their character than those who were parties to them. We have already observed that the author's own political predilections are scarcely distinguishable till he is embarked in the fleet to bring home the King — and the greater part of those with whom he converses seem to have been nearly as undecided. Monk is spoken of throughout with considerable contempt and aversion; and among many instances of his duplicity, it is recorded that upon the 21st day of February 1660, he came to Whitehall, "and there made a speech to them, recommending to them *a Commonwealth*, and *against* Charles Stuart." The feeling of the city is represented, no doubt, as extremely hostile to the Parliament (here uniformly called the Rump); but their aspirations are not said to be directed to royalty, but merely to a free Parliament and the dissolution of the existing junto. So late as the month of March our author observes, "Great is the talk of a single person. Charles, George, or Richard again. For *the last* of which my Lord St. John is said to speak very high. Great also is the dispute in the House, in whose name the writs shall issue for the new Parliament." It is a comfort, however, to find, in a season of such universal dereliction of principle, that signal perfidy, even to the cause of the republic, is visited with general scorn. A person of the name of Morland, who had been employed under the Protector in the Secretary of State's office, had been in the habit of betraying his trust, and communicating privately with the exiled monarch — and, upon now resorting to him, had been graced with the honour of knighthood. Even our cold-hearted chronicler speaks thus of this deserter:

"Mr. Morland, now Sir Samuel, was here on board; but I do not find that my lord or any body did give him any respect — he being looked upon by him and all men as a knave. Among others he betrayed Sir Rich. Willis that married Dr. F. Jones's daughter, who had paid him 1000*l.* at one time, by the Protector's and Secretary Thurloe's order, for intelligence that he sent concerning the King."

And there is afterwards a similar expression of honest indignation against "that perfidious rogue Sir G. Downing," who, though he had served in the Parliamentary army under Okey, yet now volunteered to go after him and Corbet, with the King's warrant, to Holland, and succeeded in bringing them back as prisoners, to their death — and had the impudence, when there, to make a speech to "the

Lords States of Holland, telling them to their faces that he observed that he was not received with the respect and observance *now*, that he was when he came from the *traitor and rebell Cromwell!* by whom, I am sure, he hath got all he hath in the world, — and they know it too."

When our author is presented to the King, he very simply puts down, that "he seems to be a very sober man!" This, however, probably referred only to his dress and equipment; which, from the following extract, seems to have been homely enough, even for a republic.

"This afternoon Mr. Edward Pickering told me in what a sad, poor *condition* for *clothes* and money the King was, and all his attendants, when he came to him first from my lord; their clothes *not being worth forty shillings* — the best of them. And how overjoyed the King was when Sir J. Greenville brought him some money; so joyful, that he called the Princess Royal and Duke of York to look upon it, as it lay in the portmanteau before it was taken out."

On the voyage home the names of the ships are changed — and to be sure the *Richard*, the *Naseby*, and the *Dunbar*, were not very fit to bear the royal flag — nor even the *Speaker* or the *Lambert*. There is a long account of the landing, and a still longer, of Lord Sandwich's investment with the Order of the Garter; but we do not find any thing of moment recorded, till we come to the condemnation and execution of the regicides — a pitiful and disgusting departure from the broad principle of amnesty, upon the basis of which alone any peaceful restoration could be contemplated, after so long and so unequivocally national a suspension of royalty. It is disgusting to find, that Monk sate on the bench, while his companions in arms, Harrison, Hacker, and Axtell, were arraigned for the treasons in which he and they had been associated. Our author records the whole transactions with the most perfect indifference, and with scarcely a remark — for example,

"13th. I went out to Charing Cross, to see Major-General Harrison hanged, drawn, and quartered; which was done there; he looking as *cheerful!* as any man could do in that condition. — 18th. This morning, it being expected that Colonel Hacker and Axtell should die, I went to Newgate, but found they were reprieved till to-morrow. — 19th. This morning my dining-room was finished with greene serge hanging and gilt leather, which is very handsome. This morning Hacker and Axtell were hanged and quartered, as the rest are."

He is, to be sure, a little *troubled*, as he expresses it, at the disinterring and gibbeting of Cromwell's dead and festering body — thinking it unfit that "a man of so great courage as he was, should have that dishonour — though otherwise he might deserve it — enough!" He does not fail, however, to attend the rest of the executions, and to describe them as spectacles of ordinary occurrence — thus:

"19th. This morning, before we sat, I went to Aldgate; and at the corner shop, a draper's, I stood, and did see Barkestead, Okey, and Corbet drawn towards the gallows at Tiburne; and there they were hanged and quartered. *They all looked very cheerful!* but I hear they all die defending what they did to the King to be just; which is very strange!"

"14th. About eleven o'clock, having a room got ready for us, we all went out to the Tower Hill; and there, over against the scaffold, made on purpose this day, saw Sir Henry Vane brought. A very great press of people. He made a long speech, many times interrupted by the sheriffe and others there: and they would have taken his paper out of his hand, but he would not let it go. But they caused all the books of those that writ after him to be given to the sheriffe; and the trumpets were brought under the scaffold that he might not be heard. Then he prayed, and so fitted himself, and received the blow; but the scaffold was so crowded that we could not see it done. He had a blister, or issue, upon his neck, which *he desired them not to hurt!* He changed not his colour or speech to the last, but died justifying himself and the cause he had stood for; and spoke very confidently of his being presently at the right hand of Christ; and in all things appeared the most resolved man that ever died in that manner."

In spite of those rigorous measures, the author very soon gets disgusted with "the lewdness, beggary, and wastefulness," of the new government — and after sagaciously remarking, that "I doubt our new Lords of the Council do not mind things as *the late powers* did — but their pleasure or profit more," he proceeds to make the following striking remarks on the ruinous policy, adopted on this, and many other restorations, of excluding the only men really acquainted with business, on the score of their former opposition to the party in power.

"From that we discoursed of the evil of putting out men of experience in business, and of the condition of the King's party at present, who, as the Papists, though otherwise fine persons, yet being by law kept

for these fourscore years out of employment, they are now *wholly uncapable* of business; and *so the Cavaliers*, for twenty years, who for the most part have either given themselves over to look after country and family business, and those the best of them, and the rest to debauchery, &c.; and that was it that hath made him high against the late bill brought into the House for the making all men incapable of employment *that had served against the King*. People, says he, in the sea-service, it is impossible to do any thing without them, there being not more than three men of the whole King's side that are fit to command almost; and these were Captn. Allen, Smith, and Beech; and it may be Holmes, and Utber; and Batts might do something."

In his account of another conversation with the same shrewd observer, he gives the following striking picture of the different temper and moral character of the old Republican soldiers, as contrasted with those of the Royalists. Of the former he reports —

"Let the King think what he will, it is *them* that must help him in the day of warr. For generally they are the most substantiall sort of people, and the soberest; and did desire me to observe it to my Lord Sandwich, among other things, that *of all the old army* now you cannot see a man *begging* about the street; but what? you shall have this captain turned a shoemaker; this lieutenant a baker; this a brewer; that a haberdasher; this common soldier a porter; and every man in his apron and frock, &c., as if they had never done any thing else: whereas the other go with their belts and swords, *swearing and cursing, and stealing*; running into people's houses, by force oftentimes, to carry away something; and this is the difference between the temper of one and the other; and concludes (and I think with some reason), that the spirit of the old Parliament soldiers are so quiet and contented with God's providences, that the King is safer from any evil meant him by them, one thousand times more than from his own discontented Cavaliers. And then to the publick management of business: it is done, as he observes, so loosely and so carelessly, that the kingdom can never be happy with it, every man looking after himself, and his own lust and luxury."

The following is also very remarkable.

"It is strange how every body now-a-days *do reflect upon Oliver, and commend him*; what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him; while here a prince, come in with all the love and prayers and good liking of his people, who have given greater signs of loyalty and willingness to serve him with their estates than ever was done by any people, *hath lost all so soon*, that it is a miracle that a man could devise to lose so much in so little time."

The following particulars of the condition of the Protector's family are curious, and probably authentic. The conversation is in the end of 1664.

"In my way to Brampton in this day's journey I met with Mr. White, Cromwell's chaplain that was, and had a great deal of discourse with him. Among others, he tells me that Richard is, and hath long been, in France, and is now going into Italy. He owns publickly that he do correspond, and return him all his money. That Richard hath been in some straits in the beginning; but relieved by his friends. That he goes by another name, but do not disguise himself, nor deny himself to any man that challenges him. He tells me for certain, that offers had been made to *the old man*, of marriage *between the king and his daughter*, to have obliged him — *but he would not*. He thinks (with me) that it never was in his power to bring in the King with the consent of any of his officers about him; and that he *scorned* to bring him in *as Monk did, to secure himself and deliver every body else*. When I told him of what I found writ in a French book of one Monsieur Sorbiere, that gives an account of his observations here in England; among other things he says, that it is reported that Cromwell did, in his lifetime, transpose many of the bodies of the kings of England from one grave to another; and that by that means it is not known certainly whether the head that is now set upon a post be that of Cromwell, or of one of the kings; Mr. White tells me that he believes he never had so poor a low thought in him, to trouble himself about it. He says the hand of God is much to be seen; that all his children are in good condition enough as to estate, and that their relations that betrayed their family are all now either hanged or very miserable."

The most frequent and prolific topic in the whole book, next perhaps to that of dress, is the profligacy of the court — or what may fairly be denominated court scandal. It would be endless, and not very edifying, to attempt any thing like an abstract of the shameful immoralities which this loyal author has recorded of the two royal brothers, and the greater part of their favourites — at the same time, that they occupy so great a part of the work, that we cannot well give an account of it without some notice of them. The reader will probably be satisfied with the following specimens, taken almost at random.

"In the Privy Garden saw the finest smocks and linen petticoats of my Lady Castlemaine's, laced with rich lace at the bottom, that ever I saw; *and did me good to look at them*. Sarah told me how the King dined at my lady Castlemaine's, and supped, every day and night the last week; and that the night that the bonfires were made for joy of the *Queene's arrivall*, the King was *there*. But there was no fire at her door, though at all the rest of the doors almost in the

street; which was much observed: and that the King and she did send for *a pair of scales* and *weighed one another;* and she, being with child, was said to be heaviest."

"Mr. Pickering tells me the story is very true of a child being dropped at the ball at Court; and that the King had it in his closet a week after, and *did dissect* it; and making great sport of it, said that in his opinion it must have been a month and three houres old; and that, whatever others think, he hath the greatest loss (it being a boy, as he says), that hath lost a subject by the business." — "He told me also how loose the Court is, nobody looking after business, but every man his lust and gain; and how the King is now become so besotted upon Mrs. Stewart, that he gets into corners, and will be with her half an hour together kissing her to the observation of all the world; and she now stays by herself and expects it, as my Lady Castlemaine did use to do; to whom the King, he says, is still kind," &c.

"Coming to St. James's, I hear that the Queene did sleep five hours pretty well to-night. The King they all say is most fondly disconsolate for her, and weeps by her, which makes her weep: which one this day told me he reckons a good sign, for that it carries away some rheum from the head! She tells us that the Queene's sickness is the spotted fever; that she was as full of the spots as a leopard: which is very strange that it should be no more known; but perhaps it is not so. And that the King do seem to take it much to heart, for that he hath wept before her; but *for all that, he hath not missed one night* since she was sick, of supping with my lady Castlemaine! which I believe is true, for she says that her husband hath dressed the suppers every night; and I confess I saw him myself coming through the street dressing up a great supper to-night, which Sarah says is also for the King and her; which is a very strange thing."

"Pierce do tell me, among other news, the late frolic and debauchery of Sir Charles Sedley and Buckhurst running up and down all night, almost naked, through the streets; and at last fighting, and being beat by the watch and clapped up all night; and how the King takes their parts; and my Lord Chief Justice Keeling hath laid the constable by the heels to answer it next sessions; which is a horrid shame. Also how the King and these gentlemen did make the fiddlers of Thetford, this last progress, to sing them all the obscene songs they could think of! That the King was drunk at Saxam with Sedley, Buckhurst, &c. the night that my Lord Arlington came thither, and would not give him audience, or *could not:* which is true, for it was the night that I was there, and saw the King go up to his chamber, and was told that the King had been drinking." — "He tells me that the King and my Lady Castlemaine are quite broke off, and she is gone away, and is with child, and swears the king shall own it; and she will have it christened in the chapel at White Hall so, and owned for the King's, as other kings have done; or she will bring it into White Hall gallery, *and dash the brains of it out before the King's face!* He tells me that the King and court were never in the world so bad as they are now, for gaming, swearing, women, and drinking, and the most abominable vices that ever were in the world; so that all must come to nought."

"They came to Sir G. Cartaret's house at Cranbourne, and there were entertained, and *all made drunk;* and, being all drunk, Armerer did come to the King, and swore to him by God, 'Sir,' says he, 'you are not so kind to the Duke of York of late as you used to be.' — 'Not I?' says the King. 'Why so?' — 'Why,' says he, 'if you are, let us drink his health.'— 'Why let us,' says the King. Then he fell on his knees and drank it; and having done, the King began to drink it. 'Nay, sir,' says Armerer, 'by God you must do it on your knees!' So he did, and then all the company: and having done it, all fell a crying for joy, *being all maudling and kissing one another!* the King the Duke of York, and the Duke of York the King! and in such a maudling pickle as never people were; and so passed the day!"

It affords us no pleasure, however, to expose these degrading traits — even in departed royalty; but it is of more consequence to mark the political vices to which they so naturally led. The following entry, on the King's adjourning the Parliament in 1667, gives such a picture of the court policy, as makes one wonder how the Revolution could have been so long deferred.

"Thus they are dismissed again, to their general great distaste, I believe the greatest that ever Parliament was, to see themselves so fooled, and the nation in certain condition of ruin, while the King, they see, is only governed by his lust, and women, and rogues about him. They do all give up the kingdom for lost, that I speak to; and do hear *what the king says,* how he and the Duke of York do DO WHAT THEY CAN TO GET UP AN ARMY, THAT THEY MAY NEED NO MORE PARLIAMENTS: and how my Lady Castlemaine hath, before the late breach between her and the King, said to the King *that he must rule by an army* or *all would be lost!* I am told that many petitions were provided for the Parliament, complaining of the wrongs they have received from the court and courtiers, in city and country, if the Parliament had but sat: and I do perceive they all do resolve to have a good account of the money spent, before ever they give a farthing more; and the whole kingdom is every where sensible of their being abused," &c.

The following confirmation of these speculations is still more characteristic, both of the parties and their chronicler.

"And so she (Lady Castlemaine) is come to-day, when one would think his mind should be full of some other cares, having but this morning broken up such a Parliament with so much discontent and so many wants upon him, and but yesterday heard *such a ser-*

mon against adultery! But it seems she hath told the King, that whoever did get it, he should own it. And the bottom of the quarrel is this: — she is fallen in love with young Jermin, who hath of late been with her oftener than the King, and is now going to marry my Lady Falmouth; the King is mad at her entertaining Jermin, and she is mad at Jermin's going to marry from her: so they are all mad! — and thus the kingdom is governed! But he tells me for certain that nothing is more sure than that the King, and Duke of York, and the Chancellor, are desirous and labouring all they can *to get an army*, whatever the King says to the Parliament; and he believes that they are at last resolved to stand and fall all three together."

A little after we find traces of another project of the same truly legitimate school.

"The great discourse now is, that the Parliament shall be dissolved and another called, which *shall give the King the dean and chapter lands*; and that will put him out of debt. And it is said that Buckingham do knowingly meet daily with Wildman and other Commonwealth-men; and that when he is with *them* he makes the King believe that he is with his wenches."

The next notice of this is in the form of a confidential conversation with a person of great intelligence.

"And he told me, upon my several inquiries to that purpose, that he did believe that it was not yet resolved *whether the Parliament should ever meet more or no*, the three great rulers of things now standing thus:—The Duke of Buckingham is *absolutely against their meeting*, as moved thereto by his people that he advises with, the *people of the late times*, who do never expect to have any thing done by this Parliament for their religion, and who do propose that, by the sale of the church lands, they shall be able to put the King out of debt, &c. He tells me that he is really persuaded that the design of the Duke of Buckingham is, to bring the state into such a condition as, if the King do die without issue, it shall, upon his death, *break into pieces again*; and *so put by the Duke of York*, — whom they have disobliged, they know, to that degree as to despair of his pardon. He tells me that there is no way to rule the King but by *brisknesse*, — which the Duke of Buckingham hath above all men; and that the Duke of York having it not, *his* best way is what he practises, — that is to say, a good temper, which will support him till the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Arlington fall out, which cannot be long first; the former knowing that the latter did, in the time of the Chancellor, endeavour with the Chancellor to *hang him* at that time, when he was proclaimed against."

And again —

"The talk which these people about our King have, is to tell him how neither privilege of parliament nor city is any thing; *but that his will is all, and ought to be so:* and their discourse it seems, when they are alone, is so base and sordid, that it makes the eares of the very gentlemen of the back stairs (I think he called them) to tingle to hear it spoke in the King's hearing; *and that must be very bad indeed.*"

The following is not so material as to doctrine — though we think it very curious.

"After the bills passed, the King, sitting on his throne, with his speech writ in a paper which he held in his lap, and scarce looked off of it all the time he made his speech to them, giving them thanks for their subsidys, of which, *had he not need*, he would not have asked or received them; and that need, *not from any extravagancys of his*, he was sure, in any thing! — but the disorders of the times. His speech was very plain; nothing at all of spirit in it, nor spoke with any; but rather on the contrary imperfectly, repeating many time his words, though he read all: which I am sorry to see, it having not been hard for him to have got all the speech without booke." — And upon another occasion, "I crowded in and heard the King's speech to them; but *he speaks the worst that ever I heard man in my life:* worse than if he read it all, and he had it in writing in his hand."

It is observed soon after — viz. in 1664 — as a singular thing that there should be but two seamen in Parliament — and not above twenty or thirty merchants: and yet from various intimations we gather that the deportment of this aristocratical assembly was by no means very decorous. We have already had the incidental notice of many members coming in from dinner half drunk, on the day of the author's great oration — and some of them appear now and then to have gone a little farther, — early as the hours of business then were.

"He did tell me, and so did Sir W. Batten, how Sir Allen Brodericke and Sir Allen Apsly did come *drunk* the other day into the House; and did both speak for half an hour, together, and could not be either laughed, or pulled, or bid to sit down and hold their peace, — to the great contempt of King's servants and cause; which I am grieved at with all my heart."

The mingled extravagance and penury of this disorderly court is strikingly illustrated by two entries, not far from each other, in the year 1667 — in one of which is recorded the royal wardrobeman's pathetic lamentation over the King's necessities — representing that his Majesty has "actually no handkerchiefs, and but three bands to his neck" — and that he does not know where to take up a yard of linen for his service! — and the other setting

forth, that his said Majesty had lost 25,000*l.* in one night at play with Lady Castlemaine — and staked 1000*l.* and 1500*l.* on a cast. It is a far worse trait, however, in his character, that he was by no means scrupulous as to the pretexts upon which he obtained money from his people — these memoirs containing repeated notices of accounts deliberately falsified for this purpose — and not a few in particular, in which the expenses of the navy are exaggerated — we are afraid, not without our author's co-operation — to cover the misapplication of the money voted for that most popular branch of the service, to very different purposes. In another royal imposture, our author now appears to have been also implicated, though in a manner far less derogatory to his personal honour, — we mean in procuring for the Duke of York, the credit which he has obtained with almost all our historians, for his great skill in maritime affairs; and the extraordinary labour which he bestowed in improving the condition of the navy. On this subject we need do little more than transcribe the decisive statement of the noble Editor, to whose care we are indebted for the publication before us; and who, in the summary of Mr. Pepys's life which he has prefixed to it, observes —

"Mr. Stanier Clarke, in particular, actually dwells upon the essential and lasting benefit which that monarch conferred on his country, by *building up and regenerating the naval power;* and asserts as *a proof of the King's great ability,* that *the regulations still enforced under the orders of the admiralty are nearly the same as those originally drawn up by him.* It becomes due therefore to Mr. Pepys to explain that for these improvements, the value of which no person can doubt, we are indebted *to him,* and *not* to his royal master. To establish this fact, it is only necessary to refer to the MSS. connected with the subject in the Bodleian and Pepysian libraries, by which the extent of Mr. Pepys's official labours can alone be appreciated; and we even find in the Diary, as early as 1668, that a long letter of regulation, produced before the commissioners of the navy by the Duke of York, *as his own composition,* was entirely written by our clerk of the acts." — (I. xxx.)

We do not know whether the citations we have now made from these curious and most miscellaneous volumes, will enable our readers to form a just estimate of their value. But we fear that, at all events, we cannot now indulge them with any considerable addition to their number. There is a long account of the great fire, and the great sickness in 1666, and a still longer one of the insulting advance of the Dutch fleet to Chatham in 1667, as well as of our absurd settlement at Tangiers, and of various naval actions during the period to which the Diary extends. But, though all these contain much curious matter, we are not tempted to make any extracts: both because the accounts, being given in the broken and minute way which belongs to the form of a Diary, do not afford many striking or summary passages, and because what is new in them, is not for the most part of any great importance. The public besides has been lately pretty much satiated with details on most of those subjects, in the contemporary work of Evelyn, — of which we shall only say, that though its author was indisputably more of a gentleman, a scholar, and a man of taste than our actuary, it is far inferior, both in interest, curiosity, and substantial instruction, to that which we are now considering. The two authors, however, we are happy to find, were great friends; and no name is mentioned, in the latter part of the Diary, with more uniform respect and affection than that of Evelyn — though it is very edifying to see how the shrewd, practical sagacity of the man of business revenges itself on the assumed superiority of the philosopher and man of letters. In this respect we think there is a fine keeping of character in the sincerity of the following passage —

"By water to Deptford, and there made a visit to Mr. Evelyn, who among other things, showed me most excellent painting in little; in distemper, Indian incke, water colours; graveing; and above all, the whole mezzo-tinto, and the manner of it, which is very pretty, and good things done with it. He read to me very much also of his discourse, he hath been many years and now is about, about Gardenage; which is a most noble and pleasant piece. He read me part of a play or two of his own making, — *very good, but not as he conceits them,* I think to be. He showed me his Hortus Hyemalis; leaves laid up in a book of several plants kept dry, which preserve colour, however, and look very finely, better than an herball. In fine a most excellent person he is — *and must be allowed a little for a little conceitedness;* but he may well be so, being a man so much above others. He read me, *though with too much gusto,* some little poems of his own *that were not transcendant;* yet one or two very pretty epigrams; among others, of a lady looking in a grate, and being pecked at by an eagle that was there."

And a little after he chuckles not a little over his learned friend's failure, in a speculation about making bricks — concluding very sagely, "so that I see the most ingenious men may sometimes be mistaken!"

We meet with the *names* of many distinguished men in these pages, and some characteristic anecdotes,— but few bold characters. He has a remarkable interview with Clarendon — in which the cautious and artful demeanour of that veteran politician is finely displayed, though on a very trivial occasion. The Navy Board had marked some trees for cutting in Clarendon Park without his leave — at which he had expressed great indignation; and our author went, in a prodigious fright, to pacify him. He found him busy hearing causes in his chambers, and was obliged to wait.

"After all done, he himself called, 'Come, Mr. Pepys, you and I will take a turn in the garden.' So he was led down stairs, having the goute, and there walked with me, I think above an hour, talking *most friendly, yet cunningly!* — He told me he would not direct me in any thing, that it might not be said that the Lord Chancellor did labour to abuse the King; or (as I offered) direct the suspending the report of the purveyors: *but I see what he means*, and will make it my work to do him service in it. But Lord! to see how we poor wretches dare not do the King good service, for fear of the greatness of these men!"

There is no *literary* intelligence of any value to be gained from this work. Play collectors will probably find the names of many lost pieces — but of our classical authors there are no notices worth naming — a bare intimation of the deaths of Waller, Cowley, and Davenant, and a few words of Dryden — Milton, we think, not once mentioned. There is more of the natural philosophers of Gresham College, but not much that is valuable — some curious calculations and speculations about money and coinages — and this odd but authentic notice of Sir W. Petty's intended will.

"Sir William Petty did tell me that in good earnest he hath in his will left some parts of his estate to him that could invent such and such things. As among others, that could discover truly the way of milk coming into the breasts of a woman! and he that could invent proper characters to express to another the mixture of relishes and tastes. And says, that to him that invents gold, he gives nothing for the philosopher's stone; for (says he) they that find out that, will be able to pay themselves. But, says he, by this means it is better than to go to a lecture; for here my executors, that must part with this, will be sure to be well convinced of the invention before they do part with their money."

The Appendix, which seems very judiciously selected, contains some valuable fragments of historical information: but we have not now left ourselves room for any account of them; and are tempted to give all we can yet spare to a few extracts from a very curious correspondence between Mr. Pepys and Lord Reay and Lord Tarbut in 1699, on the subject of the Second Sight among our Highlanders. Lord Reay seems to have been a firm believer in this gift or faculty — but Lord Tarbut had been a decided sceptic, and was only converted by the proofs of its reality, which occurred to himself while in the Highlands, in the year 1652 and afterwards. Some of the stories he tells are not a little remarkable. For example, he says, that one night when one of his Celtic attendants was entering a house where they had proposed to sleep, he suddenly started back with a scream, and fell down in an agony.

"I asked what the matter was, for he seemed to me to be very much frighted: he told me very seriously that I should not lodge in that house, because shortly a dead coffin would be carried out of it, for many were carrying it when he was heard cry! I neglecting his words and staying there, he said to others of the servants he was very sorry for it, and that what he saw would surely come to pass: and though no sick person was then there, yet the landlord, a healthy Highlander, *died of an apoplectic fit before I left the house.*"

Another occurred in 1653, when, in a very rugged part of the country, he fell in with a man who was staring into the air with marks of great agitation. Upon asking what it was that disturbed him, he answered,

"'I see a troop of Englishmen leading their horses down that hill — and some of them are already in the plain, eating the barley which is growing in the field near to the hill.' This was on the 4th of May (for I noted the day), and it was four or five days *before any barley was sown* in the field he spoke of. Alexander Monro asked him how he knew they were Englishmen: he answered, because they were leading horses, and had on hats and boots, which he knew no Scotchmen would have on there. We took little notice of the whole story as other than a foolish vision, but wished that an English party were there, we being then at war with them, and the place almost inaccessible for horsemen. But the *beginning of August thereafter*, the Earl of Middleton, then lieutenant for

the King in the Highlands, having occasion to march a party of his towards the South Islands, sent his foot through a place called Inverlacwell, and the forepart, which was first down the hill, did fall to eating the barley which was on the little plain under it."

Another of his lordship's experiences was as follows. In January 1682, he was sitting with two friends in a house in Ross-shire, when a man from the islands

"Desired me to rise from that chair, for it was an unlucky one. I asked 'Why?' He answered, 'Because there was a dead man in the chair next to it.' —'Well,' said I, 'if it be but in the next, I may safely sit here: but what is the likeness of the man?' He said he was a tall man with a long grey coat, booted, and one of his legs hanging over the chair, and his head hanging down to the other side, and his arm backward, as it were broken. There were then some English troops quartered near the place, and there being at that time a great frost after a thaw, the country was wholly covered over with ice. Four or five Englishmen riding by this house, not two hours after the vision, where we were sitting by the fire, we heard a great noise, which proved to be these troopers, with the help of other servants, carrying in one of their number who had got a very mischievous fall and had his arm broke; and falling frequently into swooning fits, they brought him to the hall, and set him *in the very chair and in the very posture* which the seer had proposed: *but the man did not die*, though he revived with great difficulty."

These instances are chiefly remarkable as being given upon the personal knowledge of an individual of great judgment, acuteness, and firmness of character. The following is from a still higher quarter; since the reporter was not even a Scotchman, and indeed no less a person than Lord Clarendon. In a letter to Mr. Pepys in 1701, he informs him, that, in 1661, upon a Scottish gentleman being in his presence introduced to Lady Cornbury, he was observed to gaze upon her with a singular expression of melancholy; and upon one of the company asking the reason, he replied, "I see her *in blood!*" She was at that time in perfect health, and remained so for near a month, when she fell ill of small-pox: and

"Upon the ninth day after the small-pox appeared, in the morning, she *bled* at the nose, which quickly stopt; but in the afternoon the blood burst out again with great violence at her nose and mouth, and about eleven of the clock that night she dyed, *almost weltering in her blood!*"

There is a great number of similar stories, reported on the most imposing testimony—though, in some instances, the seer, we must say, is somewhat put to it to support his credit, and make out the accomplishment of his vision. One chieftain, for instance, had long been seen by the gifted, with an arrow sticking in his thigh; from which they all inferred that he was either to die or to suffer greatly, from a wound in that place. To their surprise, however, he died of some other infliction, and the seers were getting out of reputation; when luckily a fray arose *at the funeral*, and an arrow was shot fairly through the thigh of the dead man, in the very spot where the vision had shown it! On another occasion, Lord Reay's grandfather was told that he had been seen with a dagger run into his breast—and though nothing ever happened to him, one of his servants, to whom he had given *the doublet* which he wore at the time of this intimation, was stabbed through it, in the very place where the dagger had been seen. Lord Reay adds the following additional instance, of this glancing, as it were, of the prophecy on the outer garment.

"John Macky, of Dilril, having put on a new suit of clothes, was told by a seer that he did see the gallows upon his coat, which he never noticed; but some time after *gave his coat* to his servant, William Forbess, to whose honesty there could be nothing said at that time; but he was shortly after hanged for theft, *with the same coat about him:* my informer being an eyewitness of his execution, and one who had heard what the seer said before."

His Lordship also mentions, that these visions were seen by *blind* people, as well as those who had sight,—and adds, that there was a blind woman in this time who had the faculty in great perfection; and foretold many things that afterwards happened, as hundreds of living witnesses could attest. We have no time now to speculate on these singular legends —but, as curious *mementos* of the lubricity of human testimony, we think it right they should be once more brought into notice.

And now we have done with Mr. Pepys. There is trash enough no doubt in his journal, —trifling facts, and silly observations in abundance. But we can scarcely say that we wish it a page shorter; and are of opinion, that there is very little of it which does not help us to understand the character of his times, and his contemporaries, better than we should ever

have done without it; and make us feel more assured that we comprehend the great historical events of the age, and the people who bore a part in them. Independent of instruction altogether too, there is no denying, that it is very entertaining thus to be transported into the very heart of a time so long gone by; and to be admitted into the domestic intimacy, as well as the public councils, of a man of great activity and circulation in the reign of Charles II. Reading this book, in short, seems to us to be quite as good as living with Mr. Samuel Pepys in his proper person, — and though the court scandal may be detailed with more grace and vivacity in the Mémoires de Grammont, we have no doubt that even this part of his multifarious subject is treated with far greater fidelity and fairness in the work before us — while it gives us more clear and undistorted glimpses into the true English life of the times — for the court was substantially foreign — than all the other memorials of them put together, that have come down to our own.

The book is rather too dear and magnificent. But the editor's task we think excellently performed. The ample text is not incumbered with ostentatious commentaries. But very brief and useful notices are supplied of almost all the individuals who are mentioned; and an admirable and very minute index is subjoined, which methodises the immense miscellany — and places the vast chaos at our disposal.

CHARLES JAMES FOX.

(July, 1808.)

A History of the early Part of the Reign of James the Second; with an Introductory Chapter. By the Right Honourable Charles James Fox. To which is added an Appendix. 4to. pp. 340. Miller, London: 1808.

If it be true that high expectation is almost always followed by disappointment, it is scarcely possible that the readers of Mr. Fox's history should not be disappointed. So great a statesman certainly has not appeared as an author since the time of Lord Clarendon; and, independent of the great space which he fills in the recent history of this country, and the admitted splendour of his general talents, — his known zeal for liberty, the fame of his eloquence, and his habitual study of every thing relating to the constitution, concurred to direct an extraordinary degree of attention to the work upon which he was known to be engaged, and to fix a standard of unattainable excellence for the trial of his first acknowledged production. The very circumstance of his not having published any considerable work during his life, and of his having died before bringing this to a conclusion, served to increase the general curiosity; and to accumulate upon this single fragment the interest of his whole literary existence.

No human production, we suppose, could bear to be tried by such a test; and those who sit down to the perusal of the work before us, under the influence of such impressions, are very likely to rise disappointed. With those, however, who are at all on their guard against the delusive effect of these natural emotions, the result, we venture to predict, will be different; and for ourselves, we are happy to say, that we have not been disappointed at all; but, on the contrary, very greatly moved and delighted with the greater part of this singular volume.

We do not think it has any great value as a history; nor is it very admirable as a piece of composition. It comprehends too short a period, and includes too few events, to add much to our knowledge of facts; and abounds too little with splendid passages to lay much hold on the imagination. The reflections which it contains, too, are generally more remarkable for their truth and simplicity, than for any great fineness or apparent profundity of thinking; and many opportunities are neglected, or rather purposely declined, of entering into large and general speculations. Notwithstanding all this, the work, we think, is invaluable; not only as a memorial of the high principles and gentle dispositions of its illustrious author, but as a record of those sentiments of true English constitutional independence, which seem to have been nearly forgotten in the bitterness and hazards of our more recent contentions. It is delightful as the picture of a character; and most instructive and opportune as a remembrancer of public duties: and we must be permitted to say a word or two upon each of these subjects.

To those who know Mr. Fox only by the great outlines of his public history,—who know merely that he passed from the dissipations of too gay a youth into the tumults and cabals of a political life,—and that his days were spent in contending about public measures, and in guiding or averting the tempests of faction,—the spirit of indulgent and tender feeling which pervades this book must appear very unaccountable. Those who live much in the world, even in a private station, commonly have their hearts a little hardened, and their moral sensibility a little impaired. But statesmen and practical politicians are, with justice, suspected of a still greater forgetfulness of mild impressions and honourable scruples. Coming necessarily into contact with great vices and great sufferings, they must gradually lose some of their horror for the first, and much of their compassion for the last. Constantly engaged in contention, they cease pretty generally to regard any human beings as objects of sympathy or disinterested attachment; and, mixing much with the most corrupt part of mankind, naturally come to regard the species itself with indifference, if not with contempt. All the softer feelings are apt to be worn off in the rough conflicts of factious hostility; and all the finer moralities to be effaced, by the constant contemplation of expediency, and the necessities of occasional compliance.

Such is the common conception which we form of men who have lived the life of Mr. Fox; and such, in spite of the testimony of partial friends, is the impression which most private persons would have retained of him, if this volume had not come to convey a truer and a more engaging picture to the world at large, and to posterity.

By far the most remarkable thing then, in this book, is the tone of indulgence and unfeigned philanthropy which prevails in every part of it;—a most amiable sensibility to all the kind and domestic affections, and a sort of soft-heartedness towards the sufferings of individuals, which seems hitherto to have been thought incompatible with the stern dignity of history. It cannot but strike us with something still more pleasing than surprise, to meet with traits of almost feminine tenderness in the sentiments of this veteran statesman; and a general character of charity towards all men, not only remote from the rancour of vulgar hostility, but purified in a great degree from the asperities of party contention. He expresses indeed, throughout, a high-minded contempt for what is base, and a thorough detestation for what is cruel: but yet is constantly led, by a sort of generous prejudice in favour of human nature, to admit all possible palliations for the conduct of the individual delinquent, and never attempts to shut him out from the benefit of those natural sympathies of which the bad as well as the good are occasionally the objects, from their fortune or situation. He has given a new character, we think, to history, by this soft and condescending concern for the feelings of individuals; and not only left a splendid record of the gentleness and affectionate simplicity of his own dispositions, but set an example, by which we hope that men of genius may be taught hereafter to render their instructions more engaging and impressive. Nothing, we are persuaded, can be more gratifying to his friends, than the impression of his character which this work will carry down to posterity; nor is it a matter of indifference to the country, that its most illustrious statesman should be yet more distinguished for the amiableness of his private affections.

This softness of feeling is the first remarkable thing in the work before us. The second is perhaps of more general importance. It is, that it contains the only appeal to the old principles of English constitutional freedom, and the only expression of those firm and temperate sentiments of independence, which are the peculiar produce, and natural protection of our mixed government, which we recollect to have met with for very many years. The tone of the work, in this respect, recalls us to feelings which seem of late to have slumbered in the country which they used to inspire. In our indolent reliance upon the imperishable virtue of our constitution, and in our busy pursuit of wealth, we appeared to be forgetting our higher vocation of free citizens; and, in our dread of revolution or foreign invasion, to have lost sight of those intestine dangers to which our liberties are always more immediately exposed. The history of the Revolution of 1688, and of the times immediately

preceding, was eminently calculated to revive those feelings, and restore those impressions, which so many causes had in our days conspired to obliterate; and, in the hands of Mr. Fox, could scarcely have failed to produce a very powerful effect. On this account, it must be matter of the deepest regret that he was not permitted to finish, or indeed to do more than begin, that inspiring narrative. Even in the tittle which he has done, however, we discover he spirit of the master: even in the broken prelude which he has here sounded, the true notes are struck with such force and distinctness, and are in themselves so much in unison with the natural chords of every British heart, that we think no slight vibration will be excited throughout the country; and would willingly lend our assistance to propagate it into every part of the empire. In order to explain more fully the reasons for which we set so high a value upon the work before us on this particular account, we must be allowed to enlarge a little upon the evil which we think it calculated to correct.

We do not think the present generation of our countrymen substantially degenerated from their ancestors in the days of the Revolution. In the same circumstances, we are persuaded, they would have acted with the same spirit;—nay, in consequence of the more general diffusion of education and intelligence, we believe they would have been still more zealous and more unanimous in the cause of liberty. But we have of late been exposed to the operation of various causes, which have tended to lull our vigilance, and relax our exertions; and which threaten, unless powerfully counteracted, to bring on, gradually, such a general indifference and forgetfulness of the interests of freedom, as to prepare the people for any tolerably mild form of servitude which their future rulers may be tempted to impose upon them.

The first, and the principal of these causes, however paradoxical it may seem, is the actual excellence of our laws, and the supposed inviolability of the constitution. The second is, the great increase of luxury, and the tremendous patronage of the government. The last is, the impression made and maintained by the events of the French Revolution. We shall say but a word upon each of these prolific themes of speculation.

Because our ancestors stipulated wisely for the public at the Revolution, it seemed to have become a common opinion, that nothing was left to their posterity but to pursue their private interest. The machine of Government was then completed and set agoing—and it will go on without their interference. Nobody talks now of the divine right, or the dispensing power of kings, or ventures to propose to govern without Parliaments, or to levy taxes without their authority;—therefore, our liberties are secure;—and it is only factious or ambitious people that affect any jealousy of the executive. Things go on very smoothly as they are; and it can never be the interest of any party in power, to attempt any thing very oppressive or injurious to the public. By such reasonings, men excuse their abandonment of all concern for the community, and find, in the very excellence of the constitution, an apology for exposing it to corruption. It is obvious, however, that liberty, like love, is as hard to keep as to win; and that the exertions by which it was originally gained will be worse than fruitless, if they be not followed up by the assiduities by which alone it can be preserved. Wherever there is power, we may be sure that there is, or will be, a disposition to increase it; and if there be not a constant spirit of jealousy and of resistance on the part of the people, every monarchy will gradually harden into a despotism. It will not, indeed, wantonly provoke or alarm, by seeking again to occupy those very positions from which it had once been dislodged; but it will extend itself in other quarters, and march on silently, under the colours of a venal popularity.

This indolent reliance on the sufficiency of the constitution for its own preservation, affords great facilities, no doubt, to those who may be tempted to project its destruction; but the efficient *means* are to be found chiefly in the prevailing manners of the people, and the monstrous patronage of the government. It can admit of no doubt, we suppose, that trade, which has made us rich, has made us still more luxurious; and that the increased necessity of expense, has in general outgone the means of supplying it. Almost every individual now finds it more difficult to live on a level with his equals, than he did when all were poorer;

almost every man, therefore, is needy; and he who is both needy and luxurious, holds his independence on a very precarious tenure. Government, on the other hand, has the disposal of nearly twenty millions *per annum*, and the power of nominating to two or three hundred thousand posts or places of emolument; the whole population of the country amounting (1808) to less than five millions of grown men. The consequence is, that, beyond the rank of mere labourers, there is scarcely one man out of three who does not hold or hope for some appointment or promotion from government, and is not consequently disposed to go all *honest* lengths in recommending himself to its favour. This, it must be admitted, is a situation which justifies some alarm for the liberties of the people; and, when taken together with that general indifference to the public which has been already noticed, accounts sufficiently for that habit of presuming in favour of all exertions of authority, and against all popular discontent or interference, which is so remarkably the characteristic of the present generation. From this passive desertion of the people, it is but one step to abet and defend the actual oppressions of their rulers; and men, otherwise conscientious, we are afraid, too often impose upon themselves by no better reasonings than the following—"This measure, to be sure, is bad, and somewhat tyrannical;—but men are not angels;—all human government is imperfect; and, on the whole, ours is much too good to be quarrelled with. Besides, what good purpose could be answered by my individual opposition? I might ruin my own fortune, indeed, and blast the prospects of my children; but it would be too romantic to imagine, that the fear of my displeasure would produce an immaculate administration—so I will hold my tongue, and shift for myself as well as possible." When the majority of those who have influence in the country reason in this manner, it surely cannot be unnecessary to remind us, now and then, of the great things that were done when the people roused themselves against their oppressors.

In aid of these actual temptations of interest and indolence, come certain speculative doctrines, as to the real value of liberty, and the illusions by which men are carried away who fancy themselves acting on the principle of patriotism. Private happiness, it is discovered, has but little dependence on the nature of the government. The oppressions of monarchs and demagogues are nearly equal in degree, though a little different in form; and the only thing certain is, that in flying from the one we shall fall into the other, and suffer tremendously in the period of transition. If ambition and great activity therefore be not necessary to our happiness, we shall do wisely to occupy ourselves with the many innocent and pleasant pursuits that are allowed under all governments; instead of spreading tumult and discontent, by endeavouring to realize some political conceit of our own imagination. Mr. Hume, we are afraid, is chiefly responsible for the prevalence of this Epicurean and ignoble strain of sentiment in this country,—an author from whose dispositions and understanding, a very different doctrine might have been anticipated.* But, under whatever authority it is maintained, we have no scruple in saying, that it seems to us as obviously false as it is pernicious. We need not appeal to Turkey or to Russia to prove, that neither liberal nor even gainful pursuits can be carried on with advantage, where there is no po-

* Few things seem more unaccountable, and indeed absurd, than that Hume should have taken part with high-church and high-monarchy men. The persecutions which he suffered in his youth from the Presbyterians, may perhaps have influenced his ecclesiastical partialities. But that he should have sided with the Tudors and the Stuarts against the people, seems quite inconsistent with all the great traits of his character. His unrivalled sagacity must have looked with contempt on the preposterous arguments by which the *jus divinum* was maintained. His natural benevolence must have suggested the cruelty of subjecting the enjoyments of thousands to the caprice of one unfeeling individual; and his own practical independence in private life, might have taught him the value of those feelings which he has so mischievously derided. Mr. Fox seems to have been struck with the same surprise at this strange trait in the character of our philosopher. In a letter to Mr. Laing, he says, "He was an excellent man, and of great powers of mind; but his partiality to kings and princes is intolerable: nay, it is, in my opinion, quite ridiculous; and is more like the foolish admiration which women and children sometimes have for kings, than the opinion, right or wrong, of a philosopher."

litical freedom: for, even laying out of view the utter *impossibility* of securing the persons and properties of individuals in any other way, it is certain that the consciousness of independence is a *great enjoyment in itself*, and that, without it, all the powers of the mind, and all the capacities of happiness, are gradually blunted and destroyed. It is like the privation of air and exercise, or the emasculation of the body;—which, though they may appear at first to conduce to tranquillity and indolent enjoyment, never fail to enfeeble the whole frame, and to produce a state of oppressive languor and debility, in comparison with which even wounds and fatigue would be delicious.

To counteract all these enervating and depressing causes, we had, no doubt, the increasing opulence of the lower and middling orders of the people, naturally leading them to aspire to greater independence, and improving their education and general intelligence: and thus, public opinion, which is in all countries the great operating check upon authority, had become more extensive and more enlightened; and might perhaps have been found a sufficient corrective of all our other corruptions, had things gone on around us in their usual and accustomed channels. Unfortunately, however, the French Revolution came, to astonish and appal the world; and, originating with the people, not only subverted thrones and establishments, but made such havoc on the lives and properties and principles of individuals, as very naturally to excite the horror and alarm of all whose condition was not already intolerable. This alarm, in so far as it related to this country, was always excessive, and in a great degree unreasonable: but it was impossible perhaps altogether to escape it; and the consequences have been incalculably injurious to the interests of practical liberty. During the raging of that war which Jacobinism in its most disgusting form carried on against rank and royalty, it was natural for those who apprehended the possibility of a similar conflict at home, to fortify those orders with all that reason and even prejudice could supply for their security, and to lay aside for the time those jealousies and hereditary grudges, upon which, in better days, it was their duty to engage in contention. While a raging fever of liberty was epidemic in the neighbourhood, the ordinary diet of the people appeared too inflammatory for their constitution; and it was thought advisable to abstain from articles, which, at all other times, were allowed to be necessary for their health and vigour. Thus, a sort of tacit convention was entered into,—to say nothing, for a while, of the follies and vices of princes, the tyranny of courts, or the rights of the people. The Revolution of 1668, it was agreed, could not be mentioned with praise, without giving some indirect encouragement to the Revolution of 1789; and it was thought as well to say nothing in favour of Hampden, or Russell, or Sydney, for fear it might give spirits to Robespierre, Danton, or Marat. To this strict regimen the greater part of the nation submitted of their own accord; and it was forced upon the remainder by a pretty vigorous system of proceeding. Now, we do not greatly blame either the alarm, or the precautions which it dictated; but we do very seriously lament, that the use of those precautions should have degenerated into a sort of national habit; and should be continued and approved of so very long after the danger which occasioned them has ceased.

It is now at least ten years since Jacobinism was prostrated at Paris; and it is still longer since it ceased to be regarded with any thing but horror in this country. Yet the favourers of power would still take advantage of its name to shield authority from question; and to throw obloquy on the rights and services of the people. The power of habit has come unfortunately to their aid; and it is still unfashionable, and, we are afraid, not very popular, to talk of the tyranny of the Stuarts, and the triumphs of the Revolution, in the tone which was universal and established within these last twenty years. For our parts, however, we see no sort of reason for this change; and we hail, with pleasure, this work of Mr. Fox's, as likely to put an end to a system of timidity so apt to graduate into servility; and to familiarize his countrymen once more to speak and to think of Charles, of James, and of Strafford,—and of William, and Russell, and Sydney,—as it becomes Englishmen to speak and to think of such characters. To talk with affected tenderness of oppressors,

may suit the policy of those who wish to bespeak the clemency of an Imperial Conqueror; but must appear peculiarly base and inconsistent in all who profess an anxiety to rouse the people to great exertions in the cause of their independence.

The volume itself, which has given occasion to these reflections, and from which we have withheld our readers too long, consists of a preface or general introduction from the pen of Lord Holland; an introductory chapter, comprising a review of the leading events, from the year 1640 to the death of Charles II.; two chapters of the history of the reign of James, which include no more than seven months of the year 1685, and narrate very little but the unfortunate expeditions of Argyle and of Monmouth; and a pretty long Appendix, consisting chiefly of the correspondence between Barillon, the French confidential minister at the court of England, and his master Louis XIV.

Lord Holland's part of the volume is written with great judgment, perspicuity, and propriety; and though it contains less anecdote and minute information with regard to his illustrious kinsman than every reader must wish to possess, it not only gives a very satisfactory account of the progress of the work to which it is prefixed, but affords us some glimpses of the character and opinions of its author, which are peculiarly interesting, both from the authenticity of the source from which they are derived, and from the unostentatious simplicity with which they are communicated. Lord Holland has not been able to ascertain at what period Mr. Fox first formed the design of writing a history; but, from the year 1797, when he ceased to give a regular attendance in parliament, he was almost entirely occupied with literary schemes and avocations. The following little sketch of the temper and employments of him who was pitied by many as a disappointed politician, is extremely amiable; and, we are now convinced by the fragment before us, correctly true.

"During his retirement, that love of literature, and fondness for poetry, which neither pleasure nor business had ever extinguished, revived with an ardour such as few, in the eagerness of youth or in pursuit of fame or advantage, are capable of feeling. For some time, however, his studies were not directed to any particular object. Such was the happy disposition of his mind, that his own reflections, whether supplied by conversation, desultory reading, or the common occurrences of a life in the country, were always sufficient to call forth the vigour and exertion of his faculties. Intercourse with the world had so little deadened in him the sense of the simplest enjoyments, that even in the hours of apparent leisure and inactivity, he retained that keen relish of existence, which, after the first impressions of life, is so rarely excited but by great interests and strong passions. Hence it was, that in the interval between his active attendance in parliament, and the undertaking of his History, he never felt the tedium of a vacant day.

A verse in Cowper, which he frequently repeated,

'How various his employments whom the world
Calls idle!'

was an accurate description of the life he was then leading; and I am persuaded, that if he had consulted his own gratifications only, it would have continued to be so. The circumstances which led him once more to take an active part in public discussions, are foreign to the purposes of this preface. It is sufficient to remark, that they could not be foreseen, and that his notion of engaging in some literary undertaking was adopted during his retirement, and with the prospect of long and uninterrupted leisure before him."—Pp. iii. iv.

He seems to have fixed finally on the history of the Revolution, about the year 1799; but even after the work was begun, he not only dedicated large portions of his time to the study of Greek literature, and poetry in general, but meditated and announced to his correspondents a great variety of publications, upon a very wide range of subjects. Among these were, an edition of Dryden — a Defence of Racine and of the French Stage — an Essay on the Beauties of Euripides — a Disquisition upon Hume's History,— and an Essay or Dialogue on Poetry, History, and Oratory. In 1802, the greater part of the work, as it now stands, was finished; but the author wished to consult the papers in the Scotch College, and the *Dépôt des Affaires étrangères* at Paris, and took the opportunity of the peace to pay a visit to that capital accordingly. After his return, he made some additions to his chapters; but being soon after recalled to the duties of public life, he never afterwards found leisure to go on with the work to which he had dedicated himself with so much zeal and assiduity. What he did write was finished, however, for the most part with very great care. He wrote very slow: and was ex-

tremely fastidious in the choice of his expressions; holding pedantry and affectation, however, in far greater horror than carelessness or roughness. He commonly wrote detached sentences on slips of paper, and afterwards dictated them off to Mrs. Fox, who copied them into the book from which the present volume has been printed without the alteration of a single syllable.

The only other part of the statement of Lord Holland, to which we think it necessary to call the attention of the reader, is that in which he thinks it necessary to explain the peculiar notions which Mr. Fox entertained on the subject of historical composition, and the very rigid laws to which he had subjected himself in the execution of his important task.

"It is therefore necessary to observe, that he had formed his plan so exclusively on the model of ancient writers, that he not only felt some repugnance to the modern practice of notes, but he thought that all which an historian wished to say should be introduced as part of a continued narration, and never assume the appearance of a digression, much less of a dissertation annexed to it. From the period, therefore, that he closed his Introductory Chapter, he defined his duty as an author, to consist in recounting the facts as they arose; or, in his simple and forcible language, *in telling the story of those times.* A conversation which passed on the subject of the literature of the age of James the Second, proves his rigid adherence to these ideas; and perhaps the substance of it may serve to illustrate and explain them. In speaking of the writers of that period, he lamented that he had not devised a method of interweaving any account of them or their works, much less any criticism on their style, into his history. On my suggesting the example of Hume and Voltaire, who had discussed such topics at some length, either at the end of each reign, or in a separate chapter, he observed, with much commendation of their execution of it, that such a contrivance might be a good mode of writing critical essays, but that it was, in his opinion, incompatible with the nature of his undertaking, which, if it ceased to be a narrative, ceased to be a history."—Pp. xxxvi. xxxvii.

Now, we must be permitted to say, that this is a view of the nature of history, which, in so far as it is intelligible, appears to be very narrow and erroneous; and which seems, like all such partial views, to have been so little adhered to by the author himself, as only to exclude many excellences, without attaining the praise even of consistency in error. The object of history, we conceive, is to give us a clear narrative of the transactions of past ages, with a view of the character and condition of those who were concerned in them, and such reasonings and reflections as may be necessary to explain their connection, or natural on reviewing their results. That some account of the authors of a literary age should have a place in such a composition, seems to follow upon two considerations: *first*, because it is unquestionably one object of history, to give us a distinct view of the state and condition of the age and people with whose affairs it is occupied; and nothing can serve so well to illustrate their true state and condition as a correct estimate and description of the great authors they produced: and, *secondly*, because the facts that such and such authors did flourish in such a period, and were ingenious and elegant, or rude and ignorant, are facts which are interesting in themselves, and may be made the object of narrative just as properly as that such and such princes or ministers did flourish at the same time, and were ambitious or slothful, tyrannical or friends to liberty. Political events are not the only events which are recorded even in ancient history; and now, when it is generally admitted, that even political events cannot be fully understood or accounted for without taking into view the preceding and concomitant changes in manners, literature, commerce, &c., it cannot fail to appear surprising, that an author with such a compass of mind as belonged to Mr. Fox, should have thought of confining himself to the mere chronicling of wars or factions, and held himself excluded, by the laws of historical composition, from touching upon topics so much more interesting.

The truth is, however, that Mr. Fox has by no means adhered to this plan of merely "telling the story of the times" of which he treats. On the contrary, he is more full of argument, and what is properly called reflection, than most modern historians with whom we are acquainted. His argument, to be sure, is chiefly directed to ascertain the truth of reputed facts, or the motives of ambiguous actions; and his reflections, however just and natural, may commonly be considered as redundant, with a view to mere information. Of another kind of reasoning, indeed, he is

more sparing; though of a kind far more valuable, and, in our apprehension, far more essential to the true perfection of history. We allude now to those general views of the causes which influence the character and disposition of the people at large; and which, as they vary from age to age, bring a greater or a smaller part of the nation into contact with its government, and ultimately produce the success or failure of every scheme of tyranny or freedom. The more this subject is meditated, the more certain, we are persuaded, it will appear, that all permanent and important occurrences in the internal history of a country, are the result of those changes in the general character of its population; and that kings and ministers are necessarily guided in their projects by a feeling of the tendencies of this varying character, and fail or succeed, exactly as they had judged correctly or erroneously of its condition. To trace the causes and the modes of its variation, is therefore to describe the true sources of events; and, merely to narrate the occurrences to which it gave rise, is to recite a history of actions without intelligible motives, and of effects without assignable causes. It is true, no doubt, that political events operate in their turn on that national character by which they are previously moulded and controuled: but they are very far, indeed, from being the chief agents in its formation; and the history of those very events is necessarily imperfect, as well as uninstructive, if the consideration of those other agents is omitted. They consist of every thing which affects the character of individuals: — manners, education, prevailing occupations, religion, taste, — and, above all, the distribution of wealth, and the state of prejudice and opinions.

It is the more to be regretted, that such a mind as Mr. Fox's should have been bound up from such a subject by the shackles of an idle theory; because the period of which he treats affords the finest of all opportunities for prosecuting such an inquiry, and does not, indeed, admit of any intelligible or satisfactory history upon any other conditions. There are three great events, falling within that period, of which, it appears to us, that "the story" has not yet been intelligibly told, for want of some such analysis of the national feelings. One is, the universal joy and sincere confidence with which Charles II. was received back, without one stipulation for the liberties of the people, or one precaution against the abuses of power. This was done by the very people who had waged war against a more amiable Sovereign, and quarrelled with the Protector for depriving them of their freedom. It is saying nothing, to say that Monk did this by means of the army. It was not done either by Monk or the army, but by the nation; and even if it were not so, the question would still be, — by what change in the dispositions of the army and the nation Monk was able to make them do it. The second event, which must always appear unaccountable upon the mere narrative of the circumstances, is the base and abject submission of the people to the avowed tyranny of the restored Charles, when he was pleased at last to give up the use of Parliaments, and to tax and govern on his own single authority. This happened when most of those must have still been alive who had seen the nation rise up in arms against his father; and within five years of the time when it rose up still more unanimously against his successor, and not only changed the succession of the crown, but very strictly defined and limited its prerogatives. The third, is the Revolution itself; an event which was brought about by the very individuals who had submitted so quietly to the domination of Charles, and who, when assembled in the House of Commons under James himself, had, of their own accord, sent one of their members to the Tower for having observed, upon a harsh and tyrannical expression of the King's, that "he hoped they were all Englishmen, and not to be frighted by a few hard words." It is not to give us the history of these events, merely to set down the time and circumstances of their occurrence. They evidently require some explanation, in order to be comprehended; and the narrative will be altogether unsatisfactory, as well as totally barren of instruction, unless it give some account of those changes in the general temper and opinion of the nation, by which such contradictory actions became possible. Mr. Fox's conception of the limits of legitimate history, restrained him, we are afraid, from entering into such considerations; and they will best estimate the amount of his error,

who are most aware of the importance of the information of which it has deprived us. Nothing, in our apprehension, can be beyond the province of legitimate history, which tends to give us clear conceptions of the times and characters with which that history is conversant; nor can the story of any time be complete or valuable, unless it look before and after,— to the causes and consequences of the events which it details, and mark out the period with which it is occupied, as part of a greater series, as well as an object of separate consideration.

In proceeding to the consideration of Mr. Fox's own part of this volume, it may be as well to complete that general estimate of its excellence and defects which we have been led incidentally to express in a good degree already. We shall then be able to pursue our analysis of the successive chapters with less distraction.

The sentiments, we think, are almost all just, and candid, and manly; but the narrative is too minute and diffusive, and does not in general flow with much spirit or facility. Inconsiderable incidents are detailed at far too great length; and an extreme and painful anxiety is shown to ascertain the exact truth of doubtful or contested passages, and the probable motives of insignificant and ambiguous actions. The labour which is thus visibly bestowed on the work, often appears, therefore, disproportioned to the importance of the result. The history becomes, in a certain degree, languid and heavy; and something like a feeling of disappointment and impatience is generated, from the tardiness and excessive caution with which the story is carried forward. In those constant attempts, too, to verify the particulars which are narrated, a certain tone of debate is frequently assumed, which savours more of the orator than the historian; and though there is nothing florid or rhetorical in the general cast of the diction, yet those argumentative passages are evidently more akin to public speaking than to written composition. Frequent interrogations—short alternative propositions — and an occasional mixture of familiar images and illustrations,— all denote a certain habit of personal altercation and of keen and animated contention. Instead, therefore, of a work emulating the full and flowing narrative of Livy or Herodotus, we find in Mr. Fox's book rather a series of critical remarks on the narratives of preceding writers, mingled up with occasional details somewhat more copious and careful than the magnitude of the subjects seemed to require. The history, in short, is planned upon too broad a scale, and the narrative too frequently interrupted by small controversies and petty indecisions. We are aware that these objections may be owing in a good degree to the smallness of the fragment upon which we are unfortunately obliged to hazard them; and that the proportions which appear gigantic in this little relic, might have been no more than majestic in the finished work; but even after making allowance for this consideration, we cannot help thinking that the details are too minute, and the verifications too elaborate.

The introductory chapter is full of admirable reasonings and just reflections. It begins with noticing, that there are certain periods in the history of every people, which are obviously big with important consequences, and exercise a visible and decisive influence on the times that come after. The reign of Henry VII. is one of these, with relation to England;— another is that comprised between 1588 and 1640;—and the most remarkable of all, is that which extends from the last of these dates to the death of Charles II. — the era of constitutional principles and practical tyranny —of the best laws, and the most corrupt administration. It is to the review of this period, that the introductory chapter is dedicated.

Mr. Fox approves of the first proceedings of the Commons; but censures without reserve the unjustifiable form of the proceedings against Lord Strafford, whom he qualifies with the name of a great delinquent. With regard to the causes of the civil war, the most difficult question to determine is, whether the Parliament made sufficient efforts to avoid bringing affairs to such a decision. That they had justice on their side, he says cannot be reasonably doubted, — but seems to think that something more might have been done, to bring matters to an accommodation. With regard to the execution of the King, he makes the following striking observations, in that tone of fearless integrity, and natural mildness, which

we have already noticed as characteristic of this performance.

"The execution of the King, though a far less violent measure than that of Lord Strafford, is an event of so singular a nature, that we cannot wonder that it should have excited more sensation than any other in the annals of England. This exemplary act of substantial justice, as it has been called by some, of enormous wickedness by others, must be considered in two points of view. First, was it not in itself just and necessary? Secondly, was the example of it likely to be salutary or pernicious? In regard to the first of these questions, Mr. Hume, not perhaps intentionally, makes the best justification of it, by saying, that while Charles lived, the projected Republic could never be secure. But to justify taking away the life of an individual, upon the principle of self-defence, the danger must be, not problematical and remote, but evident and immediate. The danger in this instance was not of such a nature; and the imprisonment, or even banishment, of Charles, might have given to the republic such a degree of security as any government ought to be content with. It must be confessed, however, on the other side, that if the republican government had suffered the King to escape, it would have been an act of justice and generosity wholly unexampled; and to have granted him even his life, would have been one among the more rare efforts of virtue. The short interval between the deposal and death of princes is become proverbial; and though there may be some few examples on the other side, as far as life is concerned, I doubt whether a single instance can be found, where liberty has been granted to a deposed monarch. Among the modes of destroying persons in such a situation, there can be little doubt but that adopted by Cromwell and his adherents is the least dishonourable. Edward the Second, Richard the Second, Henry the Sixth, Edward the Fifth, had none of them long survived their deposal; but this was the first instance in our history at least, where, of such an act, it could be truly said, that it was not done in a corner.

"As to the second question, whether the advantage to be derived from the example was such as to justify an act of such violence, it appears to me to be a complete solution of it to observe, that with respect to England, (and I know not upon what ground we are to set examples for other nations, or, in other words, to take the criminal justice of the world into our hands,) it was wholly needless, and therefore unjustifiable, to set one for kings, at a time when it was intended the office of king should be abolished, and consequently that no person should be in the situation to make it the rule of his conduct. Besides, the miseries attendant upon a deposed monarch, seem to be sufficient to deter any prince, who thinks of consequences, from running the risk of being placed in such a situation; or if death be the only evil that can deter him, the fate of former tyrants deposed by their subjects, would by no means encourage him to hope he could avoid even that catastrophe. As far as we can judge from the event, the example was certainly not very effectual; since both the sons of Charles, though having their father's fate before their eyes, yet feared not to violate the liberties of the people even more than he had attempted to do.

"After all, however, notwithstanding what the more reasonable part of mankind may think upon this question, it is much to be doubted whether this singular proceeding has not, as much as any other circumstance, served to raise the character of the English nation in the opinion of Europe in general. He who has read, and still more he who has heard in conversation, discussions upon this subject, by foreigners, must have perceived, that, even in the minds of those who condemn the act, the impression made by it has been far more that of respect and admiration, than that of disgust and horror. The truth is, that the guilt of the action, that is to say, the taking away the life of the King, is what most men in the place of Cromwell and his associates would have incurred. What there is of splendour and of magnanimity in it, I mean the publicity and solemnity of the act, is what few would be capable of displaying. It is a degrading fact to human nature, that even the sending away of the Duke of Gloucester was an instance of generosity almost unexampled in the history of transactions of this nature." — Pp. 13—17.

Under the Protector, of whom he speaks with singular candour, the government was absolute — and, on his death, fell wholly into the hands of the army. He speaks with contempt and severe censure of Monk for the precipitate and unconditional submission into which he hurried the country at the Restoration; and makes the following candid reflection on the subsequent punishment of the regicides.

"With respect to the execution of those who were accused of having been more immediately concerned in the King's death, that of Scrope, who had come in upon the proclamation, and of the military officers who had attended the trial, was a violation of every principle of law and justice. But the fate of the others, though highly dishonourable to Monk, whose whole power had arisen from his zeal in their service, and the favour and confidence with which they had rewarded him, and not perhaps very creditable to the nation, of which many had applauded, more had supported, and almost all had acquiesced in the act, is not certainly to be imputed as a crime to the King, or to those of his advisers who were of the Cavalier party. The passion of revenge, though properly condemned both by philosophy and religion, yet when it is excited by injurious treatment of persons justly dear to us, is among the most excusable of human frailties; and if Charles, in his general conduct, had

shown stronger feelings of gratitude for services performed to his father, his character, in the eyes of many, would be rather raised than lowered by this example of severity against the regicides." — Pp. 22, 23.

The mean and unprincipled submission of Charles to Louis XIV., and the profligate pretences upon which he was perpetually soliciting an increase of his disgraceful stipend, are mentioned with becoming reprobation. The delusion of the Popish plot is noticed at some length; and some admirable remarks are introduced with reference to the debates on the expediency of passing a bill for excluding the Duke of York from the Crown, or of imposing certain restrictions on him in the event of his succession. The following observations are distinguished for their soundness, as well as their acuteness; and are applicable, in principle, to every period of our history in which it can be necessary to recur to the true principles of the constitution.

"It is not easy to conceive upon what principles even the Tories could justify their support of the restrictions. Many among them, no doubt, saw the provisions in the same light in which the Whigs represented them, as an expedient, admirably indeed adapted to the real object of upholding the present king's power, by the defeat of the exclusion, but never likely to take effect for their pretended purpose of controuling that of his successor; and supported them for that very reason. But such a principle of conduct was too fraudulent to be avowed; nor ought it perhaps in candour to be imputed to the majority of the party. To those who acted with good faith, and meant that the restrictions should really take place, and be effectual, surely it ought to have occurred, (and to those who most prized the prerogatives of the crown, it ought most forcibly to have occurred,) that, in consenting to curtail the powers of the crown, rather than to alter the succession, they were adopting the greater, in order to avoid the lesser evil. The question of, what are to be the powers of the crown? is surely of superior importance to that of, who shall wear it? Those, at least, who consider the royal prerogative as vested in the king, not for his own sake, but for that of his subjects, must consider the one of these questions as much above the other in dignity, as the rights of the public are more valuable than those of an individual. In this view, *the prerogatives of the crown are in substance and effect the rights of the people; and these rights of the people were not to be sacrificed to the purpose of preserving the succession to the most favoured prince*, much less to one who, on account of his religious persuasion, was justly feared and suspected. In truth, the question between the exclusion and restrictions seems peculiarly calculated to ascertain the different views in which the different parties in this country have seen, and perhaps ever will see, the prerogatives of the crown. The Whigs, who consider them as a trust for the people, a doctrine which the Tories themselves, when pushed in argument, will sometimes admit, naturally think it their duty rather to change the manager of the trust, than to impair the subject of it; while others, who consider them as the right or property of the king, will as naturally act as they would do in the case of ony other property, and consent to the loss or annihilation of any part of it, for the purpose of preserving the remainder to him, whom they style the rightful owner. If the people be the sovereign, and the king the delegate, it is better to change the bailiff than to injure the farm; but if the king be the proprietor, it is better the farm should be impaired, nay, part of it destroyed, than that the whole should pass over to an usurper. The royal prerogative ought, according to the Whigs, (not in the case of a Popish successor only, but in all cases,) to be reduced to such powers as are in their exercise beneficial to the people; and of the benefit of these they will not rashly suffer the people to be deprived, whether the executive power be in the hands of an hereditary, or of an elected king; of a regent, or of any other denomination of magistrate; while, on the other hand, they who consider prerogative with reference only to royalty, will, with equal readiness, consent either to the extension or the suspension of its exercise, as the occasional interests of the prince may seem to require." — Pp. 37—39.

Of the reality of any design to assassinate the King by those engaged in what was called the Rye-house Plot, Mr. Fox appears to entertain considerable doubt, partly on account of the improbability of many of the circumstances, and partly on account of the uniform and resolute denial of Rumbold, the chief of that party, in circumstances when he had no conceivable inducement to disguise the truth. Of the condemnation of Russell and Sydney, he speaks with the indignation which must be felt by all friends to liberty at the recollection of that disgraceful proceeding. The following passage is one of the most eloquent and one of the most characteristic in the whole volume.

"Upon evidence such as has been stated, was this great and excellent man (Sydney) condemned to die. Pardon was not to be expected. Mr. Hume says, that such an interference on the part of the King, though it might have been an act of heroic generosity, could not be regarded as an indispensable duty. He might have said, with more propriety, that it was idle to expect that the government, after having incurred so much guilt in order to obtain the sentence, should, by remitting it, relinquish the object just when it is

within its grasp. The same historian considers the jury as highly blameable: and so do I; but what was their guilt, in comparison of that of the court who tried, and of the government who prosecuted, in this infamous cause? Yet the jury, being the only party that can, with any colour, be stated as acting independently of the government, is the only one mentioned by him as blameable. The prosecutor is wholly omitted in his censure, and so is the court; this last, not from any tenderness for the judge, (who, to do this author justice, is no favourite with him,) but lest the odious connection between that branch of the judicature and the government should strike the reader too forcibly: for Jefferies, in this instance, ought to be regarded as the mere tool and instrument (a fit one, no doubt) of the prince who had appointed him for the purpose of this and similar services. Lastly, the King is gravely introduced on the question of pardon, as if he had had no prior concern in the cause, and were now to decide upon the propriety of extending mercy to a criminal condemned by a court of judicature! Nor are we once reminded what that judicature was, — by whom appointed, by whom influenced, by whom called upon to receive that detestable evidence, the very recollection of which, even at this distance of time, fires every honest heart with indignation. As well might we palliate the murders of Tiberius; who seldom put to death his victims without a previous decree of his senate. The moral of all this seems to be, that whenever a prince can, by intimidation, corruption, illegal evidence, or other such means, obtain a verdict against a subject whom he dislikes, he may cause him to be executed without any breach of indispensable duty; nay, that it is an act of heroic generosity, if he spares him. I never reflect on Mr. Hume's statement of this matter but with the deepest regret. Widely as I differ from him upon many other occasions, this appears to me to be the most reprehensible passage of his whole work. A spirit of adulation towards deceased princes, though in a good measure free from the imputation of interested meanness, which is justly attached to flattery, when applied to living monarchs; yet, as it is less intelligible with respect to its motives than the other, so is it in its consequences still more pernicious to the general interests of mankind. Fear of censure from contemporaries will seldom have much effect upon men in situations of unlimited authority. They will too often flatter themselves, that the same power which enables them to commit the crime, will secure them from reproach. The dread of posthumous infamy, therefore, being the only restraint, their consciences excepted, upon the passions of such persons, it is lamentable that this last defence (feeble enough at best) should in any degree be impaired; and impaired it must be, if not totally destroyed, when tyrants can hope to find in a man like Hume, no less eminent for the integrity and benevolence of his heart, than for the depth and soundness of his understanding, an apologist for even their foulest murders." — Pp. 48—50.

The uncontrouled tyranny of Charles's administration in his latter days, is depicted with much force and fidelity; and the clamour raised by his other ministers against the Marquis of Halifax, for having given an opinion in council that the North American colonies should be made participant in the benefits of the English constitution, gives occasion to the following natural reflection.

"There is something curious in discovering, that, even at this early period, a question relative to North American liberty, and even to North American taxation, was considered as the test of principles friendly, or adverse, to arbitrary power at home. But the truth is, that among the several controversies which have arisen, there is no other wherein the natural rights of man on the one hand, and the authority of artificial institution on the other, as applied respectively, by the Whigs and Tories, to the English constitution, are so fairly put in issue, nor by which the line of separation between the two parties is so strongly and distinctly marked." — P. 60.

The introductory chapter is closed by the following profound and important remarks, which may indeed serve as a key to the whole transactions of the ensuing reign.

"Whoever reviews the interesting period which we have been discussing, upon the principle recommended in the outset of this chapter, will find, that from the consideration of the past, to prognosticate the future, would, at the moment of Charles's demise, be no easy task. Between two persons, one of whom should expect that the country would remain sunk in slavery, the other, that the cause of freedom would revive and triumph, it would be difficult to decide, whose reasons were better supported, whose speculations the more probable. I should guess that he who desponded, had looked more at the state of the public; while he who was sanguine, had fixed his eyes more attentively upon the person who was about to mount the throne. Upon reviewing the two great parties of the nation, one observation occurs very forcibly, and that is, that the great strength of the Whigs consisted in their being able to brand their adversaries as favourers of Popery; that of the Tories, (as far as their strength depended upon opinion, and not merely upon the power of the crown,) in their finding colour to represent the Whigs as republicans. From this observation we may draw a further inference, that, in proportion to the rashness of the crown, in avowing and pressing forward the cause of Popery, and to the moderation and steadiness of the Whigs, in adhering to the form of monarchy, would be the chance of the people of England, for changing an ignominious despotism for glory, liberty, and happiness." — Pp. 66, 67.

James was known to have had so large a share in the councils of his brother, that no

one expected any material change of system from his accession. The Church, indeed, it was feared, might be less safe under a professed Catholic; and the severity of his temper might inspire some dread of an aggravated oppression. It seems to be Mr. Fox's great object, in this first chapter, to prove that the object of his early policy was, not to establish the Catholic religion, but to make himself absolute and independent of his Parliament.

The fact itself, he conceives, is completely established by the manner in which his secret negotiations with France were carried on; in the whole of which, he was zealously served by ministers, no one of whom had the slightest leaning towards Popery, or could ever be brought to countenance the measures which he afterwards pursued in its favour. It is made still more evident by the complexion of his proceedings in Scotland; where the test, which he enforced at the point of the bayonet, was a Protestant test,—*so much so, indeed, that he himself could not take it,*—and the objects of his persecution, dissenters from the Protestant church of England. We consider this point therefore—and it is one of no small importance in the history of this period—as now sufficiently established.

It does not seem necessary to follow the author into the detail of that sordid and degrading connexion which James was so anxious to establish, by becoming, like his brother, the pensioner of the French monarch. The bitter and dignified contempt with which it is treated by Mr. Fox, may be guessed at from the following account of the first remittance.

"Within a very few days from that in which the latter of them had passed, he (the French ambassador) was empowered to accompany the delivery of a letter from his master, with the agreeable news of having received from him bills of exchange to the amount of five hundred thousand livres, to be used in whatever manner might be convenient to the King of England's service. The account which Barillon gives of the manner in which this sum was received, is altogether ridiculous: *the King's eyes were full of tears!* and three of his ministers, Rochester, Sunderland, and Godolphin, came severally to the French ambassador, to express the sense their master had of the obligation, in terms the most lavish. Indeed, demonstrations of gratitude from the King directly, as well as through his ministers, for this supply, were such as, if they had been used by some unfortunate individual, who, with his whole family, had been saved, by the timely succour of some kind and powerful protector, from a gaol and all its horrors, would be deemed rather too strong than too weak. Barillon himself seems surprised when he relates them; but imputes them to what was probably their real cause, to the apprehensions that had been entertained (very unreasonable ones!), that the King of France might no longer choose to interfere in the affairs of England, and, consequently, that his support could not be relied on for the grand object of assimilating this government to his own."—Pp. 83, 84.

After this, Lord Churchill is sent to Paris on the part of the tributary King.

"How little could Barillon guess, that he was negotiating with one who was destined to be at the head of an administration which, in a few years, would send the same Lord Churchill, not to Paris to implore Lewis for succours towards enslaving England, or to thank him for pensions to her monarch, but to combine all Europe against him in the cause of liberty! to route his armies, to take his towns, to humble his pride, and to shake to the foundation that fabric of power which it had been the business of a long life to raise, at the expense of every sentiment of tenderness to his subjects, and of justice and good faith to foreign nations! It is with difficulty the reader can persuade himself that the Godolphin and Churchill here mentioned, are the same persons, who were afterwards, one in the cabinet, one in the field, the great conductors of the war of the Succession. How little do they appear in the one instance! how great in the other! And the investigation of the cause to which this excessive difference is principally owing, will produce a most useful lesson. Is the difference to be attributed to any superiority of genius in the prince whom they served in the latter period of their lives? Queen Anne's capacity appears to have been inferior even to her father's. Did they enjoy, in a greater degree, her favour and confidence? The very reverse is the fact. But, in one case, they were the tools of a king plotting against his people; in the other, the ministers of a free government acting upon enlarged principles, and with energies which no state that is not in some degree republican can supply. How forcibly must the contemplation of these men in such opposite situations teach persons engaged in political life, that a free and popular government is desirable, not only for the public good, but for their own greatness and consideration, for every object of generous ambition."—Pp. 88, 89.

As James, in the outset of his reign, professed a resolution to adhere to the system of government established by his brother, and made this declaration, in the first place, to his Scottish Parliament, Mr. Fox thinks it necessary to take a slight retrospective view of the proceedings of Charles towards that unhappy country; and details, from unquestionable authorities, such a scene of intolerant oppression

and atrocious cruelty, as to justify him in saying, that the state of that kingdom was "a state of more absolute slavery than at that time subsisted in any part of Christendom."

In both Parliaments, the King's revenue was granted for life, in terms of his demand, without discussion or hesitation; and Mr. Hume is censured with severity, and apparently with justice, for having presented his readers with a summary of the arguments which he would have them believe were actually used in the House of Commons on both sides of this question. "This misrepresentation," Mr. Fox observes, "is of no small importance, inasmuch as, by intimating that such a question could be debated at all, and much more, that it was debated with the enlightened views and bold topics of argument with which his genius has supplied him, he gives us a very false notion of the character of the Parliament, and of the times which he is describing. It is not improbable, that if the arguments had been used, which this historian supposes, the utterer of them would have been expelled, or sent to the Tower; and it is certain that he would not have been heard with any degree of attention, or even patience." —P. 142.

The last chapter is more occupied with narrative, and less with argument and reflection, than that which precedes it. It contains the story of the unfortunate and desperate expeditions of Argyle and Monmouth, and of the condemnation and death of their unhappy leaders. Mr. Fox, though convinced that the misgovernment was such as fully to justify resistance by arms, seems to admit that both those enterprises were rash and injudicious. With his usual candour and openness, he observes, that "the prudential reasons against resistance at that time were exceedingly strong; and that there is no point, indeed, in human concerns, wherein the dictates of virtue and of worldly prudence are so identified, as in this great question of resistance by force to established governments."

The expeditions of Monmouth and Argyle had been concerted together, and were intended to take effect at the same moment. Monmouth, however, who was reluctantly forced upon the enterprise, was not so soon ready; and Argyle landed in the Highlands with a very small force before the Duke had sailed from Holland. The details of his irresolute councils and ineffectual marches, are given at far too great length: though they give occasion to one profound and important remark, which we do not recollect ever to have met with before; but, of the justice of which, most of those who have acted with parties must have had melancholy and fatal experience. It is introduced when speaking of the disunion that prevailed among Argyle's little band of followers.

"Add to all this," he says, "that where spirit was not wanting, it was accompanied with a degree and species of perversity wholly inexplicable, and which can hardly gain belief from any one whose experience has not made him acquainted with the extreme difficulty of persuading men, who pride themselves upon an extravagant love of liberty, rather to compromise upon some points with those who have, in the main, the same views with themselves, than to give power (a power which will infallibly be used for their own destruction) to an adversary, of principles diametrically opposite; in other words, rather to concede something to a friend, than every thing to an enemy."—Pp. 187, 188.

The account of Argyle's deportment from the time of his capture to that of his execution, is among the most striking passages in the book; and the mildness and magnanimity of his resignation, is described with kindred feelings by his generous historian. The merits of this nobleman are perhaps somewhat exaggerated; for he certainly wanted conduct and decision for the part he had undertaken; and more admiration is expressed at the equanimity with which he went to death, than the recent frequency of this species of heroism can allow us to sympathize with: but the story is finely and feelingly told; and the impression which it leaves on the mind of the reader is equally favourable to the author and to the hero of it. We can only make room for the concluding scene of the tragedy.

"Before he left the castle, he had his dinner at the usual hour, at which he discoursed, not only calmly, but even cheerfully, with Mr. Charteris and others. After dinner he retired, as was his custom, to his bedchamber, where, it is recorded, that he slept quietly for about a quarter of an hour. While he was in bed, one of the members of the council came and intimated to the attendants a desire to speak with him: upon being told that the earl was asleep, and had left orders not to be disturbed, the manager disbelieved

the account, which he considered as a device to avoid further questionings. To satisfy him, the door of the bed-chamber was half opened, and he then beheld, enjoying a sweet and tranquil slumber, the man who, by the doom of him and his fellows, was to die within the space of two short hours! Struck with the sight, he hurried out of the room, quitted the castle with the utmost precipitation, and hid himself in the lodgings of an acquaintance who lived near, where he flung himself upon the first bed that presented itself, and had every appearance of a man suffering the most excruciating torture. His friend, who had heen apprized by the servant of the state he was in, and who naturally concluded that he was ill, offered him some wine. He refused, saying, 'No, no, that will not help me: I have been in at Argyle, and saw him sleeping as pleasantly as ever man did, within an hour of eternity! But as for me——' The name of the person to whom this anecdote relates is not mentioned; and the truth of it may therefore be fairly considered as liable to that degree of doubt with which men of judgment receive every species of traditional history. Woodrow, however, whose veracity is above suspicion, says he had it from the most unquestionable authority. It is not in itself unlikely; and who is there that would not wish it true? What a satisfactory spectacle to a philosophical mind to see the oppressor, in the zenith of his power, envying his victim! What an acknowledgment of the superiority of virtue! What an affecting and forcible testimony to the value of that peace of mind, which innocence alone can confer! We know not who this man was; but when we reflect that the guilt which agonized him was probably incurred for the sake of some vain title, or at least of some increase of wealth, which he did not want, and possibly knew not how to enjoy, our disgust is turned into something like compassion for that very foolish class of men, whom the world calls wise in their generation."—Pp. 207—209.

"On the scaffold he embraced his friends, gave some tokens of remembrance to his son-in-law, Lord Maitland, for his daughter and grandchildren; stript himself of part of his apparel, of which he likewise made presents; and laid his head upon the block. Having uttered a short prayer, he gave the signal to the executioner; which was instantly obeyed, and his head severed from his body. Such were the last hours, and such the final close, of this great man's life. May the like happy serenity in such dreadful circumstances, and a death equally glorious, be the lot of all, whom tyranny, of whatever denomination or description, shall in any age, or in any country, call to expiate their virtues on the scaffold!"—P. 211.

Rumbold, who had accompanied Argyle in this expedition, speedily shared his fate. Though a man of intrepid courage, and fully aware of the fate that awaited him, he persisted to his last hour in professing his innocence of any design to assassinate King Charles at the Rye-house. Mr. Fox gives great importance to this circumstance; and seems disposed to conclude, on the faith of it, that the Rye-house Plot itself was altogether a fabrication of the court party, to transfer to their adversaries the odium which had been thrown upon them with as little justice, by the prosecutions for the Popish plot. It does not appear to us, however, that this conclusion is made out in a manner altogether satisfactory.

The expedition of Monmouth is detailed with as redundant a fulness as that of Argyle; and the character of its leader still more overrated. Though Mr. Fox has a laudable jealousy of kings, indeed, we are afraid he has rather a partiality for nobles. Monmouth appears to have been an idle, handsome, presumptuous, incapable youth, with none of the virtues of a patriot, and none of the talents of an usurper; and we really cannot discover upon what grounds Mr. Fox would exalt him into a hero. He was in arms, indeed, against a tyrant; and that tyrant, though nearly connected with him by the ties of blood, sentenced him with unrelenting cruelty to death. He was plunged at once from the heights of fortune, of youthful pleasure, and of ambition, to the most miserable condition of existence,—to die disgracefully after having stooped to ask his life by abject submission! Mr. Fox dwells a great deal too long, we think, both upon his wavering and unskilful movements before his defeat, and on some ambiguous words in the letter which he afterwards wrote to King James; but the natural tenderness of his disposition enables him to interest us in the description of his after sufferings. The following extract, we think, is quite characteristic of the author.

"In the mean while, the Queen Dowager, who seems to have behaved with a uniformity of kindness towards her husband's son that does her great honour, urgently pressed the King to admit his nephew to an audience. Importuned therefore by entreaties, and instigated by the curiosity which Monmouth's mysterious expressions, and Sheldon's story had excited, he consented, though with a fixed determination to show no mercy. James was not of the number of those, in whom the want of an extensive understanding is compensated by a delicacy of sentiment, or by those right feelings which are often found to be better guides for the conduct, than the most accurate reasoning. His nature did not revolt, his blood did not run cold, at the thoughts of beholding the son of a brother

whom he had loved, embracing his knees, petitioning, and petitioning in vain, for life! — of interchanging words and looks with a nephew on whom he was inexorably determined, within forty-eight short hours, to inflict an ignominious death.

"In Macpherson's extract from King James's Memoirs, it is confessed that the King ought not to have seen, if he was not disposed to pardon the culprit; but whether the observation is made by the exiled prince himself, or by him who gives the extract, is in this, as in many other passages of those Memoirs, difficult to determine. Surely, if the King had made this reflection before Monmouth's execution, it must have occurred to that monarch, that if he had inadvertently done that which he ought not to have done without an intention to pardon, the only remedy was to correct that part of his conduct which was still in his power; and since he could not recall the interview, to grant the pardon." — Pp. 258, 259

Being sentenced to die in two days, he made a humble application to the King for some little respite; but met with a positive and stern refusal. The most remarkable thing in the history of his last hours, is the persecution which he suffered from the bishops who had been sent to comfort him. Those reverend persons, it appears, spent the greater part of the time in urging him to profess the orthodox doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance; without which, they said, he could not be an upright member of the church, nor attain to a proper state of repentance! It must never be forgotten, indeed, as Mr. Fox has remarked, if we would understand the history of this period, "that the orthodox members of the church regarded monarchy, not as a human, but as a *divine* institution; and passive obedience and non-resistance, not as political measures, but as *articles of religion*."

The following account of the dying scene of this misguided and unhappy youth, is very striking and pathetic; though a certain tone of sarcasm towards the reverend assistants does not, to our feelings, harmonize entirely with the more tender traits of the picture.

"At ten o'clock on the 15th, Monmouth proceeded, in a carriage of the Lieutenant of the Tower, to Tower Hill, the place destined for his execution. Two bishops were in the carriage with him; and one of them took that opportunity of informing him, that their controversial altercations were not yet at an end; and that upon the scaffold, he would again be pressed for more explicit and satisfactory declarations of repentance. When arrived at the bar, which had been put up for the purpose of keeping out the multitude, Monmouth descended from the carriage, and mounted the scaffold with a firm step, attended by his spiritual assistants. The sheriffs and executioners were already there. The concourse of spectators was innumerable, and, if we are to credit traditional accounts, never was the general compassion more affectingly expressed. The tears, sighs, and groans which the first sight of this heart-rending spectacle produced, were soon succeeded by an universal and awful silence; a respectful attention, and affectionate anxiety, to hear every syllable that should pass the lips of the sufferer. The Duke began by saying he should speak little; he came to die; and he should die a Protestant of the Church of England. Here he was interrupted by the assistants, and told, that, if he was of the Church of England, he must acknowledge the doctrine of Non-resistance to be true. In vain did he reply, that, if he acknowledged the doctrine of the church in general, it included all: they insisted he should own *that* doctrine particularly with respect to his case, and urged much more concerning their favourite point; upon which, however, they obtained nothing but a repetition, in substance, of former answers." — Pp. 265, 266.

After making a public profession of his attachment to his beloved Lady Harriet Wentworth, and his persuasion that their connection was innocent in the sight of God, he made reference to a paper he had signed in the morning, confessing the illegitimacy of his birth, and declaring that the title of King had been forced on him by his followers, much against his own inclination.

"The bishop, however, said, that there was nothing in that paper about resistance; nor, though Monmouth, quite worn out with their importunities, said to one of them in a most affecting manner, 'I am to die! — pray, my lord! — I refer to my paper,' would these men think it consistent with their duty to desist. There were only a few words they desired on one point. The substance of these applications on one hand, and answers on the other, was repeated, over and over again, in a manner that could not be believed, if the facts were not attested by the signature of the persons principally concerned. If the Duke, in declaring his sorrow for what had passed, used the word invasion, 'give it the true name,' said they, 'and call it rebellion.' 'What name you please,' replied the mild-tempered Monmouth! He was sure he was going to everlasting happiness, and considered the serenity of his mind, in his present circumstances, as a certain earnest of the favour of his Creator. His repentance, he said, must be true, for he had no fear of dying; he should die like a lamb! 'Much may come from natural courage,' was the unfeeling and stupid reply of one of the assistants. Monmouth, with that modesty inseparable from true bravery, denied that he was in general less fearful than other

men, maintaining that his present courage was owing to his consciousness that God had forgiven him his past transgressions, of all which generally he repented, with all his soul.

"At last the reverend assistants consented to join with him in prayer; but no sooner were they risen from their kneeling posture, than they returned to their charge. Not satisfied with what had passed, they exhorted him to a *true* and *thorough* repentance. Would he not pray for the King? and send a dutiful message to his Majesty, to recommend the duchess and his children? 'As you please,' was the reply: 'I pray for him and for all men.' He now spoke to the executioner, desiring that he might have no cap over his eyes, and began undressing. One would have thought that in this last sad ceremony, the poor prisoner might have been unmolested, and that the divines would have been satisfied, that prayer was the only part of their function for which their duty now called upon them. They judged differently; and one of them had the fortitude to request the Duke, even in this stage of the business, that he would address himself to the soldiers then present, to tell them he stood a sad example of rebellion, and entreat the people to be loyal and obedient to the King. 'I have said I will make no speeches,' repeated Monmouth, in a tone more peremptory than he had before been provoked to; 'I will make no speeches! I come to die.' 'My lord, ten words will be enough,' said the persevering divine; to which the Duke made no answer, but turning to the executioner, expressed a hope that he would do his work better now than in the case of Lord Russell. He then felt the axe, which he apprehended was not sharp enough, but being assured that it was of proper sharpness and weight, he laid down his head. In the mean time, many fervent ejaculations were used by the reverend assistants, who, it must be observed, even in these moments of horror, showed themselves not unmindful of the points upon which they had been disputing; praying God to accept his *imperfect* and *general* repentance.

"The executioner now struck the blow; but so feebly or unskilfully, that Monmouth, being but slightly wounded, lifted up his head, and looked him in the face as if to upbraid him; but said nothing. The two following strokes were as ineffectual as the first, and the headsman, in a fit of horror, declared he could not finish his work. The sheriffs threatened him; he was forced again to make a further trial; and in two more strokes separated the head from the body."—Pp. 267—269.

With the character of Monmouth, the second chapter of the history closes; and nothing seems to have been written for the third, but a few detached observations, occupying but two pages. The Appendix is rather longer than was necessary. The greater part of the diplomacy which it contains, had been previously published by Macpherson and Dalrymple; and the other articles are of little importance.

We have now only to add a few words as to the style and taste of composition which belongs to this work. We cannot say that we vehemently admire it. It is a diffuse, and somewhat heavy style,—clear and manly, indeed, for the most part, but sometimes deficient in force, and almost always in vivacity. In its general structure, it resembles the style of the age of which it treats, more than the balanced periods of the succeeding century—though the diction is scrupulously purified from the long and Latin words which defaced the compositions of Milton and Harrington. In his antipathy to every thing that might be supposed to look like pedantry or affected loftiness, it appears to us, indeed, that the illustrious author has sometimes fallen into an opposite error, and admitted a variety of words and phrases rather more homely and familiar than should find place in a grave composition. Thus, it is said in p. 12., that "the King *made no point* of adhering to his concessions." In p. 20., we hear of men "*swearing away* the lives" of their accomplices; and are afterwards told of "the *style* of thinking" of the country—of "*the crying injustice*" of certain proceedings—and of persons who were *fond of ill-treating* and insulting" other persons. These, we think, are phrases too colloquial for regular history, and which the author has probably been induced to admit into this composition, from his long familiarity with spoken, rather than with written language. What is merely lively and natural in a speech, however, will often appear low and vapid in writing. The following is a still more striking illustration. In speaking of the Oxford Decree, which declared the doctrine of an original contract, the lawfulness of changing the succession, &c. to be *impious* as well as seditious, and leading to *atheism* as well as rebellion, Mr. Fox is pleased to observe—"If Much Ado about Nothing had been published in those days, the town-clerk's declaration, that receiving a thousand ducats for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully, was '*flat burglary*,' might be supposed to be a satire upon this decree; yet Shakspeare, well as he knew human nature, not only as to its general course,

but in all its eccentric deviations, could never dream that, in the persons of Dogberry, Verges, and their followers, he was representing the vice-chancellors and doctors of our learned University." It would require all the credit of a well-established speaker, to have passed this comparison, with any success, upon the House of Commons; but even the high name of Mr. Fox, we believe, will be insufficient to conceal its impropriety in a serious passage of a history, written in imitation of Livy and Thucydides.

Occupied, indeed, as we conceive all the readers of Mr. Fox ought to be with the sentiments and the facts which he lays before them, we should scarcely have thought of noticing those verbal blemishes at all, had we not read so much in the preface, of the fastidious diligence with which the diction of this work was purified, and its style elaborated by the author. To this praise we cannot say we think it entitled; but, to praise of a far higher description, its claim, we think, is indisputable. Independent of its singular value as a memorial of the virtues and talents of the great statesman whose name it bears, we have no hesitation in saying, that it is written more truly in the spirit of constitutional freedom, and of temperate and practical patriotism, than any history of which the public is yet in possession.

JEAN SYLVAIN BAILLY.

(April, 1805.)

Mémoires d'un Témoin de la Révolution; ou Journal des faits qui se sont passés sous ses yeux, et qui ont préparé et fixé la Constitution Française. Ouvrage Posthume de Jean Sylvain Bailly, Premier Président de l'Assemblée Nationale Constituant, Premier Maire de Paris, et Membre des Trois Académies. 8vo. 3 tomes. Paris: 1804.*

Among the many evils which the French Revolution has inflicted on mankind, the most deplorable, perhaps, both in point of extent and of probable duration, consists in the injury which it has done to the cause of rational freedom, and the discredit in which it has involved the principles of political philosophy. The warnings which may be derived from the misfortunes of that country, and the lessons which may still be read in the tragical consequences of her temerity, are memorable, no doubt, and important: but they are such as are presented to us by the history of every period of the world; and the emotions by which they have been impressed, are in this case too violent to let their import and application be properly distinguished. From the miscarriage of a scheme of frantic innovation, we have conceived an unreasonable and undiscriminating dread of all alteration or reform. The bad success of an attempt to make government perfect, has reconciled us to imperfections that might easily be removed; and the miserable consequences of treating every thing as prejudice and injustice, which could not be reconciled to a system of fantastic equality, has given strength to prejudices, and sanction to abuses, which were gradually wearing away before the progress of reason and philosophy. The French Revolution, in short, has thrown us back half a century in the course of political improvement; and driven many among us to cling once more, with superstitious terror, to those idols from which we had been nearly reclaimed by the lessons of a milder philosophy. When we look round on the wreck and ruin which the whirlwind has scattered over the prospect before us, we tremble at the rising gale, and shrink even from the wholesome air that stirs the fig-leaf on our porch. Terrified and disgusted with the brawls and midnight murders which proceed from intoxication, we are almost inclined to deny ourselves the pleasures of a generous hospitality; and scarcely venture to diffuse the comforts of light or of warmth in our dwellings, when we turn our eyes on the devastation which the flames have committed around us.

The same circumstances which have thus led us to confound what is salutary with what is pernicious in our establishments, have also perverted our judgments as to the characters of those who were connected with those memorable occurrences. The tide of popular

* I have been tempted to let this be reprinted (though sensible enough of vices in the style) to show at how early a period those views of the character of the French Revolution, and its first effects on other countries, were adopted—which have not since received much modification.

favour, which ran at one time with a dangerous and headlong violence to the side of innovation and political experiment, has now set, perhaps too strongly, in an opposite direction; and the same misguiding passions that placed factious and selfish men on a level with patriots and heroes, has now ranked the blameless and the enlightened in the herd of murderers and madmen.

There are two classes of men, in particular, to whom it appears to us that the Revolution has thus done injustice; and who have been made to share in some measure the infamy of its most detestable agents, in consequence of venial errors, and in spite of extraordinary merits. There are none indeed who made a figure in its more advanced stages, that may not be left, without any great breach of charity, to the vengeance of public opinion: and both the descriptions of persons to whom we have alluded only existed, accordingly, at the period of its commencement. These were the philosophers or speculative men who inculcated a love of liberty and a desire of reform by their writings and conversation; and the virtuous and moderate, who attempted to *act* upon these principles at the outset of the Revolution, and countenanced or suggested those measures by which the ancient frame of the government was eventually dissolved. To confound either of these classes of men with the monsters by whom they were succeeded, it would be necessary to forget that they were in reality their most strenuous opponents—and their earliest victims! If they were instrumental in conjuring up the tempest, we may at least presume that their co-operation was granted in ignorance, since they were the first to fall before it; and can scarcely be supposed to have either foreseen or intended those consequences in which their own ruin was so inevitably involved. That they are chargeable with imprudence and with presumption, may be affirmed, perhaps, without fear of contradiction; though, with regard to many of them, it would be no easy task, perhaps, to point out by what conduct they could have avoided such an imputation; and this charge, it is manifest, ought at any rate to be kept carefully separate from that of guilt or atrocity. Benevolent intentions, though alloyed by vanity, and misguided by ignorance, can never become the objects of the highest moral reprobation; and enthusiasm itself, though it does the work of the demons, ought still to be distinguished from treachery or malice. The knightly adventurer, who broke the chains of the galley-slaves, purely that they might enjoy their deliverance from bondage, will always be regarded with other feelings than the robber who freed them to recruit the ranks of his banditti.

We have examined in a former article the extent of the participation which can be fairly imputed to the *philosophers*, in the crimes and miseries of the Revolution, and endeavoured to ascertain in how far they may be said to have made themselves responsible for its consequences, or to have deserved censure for their exertions: and, acquitting the greater part of any mischievous intention, we found reason, upon that occasion, to conclude, that there was nothing in the conduct of the majority which should expose them to blame, or deprive them of the credit which they would have certainly enjoyed, but for consequences which they could not foresee. For those who, with intentions equally blameless, attempted to carry into execution the projects which had been suggested by the others, and actually engaged in measures which could not fail to terminate in important changes, it will not be easy, we are afraid, to make so satisfactory an apology. What is written may be corrected; but what is done cannot be recalled: a rash and injudicious publication naturally calls forth an host of answers; and where the subject of discussion is such as excites a very powerful interest, the cause of truth is not always least effectually served by her opponents. But the errors of cabinets and of legislatures have other consequences and other confutations. They are answered by insurrections, and confuted by conspiracies. A paradox which might have been maintained by an author, without any other loss than that of a little leisure, and ink and paper, can only be supported by a minister at the expense of the lives and the liberties of a nation. It is evident, therefore, that the precipitation of a legislator can never admit of the same excuse with that of a speculative inquirer; that the same confidence in his opinions, which justifies the former in maintaining them to the world, will never justify the other in suspend-

ing the happiness of his country on the issue of their truth; and that he, in particular, subjects himself to a tremendous responsibility, who voluntarily takes upon himself the new-modelling of an ancient constitution.

We are very much inclined to do justice to the virtuous and enlightened men who abounded in the Constituent Assembly of France. We believe that the motives of many of them were pure, and their patriotism unaffected: their talents are still more indisputable: but we cannot acquit them of blameable presumption and inexcusable imprudence. There are *three* points, it appears to us, in particular, in which they were bound to have foreseen the consequences of their proceedings.

In the *first* place, the spirit of exasperation, defiance, and intimidation, with which from the beginning they carried on their opposition to the schemes of the court, the clergy and the nobility, appears to us to have been as impolitic with a view to their ultimate success, as it was suspicious perhaps as to their immediate motives. The parade which they made of their popularity; the support which they submitted to receive from the menaces and acclamations of the mob; the joy which they testified at the desertion of the royal armies; and the anomalous military force, of which they patronised the formation in the city of Paris, were so many preparations for actual hostility, and led almost inevitably to that appeal to force, by which all prospect of establishing an equitable government was finally cut off. Sanguine as the patriots of that assembly undoubtedly were, they might still have remembered the most obvious and important lesson in the whole volume of history, that the nation which has recourse to arms for the settlement of its internal affairs, necessarily falls under the iron yoke of a military government in the end; and that nothing but the most evident necessity can justify the lovers of freedom in forcing it from the hands of their governors. In France, there certainly was no such necessity. The whole weight and strength of the nation was bent upon political improvement and reform. There was no possibility of their being ultimately resisted; and the only danger that was to be apprehended was, that their progress would be too rapid. After the States-General were once fairly granted, indeed, it appears to us that the victory of the friends to liberty was certain. They could not have gone too slow afterwards; they could not have been satisfied with too little. The great object, then, should have been to exclude the agency of force, and to leave no pretext for an appeal to violence. Nothing could have stood against the force of reason, which ought to have given way; and from a monarch of the character of Louis XVI. there was no reason to apprehend any attempt to regain, by violence, what he had yielded from principles of philanthropy and conviction. The Third Estate would have *grown* into power, instead of usurping it; and would have gradually compressed the other orders into their proper dimensions, instead of displacing them by a violence that could never be forgiven. Even if the Orders had deliberated separately (as it appears to us they ought clearly to have done), the commons were sure of an ultimate preponderance, and the government of a permanent and incalculable amelioration. Convened in a legislative assembly, and engrossing almost entirely the respect and affections of the nation, they would have enjoyed the unlimited liberty of political discussion, and gradually impressed on the government the character of their peculiar principles. By the restoration of the legislative function to the commons of the kingdom, the system was rendered complete, and required only to be put into action in order to assume all those improvements which necessarily resulted from the increased wealth and intelligence of its representatives.

Of this fair chance of amelioration, the nation was disappointed, chiefly, we are inclined to think, by the needless asperity and injudicious menaces of the popular party. They relied openly upon the strength of their adherents among the populace. If they did not actually encourage them to threats and to acts of violence, they availed themselves at least of those which were committed, to intimidate and depress their opponents; for it is indisputably certain, that the unconditional compliance of the court with all the demands of the Constituent Assembly, was the result either of actual force, or the dread of its immediate application. This was the inauspicious commencement of the sins and the sufferings of

the Revolution. Their progress and termination were natural and necessary. The multitude, once allowed to overawe the old government with threats, soon subjected the new government to the same degradation; and, once permitted to act in arms, came speedily to dictate to those who were assembled to deliberate. As soon as an appeal was made to force, the decision came to be with those by whom force could at all times be commanded. Reason and philosophy were discarded; and mere terror and brute violence, in the various forms of proscriptions, insurrections, massacres, and military executions, harassed and distracted the misguided nation, till, by a natural consummation, they fell under the despotic sceptre of a military usurper. These consequences, we conceive, were obvious, and might have been easily foreseen. Nearly half a century had elapsed since they were pointed out in those memorable words of the most profound and philosophical of historians. "By recent, as well as by ancient example, it was become evident, that illegal violence, with whatever pretences it may be covered, and whatever object it may pursue, must inevitably end at last in the arbitrary and despotic government of a single person." *

The *second* inexcusable blunder, of which the Constituent Assembly was guilty, was one equally obvious, and has been more frequently noticed. It was the extreme restlessness and precipitation with which they proceeded to accomplish, in a few weeks, the legislative labours of a century. Their constitution was struck out at a heat; and their measures of reform proposed and adopted like toasts at an election dinner. Within less than six months from the period of their first convocation, they declared the illegality of all the subsisting taxes; they abolished the old constitution of the States-General; they settled the limits of the Royal prerogative, their own inviolability, and the responsibility of ministers. Before they put any one of their projects to the test of experiment, they had adopted such an enormous multitude, as entirely to innovate the condition of the country, and to expose even those which were salutary to misapprehension and miscarriage. From a scheme of reformation so impetuous, and an impatience so puerile, nothing permanent or judicious could be reasonably expected. In legislating for their country, they seem to have forgotten that they were operating on a living and sentient substance, and not on an inert and passive mass, which they might model and compound according to their pleasure or their fancy. Human society, however, is not like a piece of mechanism which may be safely taken to pieces, and put together by the hands of an ordinary artist. It is the work of Nature, and not of man; and has received, from the hands of its Author, an organization that cannot be destroyed without danger to its existence, and certain properties and powers that cannot be altered or suspended by those who may have been entrusted with its management. By studying those properties, and directing those powers, it may be modified and altered to a very considerable extent. But they must be allowed to develope themselves by their internal energy, and to familiarize themselves with their new channel of exertion. A child cannot be stretched out by engines to the stature of a man; or a man compelled, in a morning, to excel in all the exercises of an athlete. Those into whose hands the destinies of a great nation are committed, should bestow on its reformation at least as much patient observance and as much tender precaution as are displayed by a skilful gardener in his treatment of a sickly plant. He props up the branches that are weak or overloaded, and gradually prunes and reduces those that are too luxuriant: he cuts away what is absolutely rotten and distempered: he stirs the earth about the root, and sprinkles it with water, and waits for the coming spring! He trains the young branches to the right hand or to the left; and leads it, by a gradual and spontaneous progress, to expand or exalt itself, season after season, in the direction which he had previously determined: and thus, in the course of a few summers, he brings it, without injury or compulsion, into that form and proportion which could not with safety have been imposed upon it in a shorter time. The reformers of France applied no such gentle solicitations,

* Hume's History, chapter lx. at the end. The whole passage is deserving of the most profound meditation.

and would not wait for the effects of any such preparatory measures, or voluntary developments. They forcibly broke its lofty boughs asunder, and endeavoured to straighten its crooked joints by violence: they tortured it into symmetry in vain, and shed its life-blood on the earth, in the middle of its scattered branches.

The *third* great danger, against which we think it was the duty of the intelligent and virtuous part of the Deputies to have provided, was that which arose from the sudden transference of power to the hands of men who had previously no natural or individual influence in the community. This was an evil indeed, which arose necessarily, in some degree, from the defects of the old government, and from the novelty of the situation in which the country was placed by the convocation of the States-General; but it was materially aggravated by the presumption and improvidence of those enthusiastic legislators, and tended powerfully to produce those disasters by which they were ultimately overwhelmed.

No representative legislature, it appears to us, can ever be respectable or secure, unless it contain within itself a great proportion of those who form the natural aristocracy of the country, and are able, as individuals, to influence the conduct and opinions of the greater part of its inhabitants. Unless the power and weight and authority of the assembly, in short, be really made up of the power and weight and authority of the individuals who compose it, the factitious dignity they may derive from their situation can never be of long endurance; and the dangerous power with which they may be invested, will become the subject of scrambling and contention among the factions of the metropolis, and be employed for any purpose but the general good of the community.

In England, the House of Commons is made up of the individuals who, by birth, by fortune, or by talents, possess singly the greatest influence over the rest of the people. The most certain and the most permanent influence, is that of rank and of riches; and these are the qualifications, accordingly, which return the greatest number of members. Men submit to be governed by the united will of those, to whose will, as individuals, the greater part of them have been previously accustomed to submit themselves; and an act of parliament is reverenced and obeyed, not because the people are impressed with a constitutional veneration for an institution called a parliament, but because it has been passed by the authority of those who are recognised as their natural superiors, and by whose influence, as individuals, the same measures might have been enforced over the greater part of the kingdom. Scarcely any new power is acquired, therefore, by the combination of those persons into a legislature: they carry each their share of influence and authority into the senate along with them; and it is by adding the items of it together, that the influence and authority of the senate itself is made up. From such a senate, therefore, it is obvious that their power could never be wrested, and that it would not even attach to those who might succeed in supplanting them in the legislature, by violence or intrigue; or by any other means than those by which they themselves had originally secured their nomination. In such a state of representation, in short, the influence of the representatives is not borrowed from their office, but the influence of the office is supported by that which is personal to its members; and parliament is chiefly regarded as the great depository of all the authority which formerly existed, in a scattered state, among its members. This authority, therefore, belonging to the men, and not to their places, can neither be lost by them, if they are forced from their places, nor found by those who may supplant them. The Long Parliament, after it was purged by the Independents, and the assemblies that met under that name, during the Protectorate of Cromwell, held the place, and enjoyed all the form of power that had belonged to their predecessors: but as they no longer contained those individuals who were able to sway and influence the opinion of the body of the people, they were without respect or authority, and speedily came to be the objects of public derision and contempt.

As the power and authority of a legislature thus constituted, is perfectly secure and inalienable, on the one hand, so, on the other, the moderation of its proceedings is guaranteed by a consciousness of the basis upon which this authority is founded. Every individual being aware of the extent to which his own

influence is likely to reach among his constituents and dependants, is anxious that the mandates of the body shall never pass beyond that limit, within which obedience may be easily secured. He will not hazard the loss of his own power, therefore, by any attempt to enlarge that of the legislature; and feeling, at every step, the weight and resistance of the people, the whole assembly proceeds with a due regard to their opinions and prejudices, and can never do any thing very injurious or very distasteful to the majority. From the very nature of the authority with which they are invested, they are in fact consubstantiated with the people for whom they are to legislate. They do not sit loose upon them, like riders on inferior animals; nor speculate or project experiments upon their welfare, like operators upon a foreign substance. They are the natural organs, in fact, of a great living body; and are not only warned, by their own feelings, of any injury which they may be tempted to inflict on it, but would become incapable of performing their functions, if they were to proceed far in debilitating the general system.

Such, it appears to us, though delivered perhaps in too abstract and elementary a form, is the just conception of a free representative legislature. Neither the English House of Commons, indeed, nor any assembly of any other nation, ever realized it in all its perfection: but it is in their approximation to such a standard, we conceive, that their excellence and utility will be found to consist; and where the conditions upon which we have insisted are absolutely wanting, the sudden institution of a representative legislature will only be a step to the most frightful disorders. Where it has grown up in a country in which personal liberty and property are tolerably secure, it naturally assumes that form which is most favourable to its beneficial influence, and has a tendency to perpetual improvement, and to the constant amelioration of the condition of the whole society. The difference between a free government and a tyrannical one, consists entirely in the different proportions of the people that are influenced by their *opinions*, or subjugated by *intimidation* or *force*. In a large society, opinions can only be reunited by means of representation; and the natural representative is the individual whose example and authority can influence the opinions of the greater part of those in whose behalf he is delegated. This is the natural aristocracy of a civilized nation; and its legislature is then upon the best possible footing, when it is in the hands of those who answer to that description. The whole people are then governed by the laws, exactly as each clan or district of them would have been by the patriarchal authority of an elective and unarmed chieftain; and the lawgivers are not only secure of their places while they can maintain their individual influence over the people, but are withheld from any rash or injurious measure by the consciousness and feeling of their dependence on this voluntary deference and submission.

If this be at all a just representation of the conditions upon which the respectadility and security of a representative liegslature must always depend, it will not be difficult to explain how the experiment miscarried so completely, in the case of the French Constituent Assembly. That assembly, which the enthusiasm of the public, and the misconduct of the privileged orders, soon enabled to engross the whole power of the country, consisted almost entirely of persons without name or individual influence; who owed the whole of their consequence to the situation to which they had been elevated, and were not able, as individuals, to have influenced the opinions of one fiftieth part of their countrymen. There was in France, indeed, at this time, no legitimate, wholesome, or real aristocracy. The noblesse, who were persecuted for bearing that name, were quite disconnected from the people. Their habits of perpetual residence in the capital, and their total independence of the good opinion of their vassals, had deprived them of any real influence over the minds of the lower orders; and the organization of society had not yet enabled the rich manufacturers or proprietors to assume such an influence. The persons sent as deputies to the States-General, therefore, were those chiefly who, by intrigue and boldness, and by professions of uncommon zeal for what were then the great objects of popular pursuit, had been enabled to carry the votes of the electors. A notion of talent, and an opinion that they would be loud and vehement in supporting those re-

quests upon which the people had already come to a decision, were their passports into that assembly. They were sent there to express the particular demands of the people, and not to give a general pledge of their acquiescence in what might there be enacted. They were not the hereditary patrons of the people, but their hired advocates for a particular pleading. They had no general trust or authority over them, but were chosen as their special messengers, out of a multitude whose influence and pretensions were equally powerful.

When these men found themselves, as it were by accident, in possession of the whole power of the state, and invested with the absolute government of the greatest nation that has existed in modern times, it is not to be wondered at if they forgot the slender ties by which they were bound to their constituents. The powers to which they had succeeded were so infinitely beyond any thing that they had enjoyed in their individual capacity, that it is not surprising if they never thought of exerting them with the same consideration and caution. Instead of the great bases of rank and property, which cannot be transferred by the clamours of the factious, or the caprice of the inconstant, and which serve to ballast and steady the vessel of the state in all its wanderings and perils, the assembly possessed only the basis of talent or reputation; qualities which depend upon opinion and opportunity, and which may be attributed in the same proportion to an inconvenient multitude at once. The whole legislature may be considered, therefore, as composed of *adventurers*, who had already attained a situation incalculably above their original pretensions, and were now tempted to push their fortune by every means that held out the promise of immediate success. They had nothing, comparatively speaking, to lose, but their places, in that assembly, or the influence which they possessed within its walls; and as the authority of the assembly itself depended altogether upon the popularity of its measures, and not upon the intrinsic authority of its members, so it was only to be maintained by a succession of brilliant and imposing resolutions, and by satisfying or outdoing the extravagant wishes and expectations of the most extravagant and sanguine populace that ever existed. For a man to get a lead in such an assembly, it was by no means necessary that he should have previously possessed any influence or authority in the community; that he should be connected with powerful families, or supported by great and extensive associations. If he could dazzle and overawe in debate; if he could obtain the acclamations of the mob of Versailles, and make himself familiar to the eyes and the ears of the assembly and its galleries, he was in a fair train for having a great share in the direction of an assembly exercising absolute sovereignty over thirty millions of men. The prize was too tempting not to attract a multitude of competitors; and the assembly for many months was governed by those who outvied their associates in the impracticable extravagance of their patriotism, and sacrificed most profusely the real interests of the people at the shrine of a precarious popularity.

In this way, the assembly, from the inherent vices of its constitution, ceased to be respectable or useful. The same causes speedily put an end to its security, and converted it into an instrument of destruction.

Mere popularity was at first the instrument by which this unsteady legislature was governed: but when it became apparent, that whoever could obtain the direction or command of it, must possess the whole authority of the state, parties became less scrupulous about the means they employed for that purpose, and soon found out that violence and terror were infinitely more effectual and expeditious than persuasion and eloquence. The people at large, who had no attachment to any families or individuals among their delegates, and who contented themselves with idolizing the assembly in general, so long as it passed decrees to their liking, were passive and indifferent spectators of the transference of power which was effected by the pikes of the Parisian multitude; and looked with equal affection upon every successive junto which assumed the management of its deliberations. Having no natural representatives, they felt themselves equally connected with all who exercised the legislative function; and, being destitute of a real aristocracy, were without the means of giving effectual support even to those who might appear to deserve it. Encouraged by

this situation of affairs, the most daring, unprincipled, and profligate, proceeded to seize upon the defenceless legislature, and, driving all their antagonists before them by violence or intimidation, entered without opposition upon the supreme functions of government. They soon found, however, that the arms by which they had been victorious, were capable of being turned against themselves; and those who were envious of their success, or ambitious of their distinction, easily found means to excite discontent among the multitude, now inured to insurrection, and to employ them in pulling down those very individuals whom they had so recently exalted. The disposal of the legislature thus became a prize to be fought for in the clubs and conspiracies and insurrections of a corrupted metropolis; and the institution of a national representative had no other effect, than that of laying the government open to lawless force and flagitious audacity.

It is in this manner, it appears to us, that from the want of a natural and efficient aristocracy to exercise the functions of representative legislators, the National Assembly of France was betrayed into extravagance, and fell a prey to faction; that the institution itself became a source of public misery and disorder, and converted a civilized monarchy, first into a sanguinary democracy, and then into a military despotism.

It would be the excess of injustice, we have already said, to impute those disastrous consequences to the moderate and virtuous individuals who sat in the Constituent Assembly: but if it be admitted that they might have been easily foreseen, it will not be easy to exculpate them from the charge of very blameable imprudence. It would be difficult, indeed, to point out any course of conduct by which those dangers might have been entirely avoided: but they would undoubtedly have been less formidable, if the enlightened members of the third estate had endeavoured to form a party with the more liberal and popular among the nobility; if they had associated to themselves a greater number of those to whose persons a certain degree of influence was attached, from their fortune, their age, or their official station; if, in short, instead of grasping presumptuously at the exclusive direction of the national councils, and arrogating every thing on the credit of their zealous patriotism and inexperienced abilities, they had sought to strengthen themselves by an alliance with what was respectable in the existing establishments, and attached themselves at first as disciples to those whom they might fairly expect speedily to outgrow and eclipse.

Upon a review of the whole matter, it seems impossible to quit those of the revolutionary patriots, whose intentions are admitted to be pure, of great precipitation, presumption, and imprudence. Apologies may be found for them, perhaps, in the inexperience which was incident to their situation; in their constant apprehension of being separated before their task was accomplished; in the exasperation which was excited by the insidious proceedings of the cabinet; and in the intoxication which naturally resulted from the magnitude of their early triumph, and the noise and resounding of their popularity. But the errors into which they fell were inexcusable, we think, in politicians of the 18th century; and while we pity their sufferings, and admire their genius, we cannot feel much respect for their wisdom, or any surprise at their miscarriage.

The preceding train of reflection was irresistibly suggested to us by the title and the contents of the volumes now before us. Among the virtuous members of the first Assembly, there was no one who stood higher than Bailly. As a scholar and a man of science, he had long stood in the very first rank of celebrity: his private morals were not only irreproachable, but exemplary; and his character and dispositions had always been remarkable for gentleness, moderation, and philanthropy. Drawn unconsciously, if we may believe his own account, into public life, rather than impelled into it by any movement of ambition, he participated in the enthusiasm, and in the imprudence, from which no one seemed at that time to be exempted; and in spite of an early retreat, speedily suffered that fate by which all the well-meaning were then destined to expiate their errors. His popularity was at one time equal to that of any of the idols of the day; and if it was gained by some degree of blameable indulgence and unjustifiable zeal, it was forfeited at last (and along with his life) by a resolute opposition to disorder and a

meritorious perseverance in the discharge of his duty.

The sequel of this article, containing a full abstract of the learned author's recollections of the first six months only of his mayoralty, is now omitted; both as too minute to retain any interest at this day, and as superseded by the more comprehensive details which will be found in the succeeding article.

MADAME DE STAËL.

(SEPTEMBER, 1818.)

Considérations sur les Principaux Evènemens de la Révolution Françoise. Ouvrage Posthume de Madame la Baronne de Staël. Publié par M. LE DUC DE BROGLIE et M. LE BARON A. DE STAËL. En trois tomes. 8vo. Pp. 1285. Londres: 1818.

No book can possibly possess a higher interest than this which is now before us. It is the last, dying bequest of the most brilliant writer that has appeared in our days; — and it treats of a period of history which we already know to be the most important that has occurred for centuries; and which those who look back on it, after other centuries have elapsed, will probably consider as still more important.

We cannot stop now to say all that we think of Madame de Staël: — and yet we must say, that we think her the most powerful writer that her country has produced since the time of Voltaire and Rousseau — and the greatest writer, of a woman, that any time or any country has produced. Her taste, perhaps, is not quite pure; and her style is too irregular and ambitious. These faults may even go deeper. Her passion for *effect*, and the tone of exaggeration which it naturally produces, have probably interfered occasionally with the soundness of her judgment, and given a suspicious colouring to some of her representations of fact. At all events, they have rendered her impatient of the humbler task of completing her explanatory details, or stating in their order all the premises of her reasonings. She gives her history in abstracts, and her theories in aphorisms: — and the greater part of her works, instead of presenting that systematic unity from which the highest degrees of strength and beauty and clearness must ever be derived, may be fairly described as a collection of striking fragments — in which a great deal of repetition does by no means diminish the effect of a good deal of inconsistency. In those same works, however, whether we consider them as fragments or as systems, we do not hesitate to say that there are more original and profound observations — more new images — greater sagacity combined with higher imagination — and more of the true philosophy of the passions, the politics, and the literature of her contemporaries — than in any other author we can now remember. She has great eloquence on all subjects; and a singular pathos in representing those bitterest agonies of the spirit, in which wretchedness is aggravated by remorse, or by regrets that partake of its character. Though it is difficult to resist her when she is in earnest, we cannot say that we agree in all her opinions, or approve of all her sentiments. She overrates the importance of literature, either in determining the character or affecting the happiness of mankind; and she theorises too confidently on its past and its future history. On subjects like this, we have not yet facts enough for so much philosophy; and must be contented, we fear, for a long time to come, to call many things accidental, which it would be more satisfactory to refer to determinate causes. In her estimate of the happiness, and her notions of the wisdom of private life, we think her both unfortunate and erroneous. She makes passions and high sensibilities a great deal too indispensable; and varnishes over all her pictures too uniformly with the glare of an extravagant or affected enthusiasm. She represents men, in short, as a great deal more unhappy, more depraved, and more energetic, than they are — and seems to respect them the more for it. In her politics she is far more unexceptionable. She is every where the warm friend and animated advocate of liberty — and of liberal, practical, and philanthropic principles. On those subjects we cannot blame her enthusiasm, which has nothing in it vindictive or provoking; and are far more inclined to envy than to reprove that sanguine and buoyant temper of mind which, after all she has seen and suffered, still leads her to overrate, in our apprehension, both the merit of past attempts at

political amelioration, and the chances of their success hereafter. It is in that futurity, we fear, and in the hopes that make it present, that the lovers of mankind must yet, for a while, console themselves for the disappointments which still seem to beset them. If Madame de Staël, however, predicts with too much confidence, it must be admitted that her labours have a powerful tendency to realize her predictions. Her writings are all full of the most animating views of the improvement of our social condition, and the means by which it may be effected — the most striking refutations of prevailing errors on these great subjects — and the most persuasive expostulations with those who may think their interest or their honour concerned in maintaining them. Even they who are the least inclined to agree with her, must admit that there is much to be learned from her writings; and we can give them no higher praise than to say, that their tendency is not only to promote the interests of philanthropy and independence, but to soften, rather than exasperate, the prejudices to which they are opposed.

Of the work before us, we do not know very well what to say. It contains a multitude of admirable remarks — and a still greater number of curious details; for Madame de Staël was not only a contemporary, but an eye-witness of much that she describes, and had the very best access to learn what did not fall under her immediate observation. Few persons certainly could be better qualified to appreciate the relative importance of the subjects that fell under her review; and no one, we really think, so little likely to colour and distort them, from any personal or party feelings. With all those rare qualifications, however, and inestimable advantages for performing the task of an historian, we cannot say that she has made a good history. It is too much broken into fragments. The narrative is too much interrupted by reflections; and the reflections too much subdivided, to suit the subdivisions of the narrative. There are too many events omitted, or but cursorily noticed, to give the work the interest of a full and flowing history; and a great deal too many detailed and analyzed, to let it pass for an essay on the philosophy, or greater results of these memorable transactions. We are the most struck with this last fault — which perhaps is inseparable from the condition of a contemporary writer; — for, though the observation may sound at first like a paradox, we are rather inclined to think that the best historical compositions — not only the most pleasing to read, but the most just and instructive in themselves — must be written at a very considerable distance from the times to which they relate. When we read an eloquent and judicious account of great events transacted in other ages, our first sentiment is that of regret at not being able to learn more of them. We wish anxiously for a fuller detail of particulars — we envy those who had the good fortune to live in the time of such interesting occurrences, and blame them for having left us so brief and imperfect a memorial of them. But the truth is, if we may judge from our own experience, that the greater part of those who were present at those mighty operations, were but very imperfectly aware of their importance, and conjectured but little of the influence they were to exert on future generations. Their attention was successively engaged by each separate act of the great drama that was passing before them; but did not extend to the connected effect of the whole, in which alone posterity was to find the grandeur and interest of the scene. The connection indeed of those different acts is very often not then discernible. The series often stretches on, beyond the reach of the generation which witnessed its beginning, and makes it impossible for them to *integrate* what had not yet attained its completion; while, from similar causes, many of the terms that at first appeared most important are unavoidably discarded, to bring the problem within a manageable compass. Time, in short, performs the same services to events, which distance does to visible objects. It obscures and gradually annihilates the small, but renders those that are very great much more distinct and conceivable. If we would know the true form and bearings of an Alpine ridge, we must not grovel among the irregularities of its surface, but observe, from the distance of leagues, the direction of its ranges and peaks, and the giant outline which it traces on the sky. A traveller who wanders through a rugged and picturesque district, though struck with the

beauty of every new valley, or the grandeur of every cliff that he passes, has no notion at all of the general configuration of the country, or even of the relative situation of the objects he has been admiring; and will understand all those things, and his own route among them, a thousand times better, from a small map on a scale of half an inch to a mile, which represents neither thickets or hamlets, than from the most painful efforts to combine the indications of the strongest memory. The case is the same with those who live through periods of great historical interest. They are too near the scene — too much interested in each successive event — and too much agitated with their rapid succession, to form any just estimate of the character or result of the whole. They are like private soldiers in the middle of a great battle, or rather of a busy and complicated campaign — hardly knowing whether they have lost or won, and having but the most obscure and imperfect conception of the general movements in which their own fate has been involved. The foreigner who reads of them in the Gazette, or the peasant who sees them from the top of a distant hill or a steeple, has in fact a far better idea of them.

Of the thousand or fifteen hundred names that have been connected in contemporary fame with the great events of the last twenty-five years, how many will go down to posterity? In all probability not more than twenty: and who shall yet venture to say which twenty it will be? But it is the same with the events as with the actors. How often during that period, have we mourned or exulted, with exaggerated emotions, over occurrences that we already discover to have been of no permanent importance! — how certain is it, that the far greater proportion of those to which we still attach an interest, will be viewed with the same indifference by the very next generation! — and how probable, that the whole train and tissue of the history will appear, to a remoter posterity, under a totally different character and colour from any that the most penetrating observer of the present day has thought of ascribing to it! Was there any contemporary, do we think, of Mahomet, of Gregory VII., of Faust, or Columbus, who formed the same estimate of their achievements that we do at this day! Were the great and wise men who brought about the Reformation, as much aware of its importance as the whole world is at present? or does any one imagine, that, even in the later and more domestic events of the establishment of the English Commonwealth in 1648, or the English Revolution in 1688, the large and energetic spirits by whom those great events were conducted were fully sensible of their true character and bearings, or at all foresaw the mighty consequences of which they have since been prolific?

But though it may thus require the lapse of ages to develope the true character of a great transaction, and though its history may therefore be written with most advantage very long after its occurrence, it does not follow that such a history will not be deficient in many qualities which it would be desirable for it to possess. All we say is, that they are qualities which will generally be found incompatible with those larger and sounder views, which can hardly be matured while the subjects of them are recent. That this is an imperfection in our histories and historians, is sufficiently obvious; but it is an imperfection to which we must patiently resign ourselves, if it appear to be an unavoidable consequence of the limitation of our faculties. We cannot both enjoy the sublime effect of a vast and various landscape, and at the same time discern the form of every leaf in the forest, or the movements of every living creature that breathes within its expanse. Beings of a higher order may be capable of this; — and it would be very desirable to be so: but, constituted as we are, it is impossible; and, in our delineation of such a scene, all that is minute and detached, however interesting or important to those who are at hand, must therefore be omitted — while the general effect is entrusted to masses in which nothing but the great outlines of great objects are preserved, and the details left to be inferred from the character of their results, or the larger features of their usual accompaniments.

It is needless to apply this to the case of history; in which, when it records events of permanent interest, it is equally impossible to retain those particular details which engrossed the attention of contemporaries — both because the memory of them is necessarily lost in the course of that period which must elapse before the just value of the whole can be

known — and because, even if it were otherwise, no human memory could retain, or human judgment discriminate, the infinite number of particulars which must have been presented in such an interval. We shall only observe, further, that though that which *is* preserved is generally the most material and truly important part of the story, it not unfrequently happens, that too little is preserved to afford materials for a satisfactory narrative, or to justify any general conclusion; and that, in such cases, the historian often yields to the temptation of connecting the scanty materials that have reached him by a sort of general and theoretical reasoning, which naturally takes its colour from the prevailing views and opinions of the individual writer, or of the age to which he belongs. If an author of consummate judgment, and with a thorough knowledge of the unchangeable principles of human nature, undertake this task, it is wonderful indeed to see how much he may make of a subject that appears so unpromising — and it is almost certain that the view he will give to his readers, of such an obscure period, will, at all events, be at least as instructive and interesting as if he had had its entire annals before him. In other hands, however, the result is very different; and, instead of a masterly picture of rude or remote ages, true at least to the general features of such periods, we have nothing but a transcript of the author's own most recent fantasies and follies, ill disguised under the masquerade character of a few traditional names. — It is only necessary to call to mind such books as Zouche's Life of Sir Philip Sydney, or Godwin's Life of Chaucer, to feel this much more strongly than we can now express it. These, no doubt, are extreme cases; — but we suspect that our impressions of almost all remote characters and events, and the general notions we have of the times or societies which produced them, are much more dependent on the peculiar temper and habits of the popular writers in whom the memory of them is chiefly preserved, than it is very pleasant to think of. If we ever take the trouble of looking for ourselves into the documents and materials out of which those histories are made, we feel at once how much room there is for a very different representation of all those things from that which is current in the world: and accordingly we occasionally have very opposite representations. Compare Bossuet's Universal History with Voltaire's — Rollin with Mitford — Hume or Clarendon with Ralph or Mrs. M'Aulay: and it will be difficult to believe that these different writers are speaking of the same persons and things.

The work before us, we have already said, is singularly free from faults of this description. It is written, we do think, in the true spirit and temper of historical impartiality. But it has faults of a different character; and, with many of the merits, combines some of the appropriate defects, both of a contemporary and philosophical history. Its details are too few and too succinct for the former — they are too numerous and too rashly selected for the latter; — while the reasonings and speculations in which perhaps its chief value consists, seem already to be too often thrown away upon matters that cannot long be had in remembrance. We must take care not to get entangled too far among the anecdotes — but the general reasoning cannot detain us very long.

It is the scope of the book to show that France must have a free government — a limited monarchy — in express words, a constitution like that of England. This Madame de Staël says, was all that the body of the nation aimed at in 1789 — and this she says the great majority of the nation are resolved to have still — undeterred by the fatal miscarriage of the last experiment, and undisgusted by the revival of ancient pretensions which has signalized its close. Still, though she maintains this to be the prevailing sentiment of the French people, she thinks it not altogether unnecessary to combat this discouragement and this disgust; and the great object of all that is argumentative in her book, is to show that there is nothing in the character or condition, or late or early history of her countrymen, to render this regulated freedom unattainable by them, or to disqualify them from the enjoyment of a representative government, or the functions of free citizens.

For this purpose she takes a rapid and masterly view of the progress of the different European kingdoms, from their primitive condition of feudal aristocracies, to their present state of monarchies limited by law, or miti-

gated by the force of public opinion; and endeavours to show, that the course has been the same in all; and that its unavoidable termination is in a balanced constitution like that of England. The first change was the reduction of the Nobles — chiefly by the aid which the Commons, then first pretending to wealth or intelligence, afforded to the Crown — and, on this basis, some small states, in Italy and Germany especially, erected a permanent system of freedom. But the necessities of war, and the substitution of hired forces for the feudal militia, led much more generally to the establishment of an arbitrary or despotical authority; which was accomplished in France, Spain, and England, under Louis XI., Philip II., and Henry VIII. Then came the age of commerce, luxury, and taxes — which necessarily ripened into the age of general intelligence, individual wealth, and a sense both of right and of power in the people; — and those led irresistibly to a limitation on the powers of the Crown by a representative assembly.

England having less occasion for a land army — and having been the first in the career of commercial prosperity, led the way in this great amelioration. But the same general principles have been operating in all the Continental kingdoms, and must ultimately produce the same effects. The peculiar advantages which she enjoyed did not prevent England from being enslaved by the tyranny of Henry VIII., and Mary; — and she also experienced the hazards and paid the penalties which are perhaps inseparable from the assertion of popular rights. — She also overthrew the monarchy, and sacrificed the monarch in her first attempt to set limits to his power. The English Commonwealth of 1648, originated in as wild speculations as the French of 1792 — and ended, like it, in the establishment of a military tyranny, and a restoration which seemed to confound all the asserters of liberty in the general guilt of rebellion: — yet all the world is now agreed that this was but the first explosion of a flame that could neither be extinguished nor permanently repressed; and that what took place in 1688, was but the sequel and necessary consummation of what had been begun forty years before — and which might and would have been accomplished without even the slight shock and disturbance that was then experienced, if the Court had profited as much as the leaders of the people by the lessons of that first experience. Such, too, Madame de Staël assures us, is the unalterable destiny of France; and it is the great purpose of her book to show, that but for circumstances which cannot recur — mistakes that cannot be repeated, and accidents which never happened twice — even the last attempt would have led to that blessed consummation; and that every thing is now in the fairest train to secure it, without any great effort or hazard of disturbance.

That these views are supported with infinite talent, spirit, and eloquence, no one who has read the book will probably dispute; and we should be sorry indeed to think that they were not substantially just. Yet we are not, we confess, quite so sanguine as the distinguished writer before us; and though we do not doubt either that her principles are true, or that her predictions will be *ultimately* accomplished, we fear that the period of their triumph is not yet at hand; and that it is far more doubtful than she will allow it to be, whether that triumph will be easy, peaceful, and secure. The example of England is her great, indeed her only authority; but we are afraid that she has run the parallel with more boldness than circumspection, and overlooked a variety of particulars in our case, to which she could not easily find any thing equivalent in that of her country. It might be invidious to dwell much on the opposite character and temper of the two nations; though it is no answer to say, that this character is the work of the government. But can Madame de Staël have forgotten, that England had a parliament and a representative legislature for 500 years before 1648; and that it was *by that organ*, and the widely spread and deeply founded machinery of the elections on which it rested, that the struggle was made, and the victory won, which ultimately secured *to us* the blessings of political freedom? The least reflection upon the nature of government, and the true foundations of all liberty, will show what an immense advantage this was in the contest; and with what formidable obstacles those must have to struggle, who are obliged to engage in a similar conflict without it.

All political power, even the most despotic,

rests at last, as was profoundly observed by Hume, upon Opinion. A government is *Just*, or otherwise, according as it promotes, more or less, the true interests of the people who live under it. But it is *Stable* and secure, exactly as it is directed by the opinion of those who really possess, and know that they possess, *the power* of enforcing it, and upon whose opinion, therefore, it constantly depends; — that is, in a military despotism, on the opinion of the soldiery; — in all rude and ignorant communities, on the opinion of those who monopolize the intelligence, the wealth, or the discipline which constitute power — the priesthood — the landed proprietors — the armed and inured to war; — and, in civilized societies, on the opinion of that larger proportion of the people who can bring their joint talents, wealth, and strength, to act in concert when occasion requires. A government may indeed subsist for a time, although opposed to the opinion of those classes of persons; but its existence must always be precarious, and it probably will not subsist long. The *natural* and appropriate *Constitution*, therefore, is, in every case, that which enables those who actually administer the government, to ascertain and conform themselves in time to the opinion of those who have the power to overturn it; and no government whatever can possibly be secure where there are no arrangements for this purpose. Thus it is plainly for want of a proper *Despotic Constitution* — for want of a regular and safe way of getting at the opinions of their armies, that the Sultans and other Asiatic sovereigns are so frequently beheaded by their janissaries or insurgent soldiery: and, in like manner, it was for want of a proper Feudal Constitution, that, in the decline of that system, the King was so often dethroned by his rebellious barons, or excommunicated by an usurping priesthood. In more advanced times, there is the same necessity of conforming to the prevailing opinion of those more extended and diversified descriptions of persons in whom the power of enforcing and resisting has come to reside; and the natural and only safe constitution for such societies, must therefore embrace a representative assembly. A government may no doubt go on, in opposition to the opinion of this virtual aristocracy, for a long time after it has come into existence. For it is not enough that there is wealth, and intelligence, and individual influence enough in a community to overbear all pretensions opposed to them. It is necessary that the possessors of this virtual power should be aware of their own numbers, and of the conformity of their sentiments or views; and it is very late in the progress of society before the means of communication are so multiplied and improved, as to render this practicable in any tolerable degree. Trade and the press, however, have now greatly facilitated those communications; and in all the central countries of Europe, they probably exist in a degree quite sufficient to give one of the parties, at least, very decided impressions both as to its interests and its powers.

In such a situation of things, we cannot hesitate to say that a representative government is the natural, and will be the ultimate remedy; but if we find, that even where such an institution existed from antiquity, it was possible so fatally to miscalculate and misjudge the opinions of the nation, as proved to be the case in the reign of our King Charles, is it not manifest that there must be tenfold risk of such miscalculation, in a country where no such constitution has been previously known, and where, from a thousand causes, the true state of the public mind is so apt to be oppositely misconceived by the opposite parties, as it is up to the present hour in France?

The great and cardinal use of a representative body in the legislature is to afford a direct, safe, and legitimate channel, by which the public opinion may be brought to act on the government: but, to enable it to perform this function with success, it is by no means enough, that a certain number of deputies are sent into the legislature by a certain number of electors. Without a good deal of previous training, the public opinion itself can neither be *formed*, *collected*, nor *expressed* in an authentic or effectual manner; and the first establishment of the representative system must be expected to occasion very nearly as much disturbance as it may ultimately prevent. In countries where there never have been any political elections, and few local magistracies, or occasions of provincial and parochial assemblages for public purposes, the real state of opinion must be substantially unknown even to the most observant

resident in each particular district; — and its general bearing all over the country can never possibly be learned by the most diligent inquiries, or even guessed at with any reasonable degree of probability. The first deputies, therefore, are necessarily returned, without any firm or assured knowledge of the sentiments of their constituents — and they again can have nothing but the most vague notions of the temper in which these sentiments are to be enforced — while the whole deputies come together without any notion of the dispositions, talents, or designs of each other, and are left to scramble for distinction and influence, according to the measure of their individual zeal, knowledge, or assurance. In England, there were no such novelties to be hazarded, either in 1640 or in 1688. The people of this country have had an elective parliament from the earliest period of their history — and, long before either of the periods in question, had been trained in every hamlet to the exercise of various political franchises, and taught to consider themselves as connected, by known and honourable ties, with all the persons of influence and consideration in their neighbourhood, and through them, by an easy gradation with the political leaders of the State; — while, in Parliament itself, the place and pretensions of every man were pretty accurately known, and the strength of each party reasonably well ascertained by long and repeated experiments, made under all variety of circumstances. The organization and machinery, in short, for collecting the public opinion, and bringing it into contact with the administration, was perfect, and in daily operation among us, from very ancient times. The various conduits and channels by which it was to be conveyed from its first faint springs in the villages and burghs, and conducted in gradually increasing streams to the central wheels of the government, were all deep worn in the soil, and familiarly known, with all their levels and connections, to every one who could be affected by their condition. In France, when the new sluices were opened, not only were the waters universally foul and turbid, but the quantity and the currents were all irregular and unknown; and some stagnated or trickled feebly along, while others rushed and roared with the violence and the mischief of a torrent. But it is time to leave these perplexing generalities, and come a little closer to the work before us.

It was the Cardinal de Richelieu, according to Madame de Staël, who completed the degradation of the French nobility, begun by Louis XI.; — and the arrogance and Spanish gravity of Louis XIV., assumed, as she says, "pour éloigner de lui la familiarité des jugemens," fixed them in the capacity of courtiers; and put an end to that gay and easy tone of communication, which in the days of Henri IV., had made the task of a courtier both less wearisome and less degrading. She has no partiality, indeed, for the memory of that buckram hero — and is very indignant at his being regarded as the patron of literature. "Il persécuta Port-Royal, dont Pascal étoit le chef; il fit mourir de chagrin Racine; il exila Fénélon; il s'opposa constamment aux honneurs qu'on vouloit rendre à La Fontaine, et ne professa de l'admiration que pour Boileau. La littérature, en l'exaltant avec excès, a bien plus fait pour lui qu'il n'a fait pour elle." — (Vol. i. p. 36.) In his own person, indeed, he outlived his popularity, if not his fame. The brilliancy of his early successes was lost in his later reverses. The debts he had contracted lay like a load on the nation; and the rigour and gloominess of his devotion was one cause of the alacrity with which the nation plunged into all the excesses and profligacy of the regency and the succeeding reign.

That reign — the weakness of Louis XV. — the avowed and disgusting influence of his mistresses and all their relations, and the national disasters which they occasioned—together with the general spread of intelligence among the body of the people, and the bold and vigorous spirit displayed in the writings of Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau, created a general feeling of discontent and contempt for the government, and prepared the way for those more intrepid reformers who were so soon destined to succeed.

Louis XVI., says Madame de Staël, would have been the mildest and most equitable of despots, and the most constitutional of constitutional kings — had he been born to administer either an established despotism, or a constitutional monarchy. But he was not fitted to fill the throne during the difficult and trying crisis of a *transition* from the one state to

the other. He was sincerely anxious for the happiness and even the rights of his people; but he had a hankering after the absolute power which seemed to be his lawful inheritance; and was too easily persuaded by those about him to cling to it too long, for his own safety, or that of the country. The Queen, with the same amiable dispositions, had still more of those natural prejudices. M. de Maurepas, a minister of the old school, was compelled, by the growing disorder of the finances, to call to his aid the talents of Turgot and Necker about the year 1780. We hear enough, of course, in this book, of the latter: but though we can pardon the filial piety which has led the author to discuss, at so great length, the merit of his plans of finance and government, and to dwell on the *prophetic* spirit in which he foresaw and foretold all the consequences that have flowed from rejecting them, we have too much regard for our readers to oppress them, at this time of day, with an analysis of the Compte Rendu, or the scheme for provincial assemblies. As an historical personage, he must have his due share of notice; and no fame can be purer than that to which he is entitled. His daughter, we think, has truly described the scope of his endeavours, in his first ministry, to have been, "to persuade the King to do of himself that justice to the people, to obtain which they afterwards insisted for representatives." Such a counsellor, of course, had no chance in 1780; and, the year after, M. Necker was accordingly dismissed. The great objection to him was, that he proposed innovations—"et de toutes les innovations, celle que les courtisans et les financiers détestent le plus, c'est l'Economie." Before going out, however, he did a great deal of good; and found means, while M. de Maurepas had a bad fit of gout, to get M. de Sartine removed from the ministry of marine—a personage so extremely diligent in the studies belonging to his department, that when M. Necker went to see him soon after his appointment, he found him in a chamber all hung round with maps; and boasting with much complacency, that "he could already put his hand upon the largest of them, and point, with his eyes shut, to the four quarters of the world!"

Calonne succeeded—a frivolous, presumptuous person,—and a financier, in so far as we can judge, after the fashion of our poet-laureate: for he too, it seems, was used to call prodigality "a large economy;" and to assure the King, that the more lavish he and his court were in their expenses, so much the better would it fare with the country. The consequence was, that the disorder soon became irremediable; and this sprightly minister was forced at last to adopt Turgot's proposal of subjecting the privileged orders to their share of the burdens—and finally to advise the convocation of the Notables, in 1787. The Notables, however, being all privileged persons, refused to give up any of their immunities—and they and M. de Calonne were dismissed accordingly. Then came the wavering and undecided administration of M. de Brienne, which ended with the resolution to assemble the States-General;—and this was the Revolution!

Hitherto, says Madame de Staël, the nation at large, and especially the lower orders, had taken no share in those discussions. The resistance to the Court—the complaints—the call for reformation, originated and was confined to the privileged orders—to the Parliaments—the Nobles and the Clergy. No revolution indeed can succeed in a civilized country, which does not begin at least with the higher orders. It was in the parliament of Paris, in which the peers of France had seats, and which had always been most tenacious of the privileges of its members, that the suggestion was first made which set fire to the four quarters of the kingdom. In that kingdom, indeed, it could hardly fail, as it was made in the form of a pun or *bon mot*. They were clamouring against the minister for not exhibiting his account of the public expenses, when the Abbé Sabatier said—"Vous demandez, messieurs, *les états de recette* et de dépense—et ce sont *les Etats-Généraux* qu'il nous faut!"—This was eagerly repeated in every order of society; addresses to that effect were poured in, in daily heaps; and at last M. de Brienne was obliged to promise, in the King's name, that the States-General should assemble at the end of five years. This delay only inflamed the general impatience: and the clergy having solemnly reclaimed against it, the King was at last obliged to announce that

they should meet early in the following year. M. Necker at the same time was recalled to the ministry.

The States-General were demanded by the privileged orders: and, if they really expected to find them as they were in 1614, which was their last meeting, (though it is not very conceivable that they should have overlooked the difference of the times), we can understand that they might have urged this demand without any design of being very liberal to the other orders of the community. This is the edifying abstract which Madame de Staël has given of the proceedings of that venerable assembly.

"*Le Clergé* demanda qu'il lui fût permis de lever des dîmes sur toute espèce de fruits et de grains, et qu'on défendît de lui faire payer des droits à l'entrée des villes, ou de lui imposer sa part des contributions pour les chemins: il réclama de nouvelles entraves à la liberté de la presse. *La Noblesse* demanda que les principaux emplois fussent tous donnés exclusivement aux gentilshommes, qu'on interdît aux roturiers les arquebuses, les pistolets, et l'usage des chiens, à moins qu'ils n'eussent les jarrets coupés. Elle demanda de plus que les roturiers payassent de nouveaux droits seigneuriaux aux gentilshommes possesseurs de fiefs; que l'on supprimât toutes les pensions accordées aux membres du tiers état; mais que les gentilshommes fussent exempts de la contrainte par corps, et de tout subside sur les denrées de leurs terres; qu'ils pussent prendre du sel dans les greniers du roi au même prix que les marchands; enfin que le tiers état fût obligé de porter un habit différent de celui des gentilshommes."—Vol. i. p. 162.

The States-General, however, were decreed;—and that the whole blame of innovation might still lie upon the higher orders, M. de Brienne, in the name of the King, invited all and sundry to make public their notions upon the manner in which that great body should be arranged. By the old form, the Nobles, the Clergy, and the Commons, each deliberated apart—and each had but one voice in the enactment of laws;—so that the privileged orders were always two to one against the other—and the course of legislation had always been to extend the privileges of the one, and increase the burdens of the other. Accordingly, the tiers état had long been defined, "*la gent corvéable et taillable, à merci et à miséricorde;*"—and Madame de Staël, in one of those passages that already begin to be valuable to the orgetful world, bears this striking testimony as to the effect on their actual condition.

"Les jeunes gens et les étrangers qui n'ont pas connu la France avant la révolution, et qui voient aujourd'hui le peuple enrichi par la division des propriétés et la suppression des dîmes et du régime féodal, ne peuvent avoir l'idée de la situation de ce pays, lorsque la nation portoit le poids de tous les priviléges. Les partisans de l'esclavage, dans les colonies, ont souvent dit qu'un paysan de France étoit plus malheureux qu'un nègre. C'étoit un argument pour soulager les blancs, mais non pour s'endurcir contre les noirs. La misère accroît l'ignorance, l'ignorance accroît la misère; et, quand on se demande pourquoi le peuple françoise a été si cruel dans la révolution, on ne peut en trouver la cause que dans l'absence de bonheur, qui conduit à l'absence de moralité."—Vol. i. p. 79.

But what made the injustice of this strange system of laying the heaviest pecuniary burdens on the poorest a thousand times more oppressive, and ten thousand times more provoking, was, that the invidious right of exemption came at last to be claimed, not by the true ancient noblesse of France, which, Madame de Staël says, did not extend to 200 families, but by hundreds of thousands of persons of all descriptions, who had bought patents of nobility for the very purpose of obtaining this exemption. There was nothing in the structure of French society that was more revolting, or called more loudly for reformation, than the multitude and the pretensions of this anomalous race. They were most jealously distinguished from the true original *Noblesse;* which guarded its purity indeed with such extreme rigour, that no person was allowed to enter any of the royal carriages whose patent of nobility was not certified by the Court heralds to bear date prior to the year 1400; and yet they not only assumed the name and title of nobles, but were admitted, as against the people, into a full participation of all their most offensive privileges. It is with justice, therefore, that Madame de Staël reckons as one great cause of the Revolution,—

"Cette foule de gentilshommes du second ordre, anoblis de la veille, soit par les lettres de noblesse que les rois donnoient comme faisant suite à l'affranchissement des Gaulois, soit par les charges vénales de secrétaire du roi, etc., qui associoient de nouveaux individus aux droits et aux priviléges des anciens gentilshommes. La nation se seroit soumise volontiers à la prééminence des familles historiques; et je n'exagère pas en affirmant qu'il n'y en a pas plus de deux cents en France. Mais les cent mille nobles et les cent mille prêtres qui vouloient avoir des priviléges,

à l'égal de ceux de MM. de Montmorenci, de Grammont, de Crillon, etc., révoltoient généralement; car des négocians, des hommes de lettres, des propriétaires, des capitalistes, ne pouvoient comprendre la supériorité qu'on vouloit accorder à cette noblesse acquise à prix der évérences ou d'argent, et à laquelle vingt-cinq ans de date suffisoient pour siéger dans la chambre des nobles, et pour jouir des privilèges dont les plus honorables membres du tiers état se voyoient privés.

"La chambre des pairs en Angleterre est une magistrature patricienne fondée sans doute sur les anciens souvenirs de la chevalerie, mais tout-à-fait associée à des institutions d'une nature très-différente. Un mérite distingué dans le commerce, et surtout dans la jurisprudence, en ouvre journellement l'entrée; et les droits représentatifs que les pairs exercent dans l'état, attestent à la nation que c'est pour le bien public que leurs rangs sont institués. Mais quel avantage les François pouvoient-ils trouver dans ces vicomtes de la Garonne, ou dans ces marquis de la Loire, qui ne payoient pas seulement leur part des impôts de l'état, et que le roi lui-même ne recevoit pas à sa cour; puisqu'il falloit faire des preuves de plus de quatre siècles pour y. être admis, et qu'ils étoient à peine anoblis depuis cinquante ans? La vanité des gens de cette classe ne pouvoit s'exercer que sur leurs inférieurs, et ces inférieurs, c'étoient vingt-quatre millions d'hommes." — Vol. i. pp. 166—168.

Strange as it may appear, there was no law or usage fixing *the number* of the deputies who might be returned; and though, by the usage of 1614, and some former assemblies, the three orders were allowed each but one voice in the legislature, there were earlier examples of the whole meeting and voting as individuals in the same assembly. M. de Brienne, as we have seen, took the sapient course of calling all the pamphleteers of the kingdom into council upon this emergency. It was fixed at last, though not without difficulty, that the deputies of the people should be equal in number to those of the other two classes together; and it is a trait worth mentioning, that *the only* committee of Nobles who voted for this concession, was that over which the present King of France (in 1818) presided. If it meant any thing, however, this concession implied that the whole body was to deliberate in common, and to vote individually; and yet, incredible as it now appears, the fact is, that the King and his ministers allowed the deputies to be elected, and *actually to assemble*, without having settled that great question, or even made any approach to its settlement! Of all the particular blunders that ensured or accelerated what was probably inevitable, this has always appeared to us to be one of the most inconceivable. The point, hewever, though not taken up by any authority, was plentifully discussed among the talkers of Paris; and Madame de Staël assures us, that the side of the *tiers état* was at that time the most fashionable in good company, as well as the most popular with the bulk of the nation. "Tous ceux et toutes celles qui, dans la haute compagnie de France, influoient sur l'opinion, parloient vivement en faveur de la cause de la nation. *La mode* étoit dans ce sens. C'étoit le résultat de tout le dixhuitième siècle; et les vieux préjugés, qui combattoient encore pour les anciennes institutions, avoient beaucoup moins de force alors, qu'ils ont eu à aucune époque pendant les vingt-cinq années suivantes. Enfin l'ascendant de l'esprit public étoit tel, qu'il entraîna le parlement lui-même." — (Vol. i. pp. 172, 173.) The clamour that was made against them was not at that time by the advocates of the royal prerogative, but by interested individuals of the privileged classes. On the contrary, Madame de Staël asserts positively, that the popular party was then disposed, as of old, to unite with the sovereign against the pretensions of those bodies, and that the sovereign was understood to participate in their sentiments. The statement certainly seems to derive no slight confirmation from the memorable words which were uttered at the time, in a public address by the reigning King of France, then the first of the Princes of the blood.—"Une grande révolution étoit prête, dit Monsieur (aujourd'hui Louis XVIII.) à la municipalité de Paris, en 1789; le roi, par ses intentions, ses vertus, et son rang suprême, *devoit en être le chef!*" We perfectly agree with Madame de Staël — "que toute la sagesse de la circonstance étoit dans ces paroles."

Nothing, says Madame de Staël, can be imagined more striking than the first sight of the 1200 deputies of France, as they passed in solemn procession to hear mass at Notre Dame, the day before the meeting of the States-General.

"La Noblesse se trouvant déchue de sa splendeur, par l'esprit de courtisan, par l'alliage des anoblis, et par une longue paix; le Clergé ne possédant plus l'ascendant des lumières qu'il avoit eu dans les temps barbares; l'importance des députés du Tiers état en étoit augmentée. Leurs habits et leurs manteaux

noirs, leurs regards assurés, leur nombre imposant, attiroient l'attention sur eux : des hommes de lettres, des négocians, un grand nombre d'avocats composoient ce troisième ordre. Quelques nobles s'étoient fait nommer députés du tiers, et parmi ces nobles on remarquoit surtout le Comte de *Mirabeau* : l'opinion qu'on avoit de son esprit étoit singulièrement augmentée par la peur que faisoit son immoralité; et cependant c'est cette immoralité même qui a diminué l'influence que ses étonnantes facultés devoient lui valoir. Il étoit difficile de ne pas le regarder longtemps, quand on l'avoit une fois aperçu : son immense chevelure le distinguoit entre tous : on eût dit que sa force en dépendoit comme celle de Samson ; son visage empruntoit de l'expression de sa laideur même; et toute sa personne donnoit l'idée d'une puissance irrégulière, mais enfin d'une puissance telle qu'on se la représenteroit dans un tribun de peuple.

" Aucun nom propre, excepté le sien, n'étoit encore célèbre dans les six cents députés de tiers; mais il y avoit beaucoup d'hommes honorables, et beaucoup d'hommes à craindre." — Vol. i. pp. 185, 186.

The first day of their meeting, the deputies of course insisted that the whole three orders should sit and vote together ; and the majority of the nobles and clergy of course resisted : — and this went on for nearly two months, in the face of the mob of Paris and the people of France — before the King and his Council could make up their own minds on the matter! The inner cabinet, in which the Queen and the Princes had the chief sway, had now taken the alarm, and was for resisting the pretensions of the Third Estate; while M. Necker, and the ostensible ministers, were for compromising with them, while their power was not yet proved by experience, nor their pretensions raised by victory. The Ultras, relied on the army, and were for dismissing the Legislature as soon as they had granted a few taxes. M. Necker plainly told the King, that he did not think that the army could be relied on ; and that he ought to make up his mind to reign hereafter under a constitution like that of England. There were fierce disputes, and endless consultations; and at length, within three weeks after the States were opened, and before the Commons had gained any decided advantage, M. Necker obtained the full assent both of the King and Queen to a declaration, in which it was to be announced to the States, that they should sit and vote as *one* body in all questions of *taxation*, and in *two* chambers only in all other questions. This arrangement, Madame de Staël assures us, would have satisfied the Commons at the time, and invested the throne with the great strength of popularity. But, after a full and deliberate consent had been given by both their Majesties, the party about the Queen found means to put off from day to day the publication of the important instrument ; and a whole month was unpardonably wasted in idle discussions ; during which, nearly one half of the nobles and clergy had joined the deputies of the Commons, and taken the name of the National Assembly. Their popularity and confidence had been dangerously increased, in the mean time, by their orators and pamphleteers ; and the Court had become the object of suspicion and discontent, both by the rumour of the approach of its armies to the capital, and by what Madame de Staël calls the *accidental* exclusion of the deputies from their ordinary place of meeting — which gave occasion to the celebrated and theatrical oath of the Tenniscourt. After all, Madame de Staël says, much might have been regained or saved, by issuing M. Necker's declaration. But the very night before it was to be delivered, the council was adjourned, in consequence of a billet from the Queen ; — two new councillors and two princes of the blood were called to take part in the deliberations; and it was suddenly determined, that the King should announce it as his pleasure, that the Three Estates should meet and vote in their three separate chambers, as they had done in 1614!

M. Necker, full of fear and sorrow, refused to go to the meeting at which the King was to make this important communication. It was made, however — and received with murmurs of deep displeasure; and, when the Chancellor ordered the deputies to withdraw to their separate chambers, they answered, that they were the National Assembly, and would stay where they were! The whole visible population seconded this resolution, with indications of a terrible and irresistible violence. Perseverance, it was immediately seen, would have led to the most dreadful consequences; and the same night the Queen entreated M. Necker to take the management of the State upon himself, and solemnly engaged to follow no councils but his. The minister complied ; — and immediately the obnoxious order was recalled,

and a royal mandate was issued to the Nobles and the Clergy, to join the deliberations of the Tiers état.

If these reconciling measures had been sincerely followed out, the country and the monarchy might yet perhaps have been saved. But the party of the Ultras — "qui parloit avec beaucoup de dédain de l'autorité du roi d'Angleterre, et vouloit faire considérer comme un attentat, la pensée de réduire un roi de France au misérable sort du monarque Britannique" —this misguided party — had still too much weight in the royal councils; and, while they took advantage of the calm produced by M. Necker's measures and popularity, did not cease secretly to hasten the march of M. de Broglie with his German regiments upon Paris — with the design, scarcely dissembled, of employing them to overawe, and, if necessary, to disperse the assembly. Considering from whom her information is derived, we can scarcely refuse our implicit belief to the following important statement, which has never yet been made on equal authority.

"M. Necker n'ignoroit pas le véritable objet pour lequel on faisoit avancer les troupes, bien qu'on voulût le lui cacher. L'intention de la cour étoit de réunir à Compiègne tous les membres des trois ordres qui n'avoient point favorisé le système des innovations, et là de leur faire consentir à la hâte les impôts et les emprunts dont elle avoit besoin, afin de *les renvoyer* ensuite! Comme un tel projet ne pouvoit être secondé par M. Necker, on se proposoit de le renvoyer dès que la force militaire seroit rassemblée. Cinquante avis par jour l'informoient de sa situation, et il ne lui étoit pas possible d'en douter; mais il savoit aussi que, dans les circonstances où l'on se trouvoit alors, il ne pouvoit quitter sa place sans confirmer les bruits qui se répandoient sur les mesures violentes que l'on préparoit à la cour. Le roi s'étant résolu à ces mesures, M. Necker ne voulut pas y prendre part, mais il ne vouloit pas non plus donner le signal de s'y opposer; et il restoit là comme une sentinelle qu'on laissoit encore à son poste, pour tromper les attaquans sur la manœuvre." — Vol. i. pp. 231—233.

He conti ued, accordingly, to go every day to the palace, where he was received with cold civility; and at last, when the troops were all assembled, he received an order in the middle of the night, commanding him instantly to quit France, and to let no one know of his departure. This was on the night of the 11th of July; — and as soon as his dismissal was known, all Paris rose in insurrection — an army of 100,000 men was arrayed in a night — and, on the 14th, the Bastille was demolished, and the King brought as a prisoner to the Hotel de Ville, to express his approbation of all that had been done! M. Necker, who had got as far as Brussels, was instantly recalled. Upwards of two millions of men took up arms throughout the country — and it was manifest that a great revolution was already consummated!

There is next a series of lively and masterly sketches of the different parties in the Constituent Assembly, and their various leaders. Of these, the most remarkable, by far, was Mirabeau; who appeared in opposition to Necker, like the evil spirit of the Revolution, contending with its better angel. Madame de Staël says of him, that he was "Tribun par calcul, et Aristocrat par goût." There never, perhaps, was an instance of so much talent being accompanied and neutralized by so much profligacy. Of all the daring spirits that appeared on that troubled scene, no one, during his life, ever dared to encounter him, and yet, such was his want of principle, that no one party, and no one individual, trusted him with their secrets. His fearlessness, promptitude, and energy, overbore all competition; and his ambition seemed to be, to show how the making or the marring of all things depended upon his good pleasure. Madame de Staël confirms what has often been said of his occasional difficulty in *extempore* speaking, and of his habitually employing his friends to write his speeches and letters; but, after his death, she says none of them could ever produce for themselves any thing equal to what they used to catch from his inspiration In debate, he was artful when worsted, and merciless when successful. What he said of the Abbé Maury, was true of all his opponents — "Quand il a raison, nous disputons; quand il a tort, *je l'écrase!*"

Opposed to this, and finely contrasted with it, is the character of M. de la Fayette — the purest, the most temperate, and therefore the most inflexible friend of rational liberty in France. Considering the times in which he has lived, and the treatment he has met with, it is a proud thing for a nation to be able to name *one* of its public characters, to whom this

high testimony can be borne without risk of contradiction. "Depuis le départ de M. de la Fayette pour l'Amérique, il y a quarante ans, on ne peut citer ni une action, ni une parole de lui qui n'ait été dans la même ligne, sans qu'aucun intérêt personnel se soit jamais mêlé à sa conduite." The Abbé Sieyes seems to us a little like our Bentham. At all events, this little sketch of him is worth preserving.

"Il avoit mené jusqu'à quarante ans une vie solitaire, réfléchissant sur les questions politiques, et portant une grand force d'abstraction dans cette étude; mais il étoit peu fait pour communiquer avec les autres hommes, tant il s'irritoit aisément de leurs travers, et tant il les blessoit par les siens. Toutefois, comme il avoit un esprit supérieur et des façons de s'exprimer laconiques et tranchantes, c'étoit la mode dans l'assemblée de lui montrer un respect presque superstitieux. Mirabeau ne demandoit pas mieux que d'accorder au silence de l'Abbé Sieyes le pas sur sa propre éloquence; car ce genre de rivalité n'est pas redoutable. On croyoit à Sieyes, à cet homme mystérieux, des secrets sur les constitutions, dont on espéroit toujours des effets étonnans quand il les révéleroit. Quelques jeunes gens, et même des esprits d'une grande force, professoient la plus haute admiration pour lui; et l'on s'accordoit à le louer aux dépens de tout autre, parce qu'il ne se faisoit jamais juger en entier, dans aucune circonstance. Ce qu'on savoit avec certitude, c'est qu'il détestoit les distinctions nobiliaires; et cependant il avoit conservé de son état de prêtre un attachement au clergé, qui se manifesta le plus clairement du monde lors de la suppression des dîmes. *Ils veulent être libres, et ne savent pas être justes!* disoit-il à cette occasion; et toutes les fautes de l'assemblée étoient renfermées dans ces paroles." — Vol. i. pp. 305, 306.

The most remarkable party, perhaps, in the Assembly was that of the Aristocrats, consisting chiefly of the Nobles and Clergy, and about thirty of the Commons. In the situation in which they were placed, one would have expected a good deal of anxiety, bitterness, or enthusiasm from them. But, in France, things affect people differently. Nothing can be more characteristic than the following powerful sketch. "Ce parti, qui avoit protesté contre toutes les résolutions de l'assemblée, n'y assistoit que par prudence. Tout ce qu'on y faisoit lui paroissoit insolent, *mais très-peu sérieux!* tant il trouvoit *ridicule* cette découverte du dix-huitième siècle, *une nation!* — tandis qu'on n'avoit eu jusqu'alors que des nobles, des prêtres, et du peuple!" — (vol. i. p. 298.) They had their counterpart, however, on the opposite side. The speculative, refining, and philanthropic reformers, were precisely a match for them. There is infinite talent, truth, and pathos in the following hasty observations.

"Ils gagnèrent de l'ascendant dans l'assemblée, en se moquant des modérés, comme si la modération étoit de la foiblesse, et qu'eux seuls fussent des caractères forts. On les voyoit, dans les salles et sur les bancs des députés, tourner en ridicule quiconque s'avisoit de leur représenter qu'avant eux les hommes avoient existé en société; que les écrivains avoient pensé, et que l'Angleterre étoit en possession de quelque liberté. On eût dit qu'on leur répétoit les contes de leur nourrice, tant ils écoutoient avec impatience, tant ils prononçoient avec dédain de certaines phrases bien exagérées et bien décisives, sur l'impossibilité d'admettre un sénat héréditaire, un sénat même à vie, un veto absolu, une condition de propriété, enfin tout ce qui, disoient-ils, attentoit à la souveraineté du peuple! *Ils portoient la fatuité des cours dans la cause démocratique;* et plusieurs députés du tiers étoient, tout à la fois, éblouis par leurs belles manières de gentilshommes, et captivés par leurs doctrines démocratiques.

"Ces chefs élégans du parti populaire vouloient entrer dans le ministère. Ils souhaitoient de conduire les affaires jusqu'au point où l'on auroit besoin d'eux; mais, dans cette rapide descente, le char ne s'arrêta point à leurs relais; ils n'étoient point conspirateurs, mais ils se confioient trop en leur pouvoir sur l'assemblée, et se flattoient de relever le trône dès qu'ils l'auroient fait arriver jusqu'à leur portée. Mais, quand ils voulurent de bonne foi réparer le mal déjà fait, il n'étoit plus temps. On ne sauroit compter combien de désastres auroient pu être épargnés à la France, si ce parti de jeunes gens se fût réuni avec les modérés: car, avant les évènemens du 6 Octobre, lorsque le roi n'avoit point été enlevé de Versailles, et que l'armée Françoise, repandue dans les provinces, conservoit encore quelque respect pour le trône, les circonstances étoient telles qu'on pouvoit établir une monarchie raisonnable en France." — Vol. i. pp. 303—305.

It is a curious proof of the vivaciousness of vulgar prejudices, that Madame de Staël should have thought it necessary, in 1816, to refute, in a separate chapter, the popular opinion that the disorders in France in 1790 and 1791 were fomented by the hired agents of England.

There is a long and very interesting account of the outrages and horrors of the 5th October, 1789, and of the tumultuous conveyance of the captive monarch from Versailles to Paris, by a murderous and infuriated mob. Madame de Staël was herself a spectatress of the whole scene in the interior of the palace;

and though there is not much that is new in her account, we cannot resist making one little extract. After the mob had filled all the courts of the palace, —

"La reine parut alors dans le salon; ses cheveux étoient en désordre, sa figure étoit pâle, mais digne, et tout, dans sa personne, frappoit l'imagination: le peuple demanda qu'elle parût sur le balcon: et, comme toute la cour, appelée la cour de marbre, étoit remplie d'hommes qui tenoient en main des armes à feu, on put apercevoir dans la physionomie de la reine ce qu'elle redoutoit. Néanmoins, *elle s'avança, sans hésiter*, avec ses deux enfans qui lui servoient de sauvegarde.

"La multitude parut attendrie, en voyant la reine comme mère, et les fureurs politiques s'apaisèrent à cet aspect; ceux qui, la nuit même, avoient peut-être voulu l'assassiner, portèrent son nom jusqu'aux nues.

"La reine, en sortant du balcon, s'approcha de ma mère, et lui dit, avec des sanglots étouffés: *Ils vont nous forcer, le roi et moi, à nous rendre à Paris — avec les têtes de nos gardes du corps portées devant nous au bout de leurs piques!* Sa prédiction faillit s'accomplir. *Ainsi* la reine et le roi furent amenés dans leur capitale! Nous revînmes à Paris par une autre route, qui nous éloignoit de cet affreux spectacle: c'étoit à travers le bois de Boulogne que nous passâmes, et le temps étoit d'une rare beauté; l'air agitoit à peine les arbres, et le soleil avoit assez d'éclat pour ne laisser rien de sombre dans la campagne: aucun objet extérieur ne répondoit à notre tristesse. Combien de fois ce contraste, entre la beauté de la nature et les souffrances imposées par les hommes, ne se renouvelle-t-il pas dans le cours de la vie!

"Quel spectacle en effet que cet ancien palais des Tuileries, abandonné depuis plus d'un siècle par ses augustes hôtes! La vétusté des objets extérieurs agissoit sur l'imagination, et la faisoit errer dans les temps passés. Comme on étoit loin de prévoir l'arrivée de la famille royale, très-peu d'appartemens étoient habitables, et la reine avoit été obligée de faire dresser des lits de camp pour ses enfans, dans la chambre même où elle recevoit; elle nous en fit des excuses, en ajoutant: *Vous savez que je ne m'attendois pas à venir ici.* Sa physionomie étoit belle et irritée; on ne peut l'oublier quand on l'a vue." — Vol. i. pp. 347—349.

It has always struck us as a singular defect in all the writers who have spoken of those scenes of decisive violence in the early history of the French Revolution, such as the 14th of July; and this of the 6th of October, that they do not so much as attempt to explain by what instigation they were brought about — or by whom the plan of operations was formed, and the means for carrying it into execution provided. That there was concert and preparation in the business, is sufficiently apparent from the magnitude and suddenness of the assemblage, and the skill and systematic perseverance with which they set about accomplishing their purposes. Yet we know as little, at this hour, of the plotters and authors of the mischief, as we do of the Porteous mob. Madame de Staël contents herself with saying, that these dreadful scenes signalized "l'avènement des Jacobins;" but seems to exculpate all the known leaders of that party from any actual concern in the transaction; — and yet it was that transaction that subverted the monarchy!

Then came the abolition of titles of nobility — the institution of a constitutional clergy — and the federation of 14th July, 1790. In spite of the storms and showers of blood which we have already noticed, the political horizon, it seems, still looked bright in the eyes of France. The following picture is lively — and is among the traits which history does not usually preserve — and which, what she does preserve, certainly would not enable future ages to conjecture.

"Les étrangers ne sauroient concevoir le charme et l'éclat tant vanté de la société de Paris, s'ils n'ont vus la France que depuis vingt ans: mais on peut dire avec vérité, que jamais cette société n'a été aussi brillante et aussi sérieuse tout ensemble, que pendant les trois ou quatre premières années de la révolution, à compter de 1788 jusqu'à la fin de 1791. Commes les affaires politiques étoient encore entre les mains de la première classe, toute la vigueur de la liberté et toute la grâce de la politesse ancienne se réunissoient dans les mêmes personnes. Les hommes du tiers état, distingués par leurs lumières et leurs talens, se joignoient à ces gentilshommes plus fiers de leur propre mérite que des privilèges de leurs corps; et les plus hautes questions que l'ordre social ait jamais fait naître étoient traitées par les esprits les plus capables de les entendre et de les discuter.

"Ce qui nuit aux agrémens de la société en Angleterre, ce sont les occupations et les intérêts d'un état depuis long-temps représentatif. Ce qui rendoit au contraire la société françoise un peu superficielle, c'étoient les loisirs de la monarchie. Mais tout à coup la force de la liberté vint se mêler à l'élégance de l'aristocratie; dans aucun pays ni dans aucun temps, l'art de parler sous toutes ses formes n'a été aussi rémarquable que dans les premières années de la révolution.

"L'assemblée constituante, comme je l'ai déjà dit, ne suspendit pas un seul jour la liberté de la presse. Ainsi ceux qui souffroient de se trouver constamment en minorité dans l'assemblée, avoient au moins la satisfaction de se moquer de tout le parti contraire. Leurs journaux faisoient de spirituels calembours sur

les circonstances les plus importantes; c'étoit l'histoire du monde changée en commérage! Tel est partout le caractère de l'aristocratie des cours. C'est la dernière fois, hélas! que l'esprit françoise se soit montré dans tout son éclat; c'est la dernière fois, et à quelques égards aussi la première, que la société de Paris ait pu donner l'idée de cette communication des esprits supérieurs entre eux, la plus noble jouissance dont la nature humaine soit capable. Ceux qui ont vécu dans ce temps ne sauroient s'empêcher d'avouer qu'on n'a jamais vu ni tant de vie ni tant d'esprit nulle part; l'on peut juger, par la foule d'hommes de talens que les circonstances développèrent alors, ce que seroient les François, s'ils étoient appelés à se mêler des affaires publiques dans la route tracée par une constitution sage et sincère." — Vol. i. pp. 383—386.

Very soon after the federation, the King entered into secret communications with Mirabeau, and expected by his means, and those of M. Bouillé and his army, to emancipate himself from the bondage in which he was held. The plan was, to retire to Compiegne; and there, by the help of the army, to purge the Assembly, and restore the royal authority. Madame de Staël says, that Mirabeau insisted for a constitution like that of England; but, as an armed force was avowedly the organ by which he was to act, one may be permitted to doubt, whether he could seriously expect this to be granted. In the mean time, the policy of the King was to appear to agree to every thing; and, as this appeared to M. Necker, who was not in the secret, to be an unjustifiable abandonment of himself and the country, he tendered his resignation, and was allowed to retire — and then followed the death of Mirabeau, and shortly after the flight and apprehension of the King — the revision of the constitution—and the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, with a self-denying ordinance, declaring, that none of its members should be capable of being elected into the next legislature.

There is an admirable chapter on the emigration of 1791 — that emigration, in the spirit of party and of *bon ton*, which at once exasperated and strengthened the party who ought to have been opposed, and irretrievably injured a cause which was worse than deserted, when foreigners were called in to support it. Madame de Staël is decidedly of opinion, that the Nobles should have staid, and resisted what was wrong — or submitted to it. "Mais ils ont trouvé plus simple d'invoquer la gendarmerie Européenne, afin de mettre Paris à raison." The fate of their country, which ought to have been their only concern, was always a secondary object, in their eyes, to the triumph of their own opinions — "ils l'ont voulu comme un jaloux sa maîtresse — fidelle au mort,"—and seem rather to have considered themselves as allied to all the other nobles of Europe, than as a part of the French nation.

The Constituent Assembly made more laws in two years than the English parliament had done in two hundred. The succeeding assembly made as many — with this difference, that while the former aimed, for the most part, at general reformation, the last were all personal and vindictive. The speculative republicans were for some time the leaders of this industrious body; — and Madame de Staël, in describing their tone and temper while in power, has given a picture of the political tractability of her countrymen, which could scarcely have been endured from a stranger.

"Aucun argument, aucune inquiétude n'étoient écoutés par ses chefs. Ils répondoient aux observations de la sagesse, et de la sagesse désintéressée, par un sourire moqueur, symptôme de l'aridité qui résulte de l'amour-propre: on s'épuisoit à leur rappeller les circonstances, et à leur en déduire les causes; on passoit tour à tour de la théorie à l'expérience, et de l'experience à la théorie, pour leur en montrer l'identité; et, s'ils consentoient à répondre, ils nioient les faits les plus authentiques, et combattoient les observations les plus évidentes, en y opposant quelques maximes communes, bien qu'exprimées avec éloquence. Ils se regardoient entre eux, comme s'ils avoient été seuls dignes de s'entendre, et s'encourageoient par l'idée que tout étoit pusillanimité dans la résistance à leur manière de voir. Tels sont les signes de l'esprit de parti chez les François! Le dédain pour leurs adversaires en est la base, et le dédain s'oppose toujours à la connoissance de la vérité." — "Mais dans les débats politiques," she adds, "où la masse d'une nation prend part, il n'y a que la voix des évènemens qui soit entendue; les argumens n'inspirent que le désir de leur répondre."

The King, who seemed for a time to have resigned himself to his fate, was roused at last to refuse his assent to certain brutal decrees against the recusant priests — and his palace and his person were immediately invaded by a ferocious mob — and he was soon after compelled with all his family to assist at the anniversary of the 14th July, where, except the plaudits of a few children, every thing was dark and menacing. The following few lines appear to us excessively touching.

"Il falloit le caractère de Louis XVI., ce caractère de martyr qu'il n'a jamais démenti, pour supporter ainsi une pareille situation. Sa manière de marcher, sa contenance avoient quelque chose de particulier. Dans d'autres occasions, on auroit pu lui souhaiter plus de grandeur; mais il suffisoit dans ce moment de rester en tout le même, pour paroître sublime. Je suivis de loin sa tête poudrée au milieu de ces têtes à cheveux noirs; son habit, encore brodé comme jadis, ressortoit à côté du costume des gens du peuple qui se pressoient autour de lui. Quand il monta les dégrés de l'autel, on crut voir la victime saint, s'offrant volontairement en sacrifice! Il redescendit; et, traversant de nouveau les rangs en désordre, il revint s'asseoir auprès de la reine et de ses enfans. Depuis ce jour, le peuple ne l'a plus revu — que sur l'échafaud!" — Vol. ii. pp. 54, 55.

Soon after, the allies entered France; the King refused to take shelter in the army of M. de la Fayette at Compiegne. His palace was stormed, and his guards butchered, on the 10th of August. He was committed to the Temple, arraigned, and executed! and the reign of terror, with all its unspeakable atrocities, ensued.

We must pass over much of what is most interesting in the book before us; for we find that the most rapid sketch we can trace, would draw us into great length. Madame de Staël thinks that the war was nearly unavoidable on the part of England; and, after a brief character of our Fox and Pitt, she says,

"Il pouvoit être avantageux toutefois à l'Angleterre que M. Pitt fût le chef de l'état dans la crise la plus dangereuse où ce pays se soit trouvé; mais il ne l'étoit pas moins, qu'un esprit aussi étendu que celui de M. Fox soutînt les principes malgré les circonstances; et sût préserver les dieux pénates des amis de la liberté, au milieu de l'incendie. Ce n'est point pour contenter les deux partis que je les loue ainsi tous les deux, quoiqu'ils aient soutenu des opinions très-opposées. Le contraire en France devroit peut-être avoir lieu; les factions diverses y sont presque toujours également blâmables: mais dans un pays libre, les partisans du ministère et les membres de l'opposition peuvent avoir tous raison à leur manière; et ils font souvent chacun du bien selon l'époque. Ce qui importe seulement, c'est de ne pas prolonger le pouvoir acquis par la lutte, après que le danger est passé." — Vol. ii. p. 113.

There is an excellent chapter on the excesses of the parties and the people of France at this period; which she refers to the sudden exasperation of those principles of natural hostility by which the high and the low are always in some degree actuated, and which are only kept from breaking out by the mutual concessions which the law, in ordinary times, exacts from both parties. The law was now annihilated in that country, and the natural antipathies were called into uncontrolled activity; the intolerance of one party having no longer any check but the intolerance of the other.

"Les querelles des patriciens et des plébéiens, la guerre des esclaves, celle des paysans, celle qui dure encore entre les nobles et les bourgeois, toutes ont eu également pour origine la difficulté de maintenir la société humaine, sans désordre et sans injustice. Les hommes ne pourroient exister aujourd'hui, ni séparés, ni réunis, si le respect de la loi ne s'établissoit pas dans les têtes: tous les crimes naîtroient de la société même qui doit les prévenir. Le pouvoir abstrait des gouvernemens représentatifs n'irrite en rien l'orgueil des hommes; et c'est par cette institution que doivent s'éteindre les flambeaux des furies. Ils se sont allumés dans un pays où tout étoit amour-propre; et l'amour-propre irrité, chez le peuple, ne ressemble point à nos nuances fugitives; c'est le besoin de donner la mort!

"Des massacres, non moins affreux que ceux de la terreur, ont été commis au nom de la religion; la race humaine s'est épuisée pendant plusieurs siècles en efforts inutiles pour contraindre tous les hommes à la même croyance. Un tel but ne pouvoit être atteint; et l'idée la plus simple, tolérance, telle que Guillaume Penn l'a professée, a banni pour toujours, du nord de l'Amérique, le fanatisme dont le midi a été l'affreux théâtre. Il en est de même du fanatisme politique; la liberté seul peut le calmer. Après un certain temps, quelques vérités ne seront plus contestées; et l'on parlera des vieilles institutions comme des anciens systèmes de physique, entièrement effacés par l'évidence des faits." — Vol. ii. pp. 115—118.

We can afford to say nothing of the Directory, or of the successes of the national army; but it is impossible to pass quite over the 18th Fructidor (4th September) 1797, when the majority of the Directory sent General Augereau with an armed force to disperse the legislative bodies, and arrest certain of their members. This step Madame de Staël considers as the beginning of that system of military despotism which was afterwards carried so far; and seems seriously to believe, that, if it had not been then adopted, the reign of law might yet have been restored, and the usurpation of Bonaparte prevented. To us it seems infinitely more probable, that the Bourbons would then have been brought back without any conditions — or rather, perhaps, that a civil war, and a scene of far more sanguinary violence, would have ensued. She does not dispute that the royalist party was very strong in both the

councils; but seems to think, that an address or declaration by the army would have discomfited them more becomingly than an actual attack. We confess we are not so delicate. Law and order had been sufficiently trodden on already, by the Jacobin clubs and revolutionary tribunals; and the battalions of General Augereau were just as well entitled to domineer as the armed sections and butchering mobs of Paris. There was no longer, in short, any sanctity or principle of civil right acknowledged; and it was time that the force and terror which had substantially reigned for three years, should appear in their native colours. They certainly became somewhat less atrocious when thus openly avowed.

We come at last to Bonaparte—a name that *will* go down to posterity, and of whom it is not yet clear, perhaps, how posterity will judge. The greatest of conquerors, in an age when great conquests appeared no longer possible—the most splendid of usurpers, where usurpation had not been heard of for centuries—who entered in triumph almost all the capitals of Continental Europe; and led, at last, to his bed, the daughter of her proudest sovereign—who set up kings and put them down at his pleasure, and, for sixteen years, defied alike the swords of his foreign enemies and the daggers of his domestic factions! This is a man on whom future generations must yet sit in judgment. But the evidence by which they are to judge must be transmitted to them by his contemporaries. Madame de Staël has collected a great deal of this evidence; and has reported it, we think, on the whole, in a tone of great impartiality: though not without some indications of personal dislike. Her whole talents seem to be roused and concentrated when she begins to speak of this extraordinary man; and much and ably as his character has been lately discussed, we do think it has never been half so well described as in the volumes before us. We shall venture on a pretty long extract, beginning with the account of their first interview; for on this, as on most other subjects, Madame de Staël has the unspeakable advantage of writing from her own observation. After mentioning the great popularity he had acquired by his victories in Italy, and the peace by which he had secured them at Campo Formio, she says—

"C'est avec ce sentiment, du moins, que je le vis pour la première fois à Paris. Je ne trouvai pas de paroles pour lui répondre, quand il vint à moi me dire qu'il avoit cherché mon père à Coppet, et qu'il regrettoit d'avoir passé en Suisse sans le voir. Mais, lorsque je fus un peu remise du trouble de l'admiration, un sentiment de crainte très-prononcé lui succéda! Bonaparte alors n'avoit aucune puissance: on le croyoit même assez menacé par les soupçons ombrageux du directoire; ainsi, la crainte qu'il inspiroit n'étoit causée que par le singulier effet de sa personne sur presque tous ceux qui l'approchent! J'avois vu des hommes très-dignes de respect; j'avois vu aussi des hommes féroces: il n'y avoit rien dans l'impression que Bonaparte produisit sur moi, qui pût me rappeller ni les uns ni les autres. J'aperçus assez vite, dans les différentes occasions que j'eus de le rencontrer pendant son séjour à Paris, que son caractère ne pouvoit être défini par les mots dont nous avons coutume de nous servir; il n'étoit ni bon, ni violent, ni doux, ni cruel, à la façon des individus à nous connus. Un tel être n'ayant point de pareil, ne pouvoit ni ressentir, ni faire éprouver aucune sympathie. C'étoit plus ou moins qu'un homme! Sa tournure, son esprit, son langage sont empreints d'une nature étrangère—avantage de plus pour subjuguer les François, ainsi que nous l'avons dit ailleurs.

"Loin de me rassurer en voyant Bonaparte plus souvent, il m'intimidoit toujours davantage! Je sentois confusément qu'aucune émotion de cœur ne pouvoit agir sur lui. Il regarde une créature humaine comme un fait ou comme une chose, mais non comme un semblable. Il ne hait pas plus qu'il n'aime. Il n'y a que lui pour lui; tout le reste des créatures sont des chiffres. La force de sa volonté consiste dans l'imperturbable calcul de son égoïsme; c'est un habile joueur d'échecs, dont le genre humain est la partie adverse qu'il se propose de faire échec et mat. Ses succès tiennent autant aux qualités qui lui manquent, qu'aux talens qu'il possède. Ni la pitié, ni l'attrait, ni la religion, ni l'attachement à une idée quelconque ne sauroient le détourner de sa direction principale. Il est pour son intérêt, ce que le juste doit être pour la vertu: si le but étoit bon, sa persévérance seroit belle.

"Chaque fois que je l'entendois parler, j'étois frappée de sa supériorité. Elle n'avoit pourtant aucun rapport avec celle des hommes instruits et cultivés par l'étude ou la société, telle que l'Angleterre et la France peuvent en offrir des exemples. Mais ses discours indiquoient le tact des circonstances, comme le chasseur a celui de sa proie. Quelquefois il racontoit les faits politiques et militaires de sa vie d'une façon très-intéressante; il avoit même, dans les récits qui permettoient de la gaieté, un peu de l'imagination italienne. Cependant rien ne pouvoit triompher de mon invincible éloignement pour ce que j'apercevois en lui. Je sentois dans son âme une épée froide et tranchante qui glaçoit en blessant! Je sentois dans son esprit une ironie profonde à laquelle rien de grand ni de beau, *pas même sa propre gloire*, ne pouvoit échapper: car il méprisoit la nation dont il vouloit les suffrages,

et nulle étincelle d'enthousiasme ne se mêloit à son besoin d'étonner l'espèce humaine.

"Ce fut dans l'intervalle entre le retour de Bonaparte et son départ pour l'Egypte, c'est-à-dire, vers la fin de 1797, que je le vis plusieurs fois à Paris; et jamais la difficulté de respirer que j'éprouvois en sa présence ne put se dissiper. J'étois un jour à table entre lui et l'abbé Sieyes: singulière situation, si j'avois pu prévoir l'avenir! J'examinois avec attention la figure de Bonaparte; mais chaque fois qu'il découvroit en moi des regards observateurs, il avoit l'art d'ôter à ses yeux toute expression, comme s'ils fussent devenus de marbre. Son visage étoit alors immobile; excepté un sourire vague qu'il plaçoit sur ses lèvres à tout hasard, pour dérouter quiconque voudroit observer les signes extérieures de sa pensée.

"Sa figure, alors maigre et pâle, étoit assez agréable; depuis, il est engraissé, ce qui lui va très-mal: car on a besoin de croire un tel homme tourmenté par son caractère, pour tolérer un peu que ce caractère fasse tellement souffrir les autres. Comme sa stature est petite, et cependant sa taille fort longue, il étoit beaucoup mieux à cheval qu'à pied; en tout, c'est la guerre, et seulement la guerre qui lui sied. Sa manière d'être dans la société est gênée sans timidité. Il a quelque chose de dédaigneux quand il se contient, et de vulgaire quand il se met à l'aise. Le dédain lui va mieux — aussi ne s'en fait-il pas faute.

"Par une vocation naturelle pour l'état de prince, il adressoit déjà des questions insignifiantes à tous ceux qu'on lui présentoit. Etes-vous marié? demandoit-il à l'un des convives. Combien avez-vous d'enfans? disoit-il à l'autre. Depuis quand êtes-vous arrivé? Quand partez-vous? Et autres interrogations de ce genre, qui établissent la supériorité de celui qui les fait sur celui qui veut bien se laisser questionner ainsi.

"Je l'ai vu un jour s'approcher d'une Françoise très connue par sa beaute, son esprit et la vivacité de ses opinions; il se plaça tout droit devant elle comme le plus roide des généraux allemands, et lui dit: '*Madame, je n'aime pas que les femmes se mêlent de politique.*' —'*Vous avez raison, général,*' lui répondit-elle: '*mais dans un pays où on leur coupe la tête, il est naturel qu'elles aient envie de savoir pourquoi.*' Bonaparte alors ne répliqua rien. C'est un homme que la resistance véritable apaise; ceux qui ont souffert son despotisme, doivent en être autant accusés que lui-même." — Vol. ii. pp. 198—204.

The following little anecdote is every way characteristic.

"Un soir il parloit avec Barras de son ascendant sur les peuples italiens, qui avoient voulu le faire duc de Milan et roi d'Italie. '*Mais je ne pense,*' dit-il, '*à rien de semblable dans aucun pays.*' — '*Vous faites bien de n'y pas songer en France,*' répondit Barras; '*car, si le directoire vous envoyoit demain au Temple, il n'y auroit pas quatre personnes qui s'y opposassent.*' Bonaparte étoit assis sur un canapé à côté de Barras: à ces paroles il s'élança vers la cheminée, n'étant pas maître de son irritation; puis, reprenant cette espèce de calme apparent dont les hommes les plus passionnés parmi les habitans du Midi sont capables, il déclara qu'il vouloit être chargé d'une expédition militaire. Le directoire lui proposa la descente en Angleterre; il alla visiter les côtes; et reconnoissant bientôt que cette expédition étoit insensée, il revint décidé à tenter la conquête de l'Egypte." — Vol. ii. pp. 207, 208.

We must add a few miscellaneous passages, to develope a little farther this extraordinary character. Madame de Staël had a long conversation with him on the state of Switzerland, in which he seemed quite insensible to any feelings of generosity.

"Cette conversation," however, she adds, "me fit cependant concevoir l'agrément qu'on peut lui trouver quand il prend l'air bonhomme, et parle comme d'une chose simple de lui-même et de ses projets. Cet art, le plus redoutable de tous, a captivé beaucoup de gens. A cette même époque, je revis encore quelquefois Bonaparte en société, et il me parut toujours profondément occupé des rapports qu'il vouloit établir entre lui et les autres hommes, les tenant à distance ou les rapprochant de lui, suivant qu'il croyoit se les attacher plus sûrement. Quand il se trouvoit avec les directeurs surtout, il craignoit d'avoir l'air d'un général sous les ordres de son gouvernement, et il essayoit tour à tour dans ses manières, avec cette sorte de supérieurs, la dignité ou la familiarité; mais il manquoit le ton vrai de l'une et de l'autre. *C'est un homme qui ne sauroit être naturel que dans le commandement.*"—Vol. ii. pp. 211, 212.

The following remark relates rather to the French nation than their ruler. We quote it for its exquisite truth rather than its severity.

"Sa conversation avec le Mufti dans la pyramide de Chéops devoit enchanter les Parisiens; parce qu'elle réunissoit les deux choses qui les captivent: un certain genre de grandeur, et de la moquerie tout ensemble. Les François sont bien aises d'être émus, *et de rire de ce qu'ils sont émus!* Le charlatanisme leur plaît, et ils aident volontiers à se tromper eux-mêmes; pourvu qu'il leur soit permis, tout en se conduisant commes des dupes, de montrer par quelques bon mots que pourtant ils ne le sont pas." — Vol. ii. p. 228.

On his return from Egypt it was understood by every body that he was to subvert the existing constitution. But he passed five weeks at Paris in a quiet and apparently undecided way — and, with all this preparatory study, acted his part but badly after all. Nothing can be more curious than the following passage. When he had at last determined to put down the Directory,—

"Le 19 brumaire, il arriva dans le conseil des cinq cents, les bras croisés, avec un air très-sombre, et suivi de deux grands grenadiers qui protégeoient sa petite stature. Les députés appelés jacobins poussèrent des hurlemens en le voyant entrer dans la salle; son frère Lucien, bien heureusement pour lui, étoit alors président; il agitoit en vain la sonnette pour rétablir l'ordre; les cris de *traître* et d'*usurpateur* se faisoient entendre de toutes parts; et l'un des députés, compatriote de Bonaparte, le corse Aréna, s'approcha de ce général et le secoua fortement par le collet de son habit. On a supposé, mais sans fondement, qu'il avoit un poignard pour le tuer. Son action cependant *effraya* Bonaparte; et il dit aux grenadiers qui étoient à côté de lui, *en laissant tomber sa tête sur l'épaule d'un d'eux: 'Tirez-moi d'ici!'* Les grenadiers l'enlevèrent du milieu des députés qui l'entouroient; *ils le portèrent hors de la salle* en plein air; et, dès qu'il y fut, sa présence d'esprit lui revint. Il monta à cheval à l'instant même; et, parcourant les rangs de ses grenadiers, il les détermina bientôt à ce qu'il vouloit d'eux. Dans cette circonstance, comme dans beaucoup d'autres, on a remarqué que Bonaparte pouvoit se troubler quand un autre danger que celui de la guerre étoit en face de lui: et quelques personnes en ont conclu bien ridiculement qu'il manquoit de courage. Certes on ne peut nier son audace; mais, comme il n'est rien, pas même brave, d'une façon généreuse, il s'ensuit qu'il ne s'expose jamais que quand cela peut être utile. Il seroit très-fâché d'être tué, parce que c'est un revers, et qu'il veut en tout du succès. Il en seroit aussi fâché, parce que la mort déplaît à son imagination: mais il n'hésite pas à hasarder sa vie, lorsque, suivant sa manière de voir, la partie vaut le risque de l'enjeu, s'il est permis de s'exprimer ainsi."—Vol. ii. pp. 240—242.

Although he failed thus strangely in the theatrical part of the business, the substantial part was effectually done. He sent in a column of grenadiers with fixed bayonets at one end of the hall of the great council, and made them advance steadily to the other; driving the unhappy senators, in their fine classical draperies, before them, and forcing them to leap out of the windows, and scamper through the gardens in these strange habiliments! Colonel Pride's purge itself was not half so rough in its operation.

There was now an end, not only of liberty, but of republican tyranny; and the empire of the sword in the hand of one man, was substantially established. It is melancholy to think, but history shows it to be true, that the most abject servitude is usually established at the close of a long, and even generous struggle for freedom; partly, no doubt, because despotism offers an image of repose to those who are worn out with contention, but chiefly because that military force to which all parties had in their extremity appealed, naturally lends itself to the bad ambition of a fortunate commander. This it was which made the fortune of Bonaparte. His answer to all remonstrances was—"Voulez-vous que je vous livre aux Jacobins?" But his true answer was, that the army was at his devotion, and that he defied the opinion of the nation.

He began by setting up the Consulate: but from the very first, says Madame de Staël, assumed the airs and the tone of royalty.

"Il prit les Tuileries pour sa demeure; et ce fut un coup de partie que le choix de cette habitation. On avoit vu là le roi de France; les habitudes monarchiques y étoient encore présentes à tous les yeux, et il suffisoit, pour ainsi dire, de laisser faire les murs pour tout rétablir. Vers les derniers jours du dernier siècle, je vis entrer le premier consul dans ce palais bâti par les rois; et quoique Bonaparte fût bien loin encore de la magnificence qu'il a développée depuis, l'on voyoit déjà dans tout ce qui l'entouroit un empressement de se faire courtisan à l'orientale, qui dut lui persuader que gouverner la terre étoit chose bien facile. Quand sa voiture fut arrivée dans la cour des Tuileries, ses valets ouvrirent la portière et précipitèrent le marchepied avec une violence qui sembloit dire que les choses physiques elles-mêmes étoient insolentes quand elles retardoient un instant la marche de leur maître! Lui ne regardoit ni ne remercioit personne; comme s'il avoit craint qu'on pût le croire sensible aux hommages même qu'il exigeoit. En montant l'escalier au milieu de la foule qui se pressoit pour le suivre, ses yeux ne se portoient ni sur aucun objet, ni sur aucune personne en particulier. Il y avoit quelque chose de vague et d'insouciant dans sa physionomie, et ses regards n'exprimoient que ce qu'il convient toujours de montrer,—l'indifférence pour le sort, et le dédain pour les hommes."—Vol. ii. pp. 258, 259.

He had some reason, indeed, to despise men, from the specimens he had mostly about him: for his adherents were chiefly deserters from the royalists or the republican party;—the first willing to transfer their servility to a new dynasty,—the latter to take the names and emoluments of republican offices from the hand of a plebeian usurper. For a while he thought it prudent to dissemble with each; and, with that utter contempt of truth which belonged to his scorn of mankind, held, in the same day, the most edifying discourses of citizenship and equality to one set of hearers, and of the sacred rights of sovereigns to another. He extended the same unprincipled dissimulation to the sub-

ject of religion. To the prelates with whom he arranged his celebrated *Concordat*, he spoke in the most serious manner of the truth and the awfulness of the Gospel; and to Cabanis and the philosophers, he said, the same evening, —"Savez-vous ce que c'est la Concordat? C'est *la Vaccine de la Religion* — dans cinquante ans il n'y aura plus en France!" He resolved, however, to profit by it while it lasted; and had the blasphemous audacity to put this, among other things, into the national catechism, approved of by the whole Gallican church: — "*Qu.* Que doit-on penser de ceux qui manqueroient à leur devoir envers l'Empereur Napoléon? *Réponse.* Qu'ils resisteroient à l'ordre établi de Dieu lui-même — et *se rendroient dignes de la damnation éternelle!*"

With the actual tyranny of the sword began the more pitiful persecution of the slavish journals — the wanton and merciless infliction of exile on women and men of letters — and the perpetual, restless, insatiable interference in the whole life and conversation of every one of the slightest note or importance. The following passages are written, perhaps, with more bitterness than any other in the book; but they appear to us to be substantially just.

"Bonaparte, lorsqu'il disposoit d'un million d'hommes armés, n'en attachoit pas moins d'importance à l'art de guider l'esprit public par les gazettes; il dictoit souvent lui-même des articles de journaux qu'on pouvoit reconnoître aux saccades violentes du style. On voyoit qu'il auroit voulu mettre dans ce qu'il écrivoit, des coups au lieu de mots! Il a dans tout son être un fond de vulgarité que le gigantesque de son ambition même ne sauroit toujours cacher. Ce n'est pas qu'il ne sache très-bien, un jour donné, se montrer avec beaucoup de convenance; mais il n'est à son aise que dans le mépris pour les autres, et, dès qu'il peut y rentrer, il s'y complait. Toutefois ce n'étoit pas uniquement par goût qu'il se livroit à faire servir, dans ses notes du Moniteur, le cynisme de la révolution au maintien de sa puissance. Il ne permettoit qu'à lui d'être jacobin en France." — Vol. ii. p. 264.

"Je fus la première femme que Bonaparte exila; mais bientôt après il en bannit un grand nombre, d'opinions opposées. D'où venoit ce luxe en fait de méchanceté, si ce n'est d'une sorte de haine contre tous les êtres indépendans? Et comme les femmes d'une part, ne pouvoient servir en rien ses desseins politiques, et que, de l'autre, elles étoient moins accessibles que les hommes aux craintes et aux espérances dont le pouvoir est dispensateur, elles lui donnoient de l'humeur comme des rebelles, et il se plaisoit à leur dire des choses blessantes et vulgaires. Il haïssoit autant l'esprit de chevalerie qu'il recherchoit l'étiquette: c'étoit faire un mauvais choix parmi les anciennes mœurs. Il lui restoit aussi de ses premières habitudes pendant la révolution, une certaine antipathie jacobine contre la société brillante de Paris; sur laquelle les femmes exerçoient beaucoup d'ascendant. Il redoutoit en elles l'art de la plaisanterie, qui, l'on doit en convenir, appartient particulièrement aux Françoises. Si Bonaparte avoit voulu s'en tenir au superbe rôle de grand général et de premier magistrat de la république, il auroit plané de toute la hauteur du génie au-dessus des petits traits acérés de l'esprit de salon. Mais quand il avoit le dessein de se faire un roi parvenu, un bourgeois gentilhomme sur le trône, il s'exposoit précisément à la moquerie du bon ton, et il ne pouvoit la comprimer, comme il l'a fait, que par l'espionage et la terreur." — Vol. ii. pp. 306, 307.

The thin mask of the Consulate was soon thrown off — and the Emperor appeared in his proper habits. The following remarks, though not all applicable to the same period, appear to us to be admirable.

"Bonaparte avoit lu l'histoire d'une manière confuse. Peu accoutumé à l'étude, il se rendoit beaucoup moins compte de ce qu'il avoit appris dans les livres, que de ce qu'il avoit recueilli par l'observation des hommes. Il n'en étoit pas moins resté dans sa tête un certain respect pour Attila et pour Charlemagne, pour les lois féodales et pour le despotisme de l'Orient, qu'il appliquoit à tort et à travers, ne se trompant jamais, toutefois, sur ce qui servoit instantanément à son pouvoir; mais du reste, citant, blâmant, louant et raisonnant comme le hasard le conduisoit. Il parloit ainsi des heures entières avec d'autant plus d'avantage, que personne ne l'interrompoit, si ce n'est par les applaudissemens involontaires qui échappent toujours dans des occasions semblables. Une chose singulière, c'est que, dans la conversation, plusieurs officiers Bonapartistes ont emprunté de leur chef cet héroïque galimatias, qui véritablement ne signifie rien qu'à la tête de huit cent mille hommes." — Vol. ii. pp. 332, 333.

"Il fit occuper la plupart des charges de sa maison par des Nobles de l'ancien régime; il aimoit les flatteries des courtisans d'autrefois, parce qu'ils s'entendoient mieux à cet art que les hommes nouveaux, même les plus empressés. Chaque fois qu'un gentilhomme de l'ancienne cour rappeloit l'étiquette du temps jadis, proposoit une révérence de plus, une certaine façon de frapper à la porte de quelque antichambre, une manière plus cérémonieuse de présenter une dépêche, de plier une lettre, de la terminer par telle ou telle formule, il étoit accueilli comme s'il avoit fait faire des progrès au bonheur de l'espèce humaine! Le code de l'étiquette impériale est le document le plus remarquable de la bassesse à laquelle on peut réduire l'espèce humaine." — Vol ii. pp. 334, 335.

"Quand il y avoit quatre cents personnes dans son salon, un aveugle auroit pu s'y croire seul, tant le silence qu'on observoit étoit profond! Les maréchaux de France, au milieu des fatigues de la guerre, au moment de la crise d'une bataille, entroient dans la tente de l'empereur pour lui demander ses ordres, — et il ne leur étoit pas permis de s'y asseoir! Sa famille ne souffroit pas moins que les étrangers de son despotisme et de sa hauteur. Lucien a mieux aimé vivre prisonnier en Angleterre que régner sous les ordres de son frère. Louis Bonaparte, dont le caractère est généralement estimé, se vit contraint par sa probité même, à renoncer à la couronne de Hollande; et, le croiroit-on? quand il causoit avec son frère pendant deux heures tête-à-tête, forcé par sa mauvaise santé de s'appuyer péniblement contre la muraille, Napoléon ne lui offroit pas une chaise! il demeuroit lui-même debout, de crainte que quelqu'un n'eût l'idée de se familiariser assez avec lui, pour s'asseoir en sa présence.

"Le peur qu'il causoit dans les derniers temps étoit telle, que personne ne lui adressoit le premier la parole sur rien. Quelquefois il s'entretenoit avec la plus grande simplicité au milieu de sa cour, et dans son conseil d'état. Il souffroit la contradiction, il y encourageoit même, quand il s'agissoit de questions administratives ou judiciaires sans relation avec son pouvoir. Il falloit voir alors l'attendrissement de ceux auxquels il avoit rendu pour un moment la respiration libre; mais, quand le maître reparoissoit, on demandoit en vain aux ministres de présenter un rapport à l'empereur contre une mesure injuste.—Il aimoit moins les louanges vraies que les flatteries serviles; parce que, dans les unes, on n'auroit vu que son mérite, tandis que les autres attestoient son autorité. En général, il a préféré la puissance à la gloire; car l'action de la force lui plaisoit trop pour qu'il s'occupa de la postérité, sur laquelle on ne peut l'exercer." — Vol. ii. pp. 399—401.

There are some fine remarks on the baseness of those who solicited employment and favours under Bonaparte, and have since joined the party of the *Ultras*, and treated the whole Revolution as an atrocious rebellion — and a very clear and masterly view of the policy by which that great commander subdued the greater part of Continental Europe. But we can afford no room now for any further account of them. As a general, she says, he was prodigal of the lives of his soldiers — haughty and domineering to his officers — and utterly regardless of the miseries he inflicted on the countries which were the scenes of his operations. The following anecdote is curious — and to us original.

"On l'a vu dans la guerre d'Autriche, en 1809, quitter l'île de Lobau, quand il jugeoit la bataille perdu. Il traversa le Danube, seul avec M. de Czernitchef, l'un des intrépides aides-de-camp de l'empereur de Russie, et le maréchal Berthier. L'empereur leur dit assez tranquillement qu'*après avoir gagné quarante batailles, il n'étoit pas extraordinaire d'en perdre une*; et lorsqu'il fut arrivé de l'autre côté du fleuve, il se coucha et *dormit jusqu'au lendemain matin!* sans s'informer du sort de l'armée françoise, que ses généraux sauvèrent pendant son sommeil." — Vol. ii. p. 358.

Madame de Staël mentions several other instances of this faculty of sleeping in moments of great apparent anxiety. The most remarkable is, that he fell fast asleep before taking the field in 1814, while endeavouring to persuade one of his ministers that he had no chance of success in the approaching campaign, but must inevitably be ruined!

She has extracted from the Moniteur of July 1810, a very singular proof of the audacity with which he very early proclaimed his own selfish and ambitious views. It is a public letter addressed by him to his nephew, the young Duke of Berg, in which he says, in so many words, "N'oubliez jamais, que vos *premiers* devoirs sont envers MOI — vos *seconds* envers la France — ceux envers les peuples que je pourrois vous confier, ne viennent qu'après." This was at least candid — and in his disdain for mankind, a sort of audacious candour was sometimes alternated with his duplicity.

"Un principe général, quel qu'il fût, déplaisoit à Bonaparte; comme une niaiserie, ou comme un ennemi. Il n'étoit point sanguinaire, mais indifférent à la vie des hommes. Il ne la considéroit que comme moyen d'arriver à son but, ou comme un obstacle à écarter de sa route. Il n'étoit pas même aussi colère qu'il a souvent paru l'être: il vouloit effrayer avec ses paroles, afin de s'épargner le fait par la menace. Tout étoit chez lui moyen ou but; l'involontaire ne se trouvoit nulle part, ni dans le bien, ni dans le mal. On prétend qu'il a dit: *J'ai tant de conscrits à dépenser par an.* Ce propos est vraisemblable; car Bonaparte a souvent assez méprisé ses auditeurs pour se complaire dans un genre de sincérité qui n'est que de l'impudence. — Jamais il na cru aux sentimens exaltée, soit dans les individus, soit dans les nations: il a pris l'expression de ces sentimens pour de l'hypocrisie." — Vol. ii. pp. 391, 392.

Bonaparte, Madame de Staël thinks, had no alternative but to give the French nation a free constitution; or to occupy them in war, and to dazzle them with military glory. He had not magnanimity to do the one, and he finally overdid the latter. His first great error was the war with Spain; his last, the Campaign in Russia. All that followed was put upon him,

and could not be avoided. She rather admires his rejection of the terms offered at Chatillon; and is moved with his farewell to his legions and their eagles at Fontainebleau. She feels like a Frenchwoman on the occupation of Paris by foreign conquerors; but gives the Emperor Alexander full credit, both for the magnanimity of his conduct as a conqueror, and the generosity of his sentiments on the subject of French liberty and independence. She is quite satisfied with the declaration made by the King at St. Ouen, and even with the charter that followed — though she allows that many further provisions were necessary to consolidate the constitution. All this part of the book is written with great temperance and reconciling wisdom. She laughs at the doctrine of *legitimacy*, as it is now maintained; but gives excellent reasons for preferring an ancient line of princes, and a fixed order of succession. Of the *Ultras*, or *unconstitutional royalists*, as she calls them, she speaks with a sort of mixed anger and pity; although an unrepressed scorn takes the place of both, when she has occasion to mention those members of the party who were the abject flatterers of Bonaparte during the period of his power, and have but transferred, to the new occupant of the throne, the servility to which they had been trained under its late possessor.

"Mais ceux dont on avoit le plus de peine à contenir l'indignation vertueuse contre le parti de l'usurpateur, c'étoient les nobles ou leurs adhérens, qui avoient demandé des places à ce même usurpateur pendant sa puissance, et qui s'en étoient séparées bien nettement le jour de sa chute. L'enthousiasme pour la légitimité de tel chambellan de Madame mère, ou de telle dame d'atour de Madame sœur, ne connoissoit point de bornes; et certes, nous autres que Bonaparte avoit proscrits pendant tout le cours de son règne, nous nous examinions pour savoir si nous n'avions pas été ses favoris, quand une certaine délicatesse d'âme nous obligeoit à le défendre contre les invectives de ceux qu'il avoit comblés de bienfaits." —Vol. iii. p. 107.

Our Charles II. was recalled to the throne of his ancestors by the voice of his people; and yet that throne was shaken, and, within twenty-five years, overturned by the arbitrary conduct of the restored sovereigns. Louis XVIII. was *not* recalled by his people, but brought in and set up by foreign conquerors. It must therefore be still more necessary for him to guard against arbitrary measures, and to take all possible steps to secure the attachment of that people whose hostility has so lately proved fatal. If he like domestic examples better, he has that of his own Henri IV. before him. That great and popular prince at last found it necessary to adopt the religious creed of the great majority of his people. In the present day, it is at least as necessary for a less popular monarch to study and adopt their political one. Some of those about him, we have heard, rather recommend the example of Ferdinand VII.! But even the Ultras, we think, cannot really forget that Ferdinand, instead of having been restored by a foreign force, was dethroned by one; that there had been no popular insurrection, and no struggle for liberty in Spain; and that, besides the army, he had the priesthood on his side, which, in that country, is as omnipotent, as in France it is insignificant and powerless, for any political purposes. We cannot now follow Madame de Staël into the profound and instructive criticism she makes on the management of affairs during Bonaparte's stay at Elba; — though much of it is applicable to a later period — and though we do not remember to have met any where with so much truth told in so gentle a manner.

Madame de Staël confirms what we believe all well-informed persons now admit, that for months before the return of Bonaparte, the attempt was expected, and in some measure prepared for — by all but the court, and the royalists by whom it was surrounded. When the news of his landing was received, they were still too foolish to be alarmed; and, when the friends of liberty said to each other, with bitter regret, "There is an end of our liberty if he should succeed — and of our national independence if he should fail," — the worthy *Ultras* went about, saying it was the luckiest thing in the world, for they should now get properly rid of him; and the King would no longer be vexed with the fear of a pretender! Madame de Staël treats with derision the idea of Bonaparte being sincere in his professions of regard to liberty, or his resolution to adhere to the constitution proposed to him after his return. She even maintains, that it was absurd to propose a free constitution at such a crisis. If the nation and the army abandoned the Bourbons, nothing remained for the nation but to invest the master of that army with the dictatorship; and to rise

en masse, till their borders were freed from the invaders. That they did not do so, only proves that they had become indifferent about the country, or that they were in their hearts hostile to Bonaparte. Nothing, she assures us, but the consciousness of this, could have made him submit to concessions so alien to his whole character and habits—and the world, says Madame de Staël, so understood him. "Quand il a prononcé les mots de *Loi* et *Liberté*, l'Europe s'est rassurée: elle a senti que ce n'étoit plus son ancien et terrible adversaire."

She passes a magnificent encomium on the military genius and exalted character of our Wellington; but says he could not have conquered as he did, if the French had been led by one who could rally round him the affections of the people as well as he could direct their soldiers. She maintains, that after the battle, when Bonaparte returned to Paris, he had not the least idea of being called upon again to abdicate; but expected to obtain from the two chambers the means of renewing or continuing the contest. When he found that this was impossible, he sunk at once into despair, and resigned himself without a struggle. The selfishness which had guided his whole career, disclosed itself in naked deformity in the last acts of his public life. He abandoned his army the moment he found that he could not lead it immediately against the enemy—and no sooner saw his own fate determined, than he gave up all concern for that of the unhappy country which his ambition had involved in such disasters. He quietly passed by the camp of his warriors on his way to the port by which he was to make his own escape—and, by throwing himself into the hands of the English, endeavoured to obtain for himself the benefit of those liberal principles which it had been the business of his life to extirpate and discredit all over the world.

At this point Madame de Staël terminates somewhat abruptly her historical review of the events of the Revolution; and here, our readers will be happy to learn, we must stop too. There is half a volume more of her work, indeed,—and one that cannot be supposed the least interesting to us, as it treats chiefly of the history, constitution, and society of England. But it is for this very reason that we cannot trust ourselves with the examination of it. We have every reason certainly to be satisfied with the account she gives of us; nor can any thing be more eloquent and animating than the view she has presented of the admirable mechanism and steady working of our constitution, and of its ennobling effects on the character of all who live under it. We are willing to believe all this too to be just; though we are certainly painted *en beau*. In some parts, however, we are more shocked at the notions she gives us of the French character, than flattered at the contrast exhibited by our own. In mentioning the good reception that gentlemen in opposition to government sometimes meet with in society, among us, and the upright posture they contrive to maintain, she says, that nobody here would think of *condoling* with a man for being out of power, or of receiving him with less cordiality. She notices also, with a very alarming sort of admiration, that she understood, when in England, that a gentleman of the law had actually refused a situation worth 6000*l*. or 7000*l*. a year, merely because he did not approve of the ministry by whom it was offered; and adds, that in France *any man* who would refuse a respectable office, with a salary of 8000 louis, would certainly be considered as fit for Bedlam; and in another place she observes, that it seems to be a fundamental maxim in that country, that every man must have a place. We confess that we have some difficulty in reconciling these incidental intimations with her leading position, that the great majority of the French nation is desirous of a free constitution, and perfectly fit for and deserving of it. If these be the principles, not only upon which they act, but which they and their advocates avow, we know no constitution under which they can be free; and have no faith in the power of any new institutions to counteract that spirit of corruption by which, even where they have existed the longest, their whole virtue is consumed.

With our manners in society she is not quite so well pleased;—though she is kind enough to ascribe our deficiencies to the most honourable causes. In commiserating the comparative dulness of our social talk, however, has not this philosophic observer a little overlooked the effects of national tastes and habits—and is it not conceivable, at least, that we

who are used to it may really have as much satisfaction in our own hum-drum way of seeing each other, as our more sprightly neighbours in their exquisite assemblies? In all this part of the work, too, we think we can perceive the traces rather of ingenious theory, than of correct observation; and suspect that a good part of the *tableau* of English society is rather a sort of conjectural sketch, than a copy from real life; or at least that it is a generalization from a very few and not very common examples. May we be pardoned too for hinting, that a person of Madame de Staël's great talents and celebrity, is by no means well qualified for discovering the true tone and character of English society from her own observation; both because she was not likely to see it in those smaller and more familiar assemblages in which it is seen to the most advantage, and because her presence must have had the unlucky effect of imposing silence on the modest, and tempting the vain and ambitious to unnatural display and ostentation.

With all its faults, however, the portion of her book which we have been obliged to pass over in silence, is well worthy of as ample a notice as we have bestowed on the other parts of it, and would of itself be sufficient to justify us in ascribing to its lamented author that perfection of masculine understanding, and female grace and acuteness, which are so rarely to be met with apart, and never, we believe, were before united.

MADAME DE LAROCHEJAQUELEIN.

(February, 1816.)

Mémoires de Madame la Marquise de Larochejaquelein; *avec Deux Cartes du Théâtre de la Guerre de la Vendée.* 2 tomes 8vo. pp. 500. Paris: 1815.

This is a book to be placed by the side of Mrs. Hutchinson's delightful Memoirs of her heroic husband and his chivalrous Independents. Both are pictures, by a female hand, of tumultuary and almost private wars, carried on by conscientious individuals against the actual government of their country: — and both bring to light, not only innumerable traits of the most romantic daring and devoted fidelity in particular persons, but a general character of domestic virtue and social gentleness among those who would otherwise have figured to our imaginations as adventurous desperadoes or ferocious bigots. There is less talent, perhaps, and less loftiness, either of style or of character, in the French than the English heroine Yet she has also done and suffered enough to entitle her to that appellation; and, while her narrative acquires an additional interest and a truer tone of nature, from the occasional recurrence of female fears and anxieties, it is conversant with still more extraordinary incidents and characters, and reveals still more of what had been previously malignantly misrepresented, or entirely unknown.

Our readers will understand, from the title-page which we have transcribed, that the work relates to the unhappy and sanguinary wars which were waged against the insurgents in La Vendée during the first and maddest years of the French Republic: but it is proper for us to add, that it is confined almost entirely to the transactions of two years; and that the detailed narrative ends with the dissolution of the first Vendean army, before the proper formation of the Chouan force in Brittany, or the second insurrection of Poitou; though there are some brief and imperfect notices of these, and subsequent occurrences. The details also extend only to the proceedings of the Royalist or Insurgent party, to which the author belonged; and do not affect to embrace any general history of the war.

This hard-fated woman was very young, and newly married, when she was thrown, by the adverse circumstances of the time, into the very heart of those deplorable contests; — and, without pretending to any other information than she could draw from her own experience, and scarcely presuming to pass any judgment upon the merits or demerits of the cause, she has made up her book of a clear and dramatic description of acts in which she was a sharer, or scenes of which she was an eye-witness, — and of the characters and histories of the many distinguished individuals who partook with her of their glories or sufferings. The irregular and undisciplined wars

which it is her business to describe, are naturally far more prolific of extraordinary incidents, unexpected turns of fortune, and striking displays of individual talent, and vice and virtue, than the more solemn movements of national hostility; where every thing is in a great measure provided and foreseen, and where the inflexible subordination of rank, and the severe exactions of a limited duty, not only take away the inducement, but the opportunity, for those exaltations of personal feeling and adventure which produce the most lively interest, and lead to the most animating results. In the unconcerted proceedings of an insurgent population, all is experiment, and all is passion. The heroic daring of a simple peasant lifts him at once to the rank of a leader; and kindles a general enthusiasm to which all things become possible. Generous and gentle feelings are speedily generated by this raised state of mind and of destination: and the perpetual intermixture of domestic cares and rustic occupations, with the exploits of troops serving without pay, and utterly unprovided with magazines, produces a contrast which enhances the effects of both parts of the description, and gives an air of moral picturesqueness to the scene, which is both pathetic and delightful. It becomes much more attractive also, in this representation, by the singular candour and moderation — not the most usual virtue of belligerent females — with which Madame de L. has told the story of her friends and her enemies — the liberality with which she has praised the instances of heroism or compassion which occur in the conduct of the republicans, and the simplicity with which she confesses the jealousies and excesses which sometimes disgraced the insurgents. There is not only no royalist or anti-revolutionary rant in these volumes, but scarcely any of the bitterness or exaggeration of a party to civil dissensions; and it is rather wonderful that an actor and a sufferer in the most cruel and outrageous warfare by which modern times have been disgraced, should have set an example of temperance and impartiality which its remote spectators have found it so difficult to follow. The truth is, we believe, that those who have had most occasion to see the *mutual* madness of contending factions, and to be aware of the traits of individual generosity by which the worst cause is occasionally redeemed, and of brutal outrage by which the best is sometimes debased, are both more indulgent to human nature, and more distrustful of its immaculate purity, than the fine declaimers who aggravate all that is bad on the side to which they are opposed, and refuse to admit its existence in that to which they belong. The general of an adverse army has always more toleration for the severities and even the misconduct of his opponents, than the herd of ignorant speculators at home; — in the same way as *the leaders* of political parties have uniformly far less rancour and animosity towards their antagonists, than the vulgar followers in their train. It is no small proof, however, of an elevated and generous character, to be able to make those allowances; and Madame de L. would have had every apology for falling into the opposite error, — both on account of her sex, the natural prejudices of her rank and education, the extraordinary sufferings to which she was subjected, and the singularly mild and unoffending character of the beloved associates of whom she was so cruelly deprived.

She had some right, in truth, to be delicate and royalist, beyond the ordinary standard. Her father, the Marquis de Donnison, had an employment about the person of the King; in virtue of which, he had apartments in the palace of Versailles; in which splendid abode the present writer was born, and continued constantly to reside, in the very focus of royal influence and glory, till the whole of its unfortunate inhabitants were compelled to leave it, by the fury of that mob which escorted them to Paris in 1789. She had, like most French ladies of distinction, been destined from her infancy to be the wife of M. de Lescure, a near relation of her mother, and the representative of the ancient and noble family of Salgues in Poitou. The character of this eminent person, both as it is here drawn by his widow, and indirectly exhibited in various parts of her narrative, is as remote as possible from that which we should have been inclined, *à priori*, to ascribe to a young French nobleman of the old regime, just come to court, in the first flush of youth, from a great military school. He was extremely serious, bashful, pious, and self-denying, — with great firmness

of character and sweetness of temper, — fearless, and even ardent in war, but humble in his pretensions to dictate, and most considerate of the wishes and sufferings of his followers. To this person she was married in the nineteenth year of her age, in October, 1790, — at a time when most of the noblesse had already emigrated, and when the rage for that unfortunate measure had penetrated even to the province of Poitou, where M. de Lescure had previously formed a prudent association of the whole gentry of the country, to whom the peasantry were most zealously attached. It was the fashion, however, to emigrate; and so many of the Poitevin nobility were pleased to follow it, that M. de Lescure at last thought it concerned his honour, not to remain longer behind; and came to Paris in February, 1791, to make preparations for his journey to Coblentz. Here, however, he was requested by the Queen herself not to go farther: and thought it his duty to obey. The summer was passed in the greatest anxieties and agitations; and at last came the famous Tenth of August. Madame de L. assures us, that the attack on the palace was altogether unexpected on that occasion, and that M. Montmorin, who came to her from the King late in the preceding evening, informed her, that they were perfectly aware of an intention to assault the royal residence on the night of the 12th; but that, to a certainty, nothing would be attempted till then. At midnight, however, there were signs of agitation in the neighbourhood; and before four o'clock in the morning, the massacre had begun. M. de Lescure rushed out on the first symptom of alarm to join the defenders of the palace, but could not obtain access within the gates, and was obliged to return and disguise himself in the garb of a *Sansculotte*, that he might mingle with some chance of escape in the crowd of assailants. M. de Montmorin, whose disguise was less perfect, escaped as if by a miracle. After being insulted by the mob, he had taken refuge in the shop of a small grocer, by whom he was immediately recognised, and where he was speedily surrounded by crowds of the National Guards, reeking from the slaughter of the Swiss. The good-natured shopkeeper saw his danger, and, stepping quickly up to him, said with a familiar air, "Well, cousin, you scarcely expected, on your arrival from the country, to witness the downfal of the tyrant — Here, drink to the health of those brave assertors of our liberties." He submitted to swallow the toast, and got off without injury.

The street in which M. Lescure resided, being much frequented by persons of the Swiss nation, was evidently a very dangerous place of retreat for royalists; and, soon after it was dark, the whole family, disguised in the dress of the lower orders, slipped out, with the design of taking refuge in the house of an old *femme-de-chambre*, on the other side of the river. M. de Donnison and his wife went in one party; and Madame de Lescure, then in the seventh month of her pregnancy, with her husband, in another. Intending to cross by the lowest of the bridges, they first turned into the Champs-Elysées. More than a thousand men had been killed there that day; but the alleys were now silent and lonely; though the roar of the multitude, and occasional discharges of cannon and musketry, were heard from the front of the Tuileries, where the conflagration of the barracks was still visible in the sky. While they were wandering in these horrid shades, a woman came flying up to them, followed by a drunken patriot, with his musket presented at her head. All he had to say was, that she was an aristocrat, and that he must finish his day's work by killing her. M. Lescure appeased him with admirable presence of mind, by professing to enter entirely into his sentiments, and proposing that they should go back together to the attack of the palace; — adding only, "But you see what state my wife is in — she is a poor timid creature — and I must first take her to her sister's, and then I shall return here to you." The savage at last agreed to this, though, before he went off, he presented his piece several times at them, swearing that he believed they were aristocrats after all, and that he had a mind to have a shot at them. This rencontre drove them from the lonely way; and they returned to the public streets, all blazing with illuminations, and crowded with drunken and infuriated wretches, armed with pikes, and in many instances stained with blood. The tumult and terror of the scene inspired Madame de L. with a kind of sympathetic frenzy; and, without knowing what she did, she screamed out, *Vive les Sans-*

culottes! à bas les tyrans! as outrageously as any of them. They glided, unhurt, however, through this horrible assemblage; and crossing the river by the *Pont Neuf*, found the opposite shore dark, silent, and deserted, and speedily gained the humble refuge in search of which they had ventured.

The domestic relations between the great and their dependants were certainly more cordial in old France than in any other country — and a revolution, which aimed professedly at levelling all distinction of ranks, and avenging the crimes of the wealthy, armed the hands of but few servants against the lives or liberties of their masters. M. de Lescure and his family were saved in this extremity by the prudent and heroic fidelity of some old waiting-women and laundresses — and ultimately effected their retreat to the country by the zealous and devoted services of a former tutor in the family, who had taken a very conspicuous part on the side of the Revolution. This M. Thomasin, who had superintended the education of M. Lescure, and retained the warmest affection for him and the whole family, was an active, bold, and good-humoured man — a great fencer, and a considerable orator at the meetings of his section. He was eager, of course, for a revolution that was to give every thing to talents and courage; and had been made a captain in one of the municipal regiments of Paris. This kind-hearted patriot took the proscribed family of M. de Lescure under his immediate protection, and by a thousand little stratagems and contrivances, not only procured passports and conveyances to take them out of Paris, but actually escorted them himself, in his national uniform, till they were safely settled in a royalist district in the suburbs of Tours. When any tumult or obstruction arose on the journey, M. Thomasin leaped from the carriage, and assuming the tone of zeal and authority that belonged to a Parisian officer, he harangued, reprimanded, and enchanted the provincial patriots, till the whole party went off again in the midst of their acclamations. From Tours, after a cautious and encouraging exploration of the neighbouring country, they at length proceeded to M. Lescure's château of *Clisson*, in the heart of the district afterwards but too well known by the name of La Vendée, of which the author has here introduced a very clear and interesting description.

A tract of about 150 miles square, at the mouth and on the southern bank of the Loire, comprehends the scene of those deplorable hostilities. The most inland part of the district, and that in which the insurrection first broke out, is called *Le Bocage;* and seems to have been almost as singular in its physical conformation, as in the state and condition of its population. A series of detached eminences, of no great elevation, rose over the whole face of the country, with little rills trickling in the hollows and occasional cliffs by their sides. The whole space was divided into small enclosures, each surrounded with tall wild hedges, and rows of pollard trees; so that, though there were few large woods, the whole region had a sylvan and impenetrable appearance. The ground was mostly in pasturage; and the landscape had, for the most part, an aspect of wild verdure, except that in the autumn some patches of yellow corn appeared here and there athwart the green enclosures. Only two great roads traversed this sequestered region, running nearly parallel, at a distance of more than seventy miles from each other. In the intermediate space, there was nothing but a labyrinth of wild and devious paths, crossing each other at the extremity of almost every field — often serving, at the same time, as channels for the winter torrents, and winding so capriciously among the innumerable hillocks, and beneath the meeting hedgerows, that the natives themselves were always in danger of losing their way when they went a league or two from their own habitations. The country, though rather thickly peopled, contained, as may be supposed, few large towns; and the inhabitants, devoted almost entirely to rural occupations, enjoyed a great deal of leisure. The noblesse or gentry of the country were very generally resident on their estates; where they lived in a style of simplicity and homeliness which had long disappeared from every other part of the kingdom. No grand parks, fine gardens, or ornamented villas; but spacious clumsy châteaus, surrounded with farm offices and cottages for the labourers. Their manners and way of life, too, partook of the same primitive rusticity. There was great cordiality, and even much familiarity, in the inter-

course of the seigneurs with their dependants. They were followed by large trains of them in their hunting expeditions, which occupied a great part of their time. Every man had his fowlingpiece, and was a marksman of fame or pretensions. They were posted in various quarters, to intercept or drive back the game; and were thus trained, by anticipation, to that sort of discipline and concert in which their whole art of war was afterwards found to consist. Nor was their intimacy confined to their sports. The peasants resorted familiarly to their landlords for advice, both legal and medical; and they repaid the visits in their daily rambles, and entered with interest into all the details of their agricultural operations. They came to the weddings of their children, drank with their guests, and made little presents to the young people. On Sundays and holidays, all the retainers of the family assembled at the château, and danced in the barn or the court-yard, according to the season. The ladies of the house joined in the festivity, and that without any airs of condescension or of mockery; for, in their own life, there was little splendour or luxurious refinement. They travelled on horseback, or in heavy carriages drawn by oxen; and had little other amusement than in the care of their dependants, and the familiar intercourse of neighbours among whom there was no rivalry or principle of ostentation.

From all this there resulted, as Madame de L. assures us, a certain innocence and kindliness of character, joined with great hardihood and gaiety, — which reminds us of Henry IV. and his Bearnois, — and carries with it, perhaps on account of that association, an idea of something more chivalrous and romantic — more honest and unsophisticated, than any thing we now expect to meet with in this modern world of artifice and derision. There was great purity of morals accordingly, Madame de L. informs us, and general cheerfulness and content throughout the whole district; — crimes were never heard of, and lawsuits almost unknown. Though not very well educated, the population was exceedingly devout; — though theirs was a kind of superstitious and traditional devotion, it must be owned, rather than an enlightened or rational faith. They had the greatest veneration for crucifixes and images of their saints, and had no idea of any duty more imperious than that of attending on all the offices of religion. They were singularly attached also to their curés; who were almost all born and bred in the country, spoke their *patois*, and shared in all their pastimes and occupations. When a hunting-match was to take place, the clergyman announced it from the pulpit after prayers, — and then took his fowlingpiece, and accompanied his congregation to the thicket. It was on behalf of these curés, in fact, that the first disturbances were excited.

The decree of the Convention, displacing all priests who did not take the oaths imposed by that assembly, occasioned the removal of several of those beloved and conscientious pastors; and various tumults were excited by attempts to establish their successors by authority. Some lives were lost in these tumults; but their most important effect was in diffusing an opinion of the severity of the new government, and familiarizing the people with the idea of resisting it by force. The order of the Convention for a forced levy of 300,000 men, and the preparations to carry it into effect, gave rise to the first serious insurrection; — and while the dread of punishment for the acts of violence already committed deterred the insurgents from submitting, the standard was no sooner raised between the republican government on the one hand and the discontented peasantry on the other, than the mass of that united and alarmed population declared itself for their associates; and a great tract of country was thus arrayed in open rebellion, without concert, leader, or preparation. We have the testimony of Madame de L. therefore, in addition to all other good testimony, that this great civil war originated almost accidentally, and certainly not from any plot or conspiracy of the leading royalists in the country. The resident gentry, no doubt, for the most part, favoured that cause; and the peasantry felt almost universally with their masters; — but neither had the least idea, in the beginning, of opposing the political pretensions of the new government, nor, even to the last, much serious hope of effecting any revolution in the general state of the country. The first movements, indeed, partook far more of bigotry than of royalism; and were merely the rash and undirected expressions of plebeian resentment

for the loss of their accustomed pastors. The more extensive commotions which followed on the compulsory levy, were equally without object or plan, and were confined at first to the peasantry. The gentry did not join until they had no alternative, but that of taking up arms either against their own dependants, or along with them; and they went into the field, generally, with little other view than that of acquitting their own faith and honour, and scarcely any expectation beyond that of obtaining better terms for the rebels they were joining, or of being able to make a stand till some new revolution should take place at Paris, and bring in rulers less harsh and sanguinary.

It was at the ballot for the levy of St. Florent, that the rebellion may be said to have begun. The young men first murmured, and then threatened the commissioners, who somewhat rashly directed a fieldpiece to be pointed against them, and afterwards to be fired over their heads: — Nobody was hurt by the discharge; and the crowd immediately rushed forward and seized upon the gun. Some of the commissioners were knocked down — their papers were seized and burnt — and the rioters went about singing and rejoicing for the rest of the evening. An account, probably somewhat exaggerated, of this tumult, was brought next day to a venerable peasant of the name of *Cathelineau*, a sort of itinerant dealer in wool, who was immediately struck with the decisive consequences of this open attack on the constituted authorities. The tidings were brought to him as he was kneading the weekly allowance of bread for his family. He instantly wiped his arms, put on his coat, and repaired to the village market-place, where he harangued the inhabitants, and prevailed on twenty or thirty of the boldest youths to take their arms in their hands and follow him. He was universally respected for his piety, good sense, and mildness of character; and, proceeding with his troop of recruits to a neighbouring village, repeated his eloquent exhortations, and instantly found himself at the head of more than a hundred enthusiasts. Without stopping a moment, he led this new army to the attack of a military post guarded by four-score soldiers and a piece of cannon. The post was surprised,—the soldiers dispersed or made prisoners,—and the gun brought off in triumph. From this he advances, the same afternoon, to another post of two hundred soldiers and three pieces of cannon; and succeeds, by the same surprise and intrepidity. The morning after, while preparing for other enterprises, he is joined by another band of insurgents, who had associated to protect one of their friends, for whose arrest a military order had been issued. The united force, now amounting to a thousand men, then directed its attack on Chollet, a considerable town, occupied by at least 500 of the republican army; and again bears down all resistance by the suddenness and impetuosity of its onset. The rioters find here a considerable supply of arms, money, and ammunition; — and thus a country is lost and won, in which, but two days before, nobody thought or spoke of insurrection!

If there was something astonishing in the sudden breaking out of this rebellion, its first apparent suppression was not less extraordinary. These events took place just before Lent; and, upon the approach of that holy season, the religious rebels all dispersed to their homes, and betook themselves to their prayers and their rustic occupations, just as if they had never quitted them. A column of the republican army, which advanced from Angers to bear down the insurrection, found no insurrection to quell. They marched from one end of the country to the other, and met every where with the most satisfactory appearances of submission and tranquillity. These appearances, however, it will readily be understood, were altogether deceitful; and as soon as Easter Sunday was over, the peasants began again to assemble in arms, — and now, for the first time, to apply to the gentry to head them.

All this time Madame Lescure and her family remained quietly at Clisson; and, in that profound retreat, were ignorant of the singular events to which we have alluded, for long after they occurred. The first intelligence they obtained was from the indefatigable M. Thomasin, who passed his time partly at their château, and partly in scampering about the country, and haranguing the constituted authorities — always in his national uniform, and with the authority of a Parisian patriot. One day this intrepid person came home, with a strange story of the neighbouring town of Herbiers having been taken either by a party of insur-

gents, or by an English army suddenly landed on the coast; and, at seven o'clock the next morning, the château was invested by 200 soldiers,—and a party of dragoons rode into the court-yard. Their business was to demand all the horses, arms, and ammunition, and also the person of an old cowardly chevalier, some of whose foolish letters had been carried to the municipality. M. de L. received this deputation with his characteristic composure—made the apology of the poor chevalier, and a few jokes at his expense—gave up some bad horses—and sent away the party in great good humour. For a few days they were agitated with contradictory rumours: but at last it appeared that the government had determined on vigorous measures; and it was announced, that all the gentry would be required to arm themselves and their retainers against the insurgents. This brought things to a crisis;—a council was held in the château, when it was speedily determined, that no consideration of prudence or of safety could induce men of honour to desert their dependants, or the party to which, in their hearts, they wished well;—and that, when the alternative came, they would rather fight with the insurgents than against them. Henri de Larochejaquelein—of whom the fair writer gives so engaging a picture, and upon whose acts of heroism she dwells throughout with so visible a delight, that it is quite a disappointment to find that it is not *his* name she bears when she comes to change her own—had been particularly inquired after and threatened; and upon an order being sent to his peasantry to attend and ballot for the militia, he takes horse in the middle of the night, and sets out to place himself at their head for resistance. The rest of the party remain a few days longer in considerable perplexity.—M. Thomasin having become suspected, on account of his frequent resort to them, had been put in prison; and they were almost entirely without intelligence as to what was going on; when one morning, when they were at breakfast, a party of horse gallops up to the gate, and presents an order for the immediate arrest of the whole company. M. de L. takes this with perfect calmness—a team of oxen is yoked to the old coach; and the prisoners are jolted along, under escort of the National dragoons, to the town of Bressuire. By the time they had reached this place, their mild and steady deportment had made so favourable an impression on their conductors, that they were very near taking them back to their homes;—and the municipal officers, before whom M. de L. was brought, had little else to urge for the arrest, but that it did not seem advisable to leave him at large, when it had been found necessary to secure all the other gentry of the district. They were not sent, however, to the common prison, but lodged in the house of a worthy republican, who had formerly supplied the family with groceries, and now treated them with the greatest kindness and civility. Here they remained for several days, closely shut up in two little rooms; and were not a little startled, when they saw from their windows two or three thousand of the National guard march fiercely out to repulse a party of the insurgents, who were advancing, it was reported, under the command of Henri de Larochejaquelein. Next day, however, these valiant warriors came flying back in great confusion. They had met and been defeated by the insurgents; and the town was filled with terrors—and with the cruelties to which terror always gives birth. Some hundreds of Marseillois arrived at this crisis to reinforce the republican army; and proposed, as a measure of intimidation and security, that they should immediately massacre all the prisoners.—The native leaders all expressed the greatest horror at this proposal—but it was nevertheless carried into effect! The author saw hundreds of those unfortunate creatures marched out of the town, under a guard of their butchers. They were then drawn up in a neighbouring field, and were cut down with the sabre—most of them quietly kneeling and exclaiming, *Vive le Roi!* It was natural for Madame de L. and her party to think that their turn was to come next: and the alarms of their compassionate jailer did not help to allay their apprehensions. Their fate hung indeed upon the slightest accident. One day they received a letter from an emigrant, congratulating them on the progress of the counter-revolution, and exhorting them not to remit their efforts in the cause. The very day after, their letters were all opened at the municipality, and sent to them unsealed! The patriots, however, it turned out, were too much

occupied with apprehensions of their own, to attend to any thing else. The National guards of the place were not much accustomed to war, and trembled at the retaliation which the excesses of their Marseillois auxiliaries might so well justify. A sort of panic took possession even of their best corps; nor could the general prevail on his cavalry to reconnoitre beyond the walls of the town. A few horsemen, indeed, once ventured half a mile farther; but speedily came galloping back in alarm, with a report that a great troop of the enemy were at their heels. It turned out to be only a single countryman at work in his field, with a team of six oxen!

There was no waiting an assault with such forces; and, in the beginning of May, 1793, it was resolved to evacuate the place, and fall back on Thouars. The aristocratic captives were fortunately forgotten in the hurry of this inglorious movement; and though they listened through their closed shutters, with no great tranquillity, to the parting clamours and imprecations of the Marseillois, they soon received assurance of their deliverance, in the supplications of their keeper, and many others of the municipality, to be allowed to retire with them to Clisson, and to seek shelter there from the vengeance of the advancing royalists. M. de Lescure, with his usual good nature, granted all these requests; and they soon set off, with a grateful escort, for their deserted château.

The dangers he had already incurred by his inaction—the successes of his less prudent friends, and the apparent weakness and irresolution of their opponents—now decided M. de Lescure to dissemble no longer with those who seemed entitled to his protection; and he resolved instantly to cast in his lot with the insurgents, and support the efforts of his adventurous cousin. He accordingly sent round, without the delay of an instant, to intimate his purpose to all the parishes where he had influence; and busied himself and his household in preparing horses and arms, while his wife and her women were engaged in manufacturing white cockades. In the midst of these preparations, Henri de Larochejaquelein arrived, flushed with victory and hope, and announced his seizure of Bressuire, and all the story of his brief and busy campaign.

Upon his first arrival in the revolted district of his own domains, he found the peasants rather disheartened for want of a leader—some setting off for the army of Anjou, and others meditating a return to their own homes. His appearance, however, and the heartiness of his adherence to their cause, at once revived the sinking flame of their enthusiasm, and spread it through all the adjoining region. Before next evening he found himself at the head of near 10,000 devoted followers—without arms or discipline indeed, but with hearts in the trim—and ready to follow wherever he would venture to lead. There were only about 200 firelocks in the whole array, and these were shabby fowling-pieces, without bayonets: the rest were equipped with scythes, or blades of knives stuck upon poles—with spits, or with good heavy cudgels of knotty wood. In presenting himself to this romantic army, their youthful leader made the following truly eloquent and characteristic speech—"My good friends, if my father were here to lead you, we should all proceed with greater confidence. For my part, I know I am but a child—but I hope I have courage enough not to be quite unworthy of supplying his place to you—Follow me when I advance against the enemy—kill me when I turn my back upon them—and revenge me if they bring me down!" That very day he led them into action. A strong post of the republicans was stationed at Aubiers:—Henri, with a dozen or two of his best marksmen, glided silently behind the hedge which surrounded the field in which they were, and immediately began to fire—some of the unarmed peasants handing forward loaded muskets to them in quick succession. He himself fired near 200 shots that day; and a gamekeeper, who stood beside him, almost as many. The soldiers, though at first astonished at this assault from an invisible enemy, soon collected themselves, and made a movement to gain a small height that was near. Henri chose this moment to make a general assault; and calling out to his men that they were running, burst through the hedge at their head, and threw them instantly into flight and irretrievable confusion; got possession of their guns and stores, and pursued them to within a few miles of the walls of Bressuire. Such,

almost universally, was the tactic of those formidable insurgents. Their whole art of war consisted in creeping round the hedges which separated them from their enemies, and firing there till they began to waver or move — and then rushing forward with shouts and impetuosity, but without any regard to order; possessing themselves first of the artillery, and rushing into the heart of their opponents with prodigious fierceness and activity. In these assaults they seldom lost so much as one man for every five that fell of the regulars. They were scarcely ever discovered soon enough to suffer from the musketry — and seldom gave the artillery an opportunity of firing more than once. When they saw the flash of the pieces, they instantly threw themselves flat on the ground till the shot flew over, then started up, and rushed on the gunners before they could reload. If they were finally repulsed, they retreated and dispersed with the same magical rapidity, darting through the hedges, and scattering among the defiles in a way that eluded all pursuit, and exposed those who attempted it to murderous ambuscades at every turning.

As soon as it was known that M. de Lescure had declared for the white cockade, forty parishes assumed that badge of hostility; and he and his cousin found themselves at the head of near 20,000 men! The day after, they brought eighty horsemen to the château. These gallant knights, however, were not very gorgeously caparisoned. Their steeds were of all sizes and colours — many of them with packs instead of saddles, and loops of rope for stirrups — pistols and sabres of all shapes tied on with cords — white or black cockades in their hats — and tricoloured ones — with bits of epaulettes taken from the vanquished republicans, dangling in ridicule at the tails of their horses! Such as they were, however, they filled the château with tumult and exultation, and frightened the hearts out of some unhappy republicans, who came to look after their wives who had taken refuge in that asylum. They did them no other harm, however, than compelling them to spit on their tricoloured cockades, and to call *Vive le Roi!* — which the poor people, being "des gens honnêtes et paisibles," very readily performed.

In the afternoon, Madame de L., with a troop of her triumphant attendants, paid a visit to her late prison at Bressuire. The place was now occupied by near 20,000 insurgents — all as remarkable, she assures us, for their simple piety, and the innocence and purity of their morals, as for the valour and enthusiasm which had banded them together. Even in a town so obnoxious as this had become, from the massacre of the prisoners, there were no executions and no pillage. Some of the men were expressing a great desire for some tobacco; and upon being asked whether there was none in the place, answered, quite simply, that there was plenty, but they had no money to buy it!

In giving a short view of the whole insurgent force, which she estimates at about 80,000 men, Madame de L. here introduces a short account of its principal leaders, whose characters are drawn with a delicate, though probably too favourable hand. M. d'Elbée, M. de Bonchamp, and M. de Marigny, were almost the only ones who had formerly exercised the profession of arms, and were therefore invested with the formal command. Stofflet, a native of Alsace, had formerly served in a Swiss regiment, but had long been a gamekeeper in Poitou. Of Cathelineau we have spoken already. Henri de Larochejaquelein, and M. de Lescure, were undoubtedly the most popular and important members of the association, and are painted with the greatest liveliness and discrimination. The former, tall, fair, and graceful — with a shy, affectionate, and indolent manner in private life, had, in the field, all the gaiety, animation, and love of adventure, that he used to display in the chase. Utterly indifferent to danger, and ignorant of the very name of fear, his great faults as a leader were rashness in attack, and undue exposure of his person. He knew little, and cared less, for the scientific details of war; and could not always maintain the gravity that was required in the councils of the leaders. Sometimes, after bluntly giving his opinion, he would quietly lay himself to sleep till the end of the deliberations; and, when reproached with this neglect of his higher duties, would answer, "What business had they to make me a general? — I would much rather have been a private light horseman, and taken

the sport as it came." With all this lightheartedness, however, he was full not only of kindness to his soldiers, but of compassion for his prisoners. He would sometimes offer, indeed, to fight them fairly hand to hand, before accepting their surrender; but never refused to give quarter, nor ever treated them with insult or severity.

M. de Lescure was in many respects of an opposite character. His courage, though of the most heroic temper, was invariably united with perfect coolness and deliberation. He had a great theoretical knowledge of war, having diligently studied all that was written on the subject; and was the only man in the party who knew any thing of fortification. His temper was unalterably sweet and placid; and his never-failing humanity, in the tremendous scenes he had to pass through, had something in it of an angelical character. Though constantly engaged at the head of his troops, and often leading them on to the assault, he could never persuade himself to take the life of a fellow-creature with his own hand, or to show the smallest severity to his captives. One day a soldier, who he thought had surrendered, fired at him, almost at the muzzle of his piece. He put aside the musket with his sword, and said, with perfect composure, "Take that prisoner to the rear." His attendants, enraged at the perfidy of the assault, cut him down behind his back. He turned round at the noise, and flew into the most violent passion in which he had ever been seen. This was the only time in his life in which he was known to utter an oath. There was no spirit of vengeance in short in his nature; and he frequently saved more lives after a battle, than had been lost in the course of it.

The discipline of the army, thus commanded, has been already spoken of. It was never even divided into regiments or companies. When the chiefs had agreed on a plan of operations, they announced to their followers; — M. Lescure goes to take such a bridge, — who will follow him? M. Marigny keeps the passes in such a valley — who will go with him? — and so on. They were never told to march to the right or to the left, but to that tree or to that steeple. They were generally very ill supplied with ammunition, and were often obliged to attack a post of artillery with cudgels. On one occasion, while rushing on for this purpose, they suddenly discovered a huge crucifix in a recess of the woods on their flank, and immediately every man of them stopped short, and knelt quietly down, under the fire of the enemy. They then got up, ran right forward, and took the cannon. They had tolerable medical assistance; and found admirable nurses for the wounded, in the nunneries and other religious establishments that existed in all the considerable towns.

Their first enterprise, after the capture of Bressuire, was against Thouars. To get at this place, a considerable river was to be crossed. — M. de Lescure headed a party that was to force the passage of a bridge; but when he came within the heavy fire of its defenders, all his peasants fell back, and left him for some minutes alone: — His clothes were torn by the bullets, but not a shot took effect on his person: — He returned to the charge again with Henri de Larochejaquelein: — Their followers, all but two, again left them at the moment of charging: but the enemy, scared at their audacity, had already taken flight; the bridge was carried by those four men; and the town was given up after a short struggle, though not before Henri had climbed alone to the top of the wall by the help of a friend's shoulders, and thrown several stones at the flying inhabitants within. The republican general Quetineau, who had defended himself with great valour, obtained honourable terms in his capitulation, and was treated with the greatest kindness by the insurgent chiefs. He had commanded at Bressuire when it was finally abandoned, and told M. Lescure, when he was brought before him, that he saw the closed window-shutters of his family well enough as he marched out; and that it was not out of forgetfulness that he had left them unmolested. M. Lescure expressed his gratitude for his generosity, and pressed him to remain with them. — "You do not agree in our opinions, I know; — and I do not ask you to take any share in our proceedings. You shall be a prisoner at large among us: but if you go back to the republicans, they will say you gave up the place out of treachery, and you will be rewarded by the executioner for the gallant defence you have made." — The captive answered

in terms equally firm and spirited. — "I must do my duty at all hazards. I should be dishonoured, if I remained voluntarily among enemies; and I am ready to answer for all I have hitherto done." — It will surprise some violent royalists among ourselves, we believe, to find that this frankness and fidelity to his party secured for him the friendship and esteem of all the Vendean leaders. The peasants, indeed, felt a little more like the liberal persons just alluded to. *They* were not a little scandalized to find a republican treated with respect and courtesy; — and, above all, were in horror when they saw him admitted into the private society of their chiefs, and discovered that M. de Bonchamp actually trusted himself in the same chamber with him at night! For the first two or three nights, indeed, several of them kept watch at the outside of the door, to defend him against the assassination they apprehended; and once or twice he found in the morning, that one more distrustful than the rest had glided into the room, and laid himself down across the feet of his commander.

From Thouars they proceeded to Fontenay, where they had a still more formidable resistance to encounter. M. de Lescure was again exposed alone to the fire of six pieces of cannon charged with grape; and had his hat pierced, a spur shot off, and a boot torn by the discharge; — but he only turned round to his men, who were hanging back, and said, "You see these fellows can take no aim; — come on!" They did come on, and soon carried all before them.

The republicans had retaken, in the course of these encounters, the first piece of cannon which had fallen into the hands of the insurgents, and to which the peasants had fondly given the name of *Marie Jeanne*. After their success at Fontenay, a party was formed to recover it. One man, in his impatience, got so far ahead of his comrades, that he was in the heart of the enemy before he was aware. Fortunately, he had the horse and accoutrements of a dragoon he had killed the day before, and was taken by the party for one of their own company. They welcomed him accordingly; and told him that he was just come in time to repulse the brigands, who were advancing to retake their *Marie Jeanne*. "Are they?" says he; — "follow me, and we shall soon give a good account of them:" — and then, heading the troop, he rode on till he came within reach of his own party, when he suddenly cut down the two men on each side of him, and welcomed his friends to the victory. At another time, four young officers, in the wantonness of their valour, rode alone to a large village in the heart of the country occupied by the republicans, ordered all the inhabitants to throw down their tricoloured cockades, and to prepare quarters for the royalist army, which was to march in, in the evening, 100,000 strong. The good people began their preparations accordingly, and hewed down their tree of liberty — when the young men laughed in their faces, and galloped unmolested away from upwards of a thousand enemies! — The whole book is full of such feats and adventures. — Their recent successes had encumbered them with near 4000 prisoners, of whom, as they had no strong places or regular garrisons, they were much at a loss how to dispose. To dismiss such a mob of privates, on their parole not to serve any more against them, they knew would be of no avail; and after much deliberation, they fell upon the ingenious expedient of shaving their heads, at the same time that their parole was exacted; so that if they again took the field against them within any moderate time, they might be easily recognised, and dealt with accordingly. Madame Lescure's father had the merit of this happy invention.

The day after the capture of Fontenay, the greater part of the army thought it was time to go home for a while to look after their cattle, and tell their exploits to their wives and children. In about a week, however, a considerable number of them came back again, and proceeded to attack Saumur. Here M. de Lescure received his first wound in the arm; and Henri, throwing his hat over the entrenchments of the place, called to his men, "Let us see now, who will bring it back to me!" — and rushed at their head across the glacis. A vast multitude of the republicans fell in this battle; and near 12,000 prisoners were made, — who were all shaved and let go. The insurgents did not lose 400 in all. In the castle they found Quetineau, the gallant but unsuccessful defender of Thouars, who, according to M. de Lescure's prediction, had been arrested and ordered for trial in consequence

of that disaster. He was again pressed to remain with them as a prisoner on parole; but continued firm in his resolution to do his duty, and leave the rest to fortune. He was sent, accordingly, to Paris a short time after — where he was tried, condemned, and executed!

The insurrection had now attained a magnitude which seemed to make it necessary to have some one formally appointed to the chief command; and with a view of at once flattering and animating the peasants, in whose spontaneous zeal it had originated, all voices were united in favour of Cathelineau, the humble and venerable leader under whom its first successes had been obtained. It is very remarkable, indeed, that in a party thus associated avowedly in opposition to democratical innovation, the distinctions of rank were utterly disregarded and forgotten. Not only was an humble peasant raised to the dignity of commander-in-chief, but Madame de L. assures us, that she herself never knew or enquired whether one half of the officers were of noble or plebeian descent; and mentions one, the son of a village shoemaker, who was long at the head of all that was gallant and distinguished in the body. We are afraid that this is a trait of their royalism, which it is no longer thought prudent to bring forward in the courts of royalty.

Those brilliant successes speedily suggested enterprises of still greater ambition and extent. A communication was now opened with M. de Charrette, who had long headed the kindred insurrection in Anjou; and a joint attack on the city of Nantes was projected and executed by the two armies. That of Poitou was now tolerably provided with arms and ammunition, and decently clothed, though without any attention to uniformity. The dress of the officers was abundantly fierce and fantastic. With pantaloons and jackets of gray cloth, they wore a variety of great red handkerchiefs all about their persons — one tied round their head, and two or three about their waist, and across their shoulders, for holding their pistols and ammunition. Henri de Larochejaquelein introduced this fashion; and it speedily became universal among his companions, giving them not a little the air of *brigands*, or banditti, the name early bestowed on them by the republicans, and at last generally adopted and recognised among themselves. The expedition to Nantes was disastrous. The soldiers did not like to go so far from home; and the army, as it advanced, melted away by daily desertions. There was also some want of concert in the movements of the different corps; — and, after a sanguinary conflict, the attack was abandoned, and the forces dispersed all over the country. The good Cathelineau was mortally wounded in this affair, at which neither M. de Lescure nor Henri were present; the latter being in garrison at Saumur, and the other disabled by his wound. The news of this wound came rather suddenly upon his wife, who, though she had always before been in agonies of fear on horseback, instantly mounted a ragged colt, and galloped off to rejoin him. She never afterwards had the least alarm about riding. The army having spontaneously disbanded after the check at Nantes, it was found impossible to maintain the places it had occupied. General Westermann arrived from Paris, at the head of a large force; and, after retaking Saumur and Parthenay, began the relentless and exterminating system of burning and laying waste the districts from which he had succeeded in dislodging the insurgents. One of the first examples he made was at M. de Lescure's château of Clisson. It was burnt to the ground, with all its offices, stores, and peasants' houses, as well as all the pictures and furniture of its master. Having long foreseen the probability of such a consummation, he had at one time given orders to remove some of the valuable articles it contained; but apprehensive that such a proceeding might discourage or disgust his followers, he afterwards abandoned the design, and submitted to the loss of all his family moveables. The event, Madame de L. assures us, produced no degree either of irritation or discouragement. The chiefs, however, now exerted all their influence to collect their scattered forces before Chatillon; and Madame de L. accompanied her husband in all the rapid and adventurous marches he made for that purpose, through this agitated and distracted country. In one of these fatiguing movements with some broken corps of the army, they stopped to repose for the night in the château of Madame de Concise, who was still so much an alien to the Vendean manners, that they found her putting on

rouge, and talking of the agitation of her nerves!

The attack on Westermann's position at Chatillon was completely successful; but the victory was stained by the vindictive massacres which followed it. The burnings and butcheries of the republican forces were bloodily avenged —in spite of the efforts of M. de Lescure, who repeatedly exposed his own life, to save those of the vanquished. In the midst of the battle, one of his attendants seeing a rifleman about to fire at him, stepped bravely before him, and received the shot in his eye. The carriage of Westermann was taken; and some young officers, to whom it was entrusted, having foolishly broken open the strong-box, which was believed to be full of money, there was a talk of bringing them to trial for the supposed embezzlement. M. de L., however, having declared that one of them had given him his word of honour that the box was empty when they opened it, the whole council declared themselves satisfied, and acquitted the young men by acclamation.

In the course of the summer of 1793, various sanguinary actions were fought with various success; but the most remarkable event was the arrival of a M. Tinteniac, with despatches from the English government, about the middle of July. This intrepid messenger had come alone through all Brittany and Anjou, carrying his despatches in his pistols as wadding, and incessantly in danger from the republican armies and magistrates. The despatches, Madame de L. informs us, showed an incredible ignorance on the part of the English government of the actual posture of affairs. They were answered, however, with gratitude and clearness. A debarkation was strongly recommended near Sables or Paimbœuf, but by no means at L'Orient, Rochefort, or Rochelle; and it was particularly entreated, that the troops should consist chiefly of emigrant Frenchmen, and that a Prince of the House of Bourbon should, if possible, place himself at their head. Madame de L., who wrote a small and very neat hand, was employed to write out these despatches, which were placed in the pistols of M. Tinteniac, who immediately proceeded on his adventurous mission. He reached England, it seems, and was frequently employed thereafter in undertakings of the same nature. He headed a considerable party of Bretons, in endeavouring to support the unfortunate descent at Quiberon; and, disdaining to submit, even after the failure of that ill-concerted expedition, fell bravely with arms in his hands. After his departure, the insurgents were repulsed at Lucon, and obtained some advantages at Chantonnay. But finding the republican armies daily increasing in numbers, skill, and discipline, they found it necessary to act chiefly on the defensive; and, for this purpose, divided the country into several districts, in each of which they stationed that part of the army which had been recruited within it, and the general who was most beloved and confided in by the inhabitants. In this way, M. Lescure came to be stationed in the heart of his own estates; and was not a little touched to find almost all his peasants, who had bled and suffered by his side for so long a time without pay, come to make offer of the rents that were due for the possessions to which they were but just returned. He told them, it was not for his rents that he had taken up arms; — and that while they were exposed to the calamities of war, they were well entitled to be freed of that burden. Various lads of thirteen, and several hale grandsires of seventy, came at this period, and insisted upon being allowed to share the dangers and glories of their kinsmen.

From this time, downwards, the picture of the war is shaded with deeper horrors; and the operations of the insurgents acquire a character of greater desperation. The Convention issued the barbarous decree, that the whole country, which still continued its resistance, should be desolated; — that the whole inhabitants should be exterminated, without distinction of age or sex; the habitations consumed with fire, and the trees cut down with the axe. Six armies, amounting in all to near two hundred thousand men, were charged with the execution of these atrocious orders; and began, in September, 1793, to obey them with a detestable fidelity. A multitude of sanguinary conflicts ensued; and the insurgents succeeded in repulsing this desolating invasion at almost all the points of attack. Among the slain in one of these engagements, the republicans found the body of a young woman, which Madame de L. informs us gave occasion to a

number of idle reports; many giving out that it was she herself, or a sister of M. de L. (who had no sister), or a new Joan of Arc, who had kept up the spirit of the peasantry by her enthusiastic predictions. The truth was, that it was the body of an innocent peasant girl, who had always lived a remarkably quiet and pious life, till recently before this action, when she had been seized with an irresistible desire to take a part in the conflict. She had discovered herself some time before to Madame de L.; and begged from her a shift of a peculiar fabric. The night before the battle, she also revealed her secret to M. de L.; — asked him to give her a pair of shoes, — and promised to behave herself in such a manner in the morrow's fight, that he should never think of parting with her. Accordingly she kept near his person through the whole of the battle, and conducted herself with the most heroic bravery. Two or three times, in the very heat of the fight, she said to him, "No, mon General, you shall not get before me — I shall always be closer up to the enemy even than you." Early in the day, she was hurt pretty seriously in the hand, but held it up laughing to her general, and said, "It is nothing at all." In the end of the battle, she was surrounded in a charge, and fell fighting like a desperado. There were about ten other women, who took up arms, Madame de L. says, in this cause; — two sisters, under fifteen — and a tall beauty, who wore the dress of an officer. The priests attended the soldiers in the field, and rallied and exhorted them; but took no part in the combat, nor ever excited them to any acts of inhumanity. There were many boys of the most tender age among the combatants, — some scarcely more than nine or ten years of age.

M. Piron gained a decided victory over the most numerous army of the republic; but their ranks being recruited by the whole garrison of Mentz, which had been liberated on parole, presented again a most formidable front to the insurgents. A great battle was fought in the middle of September, at Chollet, where the government army was completely broken, and would have been finally routed, but for the skill and firmness of the celebrated Kleber who commanded it, and successfully maintained a position which covered its retreat. In the middle of the battle, one of the peasants took a flageolet from his pocket, and, in derision, began to play *ça ira*, as he advanced against the enemy. A cannon-ball struck off his horse's head, and brought him to the ground; but he drew his leg from the dead animal, and marched forward on foot, without discontinuing his music. One other picture of detail will give an idea of the extraordinary sort of warfare in which the country was then engaged. Westermann was beat out of Chatillon, and pursued to some distance: but finding that the insurgent forces were withdrawn, he bethought himself of recovering the place by a *coup de main*. He mounted an hundred grenadiers behind an hundred picked hussars, and sent them at midnight into the city. The peasants, as usual, had no outposts, and were scattered about the streets, overcome with fatigue and brandy. However, they made a stout and bloody resistance. One active fellow received twelve sabre wounds on the same spot; another, after killing a hussar, took up his wounded brother in his arms, placed him on the horse, and sent him out of the city; — then returned to the combat; killed another hussar, and mounted himself on the prize. The republicans, irritated at the resistance they experienced, butchered all that came across them in that night of confusion! All order or discipline was lost in the darkness; and they hacked and fired at each other, or wrestled and fell, man to man, as they chanced to meet, and often without being able to distinguish friend from foe. — An eminent leader of the insurrection was trampled under foot by a party of the republicans, who rushed past him to massacre the whole family where he lodged, who were all zealous republicans. — The town was set on fire in fifty places, — and was at last evacuated by *both* parties, in mutual fear and ignorance of the force to which they were opposed. When the day dawned, however, it was finally recupied by the insurgents.

After some more successes, the insurgent chiefs found their armies sorely reduced, and their enemies perpetually increasing in force and numbers. M. de la Charette, upon some misunderstanding, withdrew his corps; and all who looked beyond the present moment, could not fail to perceive, that disasters of the most fatal nature were almost inevitably approach-

ing. A dreadful disaster, at all events, now fell on their fair historian. M. de L., in rallying a party of his men near Tremblaye, was struck with a musket ball on the eyebrow, and instantly fell senseless to the ground. He was not dead, however; and was with difficulty borne through the rout which was the immediate consequence of his fall. His wife, entirely ignorant of what had happened, was forced to move along with the retreating army; and in a miserable little village was called at midnight, from her bed of straw, to hear mass performed to the soldiers by whom she was surrounded. The solemn ceremony was interrupted by the approaching thunder of artillery, and the perpetual arrival of fugitive and tumultuary parties, with tidings of evil omen. Nobody had the courage to tell this unfortunate woman the calamity that had befallen her, though the priest had awakened a vague alarm by solemn encomiums on the piety of M. de L., and the necessity of resignation to the will of Heaven. Next night she found him at Cherdron, scarcely able to move or to articulate, — but suffering more from the idea of her having fallen into the hands of the enemy, than from his own disasters.

The last great battle was fought near Chollet, when the insurgents, after a furious and sanguinary resistance, were at last borne down by the multitude of their opponents, and driven down into the low country on the banks of the Loire. M. de Bonchamp, who had always held out the policy of crossing this river, and the advantages to be derived from uniting themselves to the royalists of Brittany, was mortally wounded in this battle; but his counsels still influenced their proceedings in this emergency; and not only the whole debris and wreck of the army, but a great proportion of the men and women and children of the country, flying in consternation from the burnings and butchery of the government forces, flocked down in agony and despair to the banks of this great river. On gaining the heights of St. Florent, one of the most mournful, and at the same time most magnificent spectacles, burst upon the eye. Those heights form a vast semicircle; at the bottom of which a broad bare plain extends to the edge of the water. Near an hundred thousand unhappy souls now blackened over that dreary expanse, — old men, infants, and women, mingled with the half-armed soldiery, caravans, crowded baggage waggons and teams of oxen, all full of despair, impatience, anxiety, and terror. — Behind, were the smokes of their burning villages, and the thunder of the hostile artillery; — before, the broad stream of the Loire, divided by a long low island, also covered with the fugitives — twenty frail barks plying in the stream — and, on the far banks, the disorderly movements of those who had effected the passage, and were waiting there to be rejoined by their companions. Such, Madame de L. assures us, was the tumult and terror of the scene, and so awful the recollections it inspired, that it can never be effaced from the memory of any of those who beheld it; and that many of its awe-struck spectators have concurred in stating, that it brought forcibly to their imaginations the unspeakable terrors of the great day of Judgment! Through this dismayed and bewildered multitude, the disconsolate family of their gallant general made their way silently to the shore; — M. de L. stretched, almost insensible, on a wretched litter, — his wife, three months gone with child, walking by his side — and, behind her, her faithful nurse, with her helpless and astonished infant in her arms. When they arrived on the beach, they with difficulty got a crazy boat to carry them to the island; but the aged monk who steered it would not venture to cross the larger branch of the stream, — and the poor wounded man was obliged to submit to the agony of another removal. At length, they were landed on the opposite bank; where wretchedness and desolation appeared still more conspicuous. Thousands of helpless wretches were lying on the grassy shore, or roaming about in search of their friends, from whom they had been divided. There was a general complaint of cold and hunger; and nobody in a condition to give any directions, or administer any relief. M. de L. suffered excruciating pain from the piercing air which blew upon his feverish frame; — the poor infant screamed for food, and the helpless mother was left to minister to both; — while her attendant went among the burnt and ruined villages, to seek a drop of milk for the baby. At length they got again in motion for the adjoining village of Varades, — M. de L., borne in a

sort of a chair upon the pikes of his soldiers, with his wife and the maid-servant walking before him, and supporting his legs, wrapped up in their cloaks. With great difficulty they procured a little room in a cottage swarming with soldiers, — most of them famishing for want of food, and yet still so mindful of the rights of their neighbours, that they would not take a few potatoes from the garden of the cottage, till Madame de L. had obtained leave of the proprietor.

M. de Bonchamp died as they were taking him out of the boat; and it became necessary to elect another commander. M. de L. roused himself to recommend Henri de Larochejaquelein; and he was immediately appointed. When the election was announced to him, M. de L. desired to see and congratulate his valiant cousin. He was already weeping over him in a dark corner of the room; and now came to express his hopes that he should soon be superseded by his recovery. "No," said M. de L., "that I believe is out of the question: but even if I were to recover, I should never take the place you have now obtained, and should be proud to serve as your aide-de-camp." — The day after, they advanced towards Rennes. M. de L. could find no other conveyance than a baggage-waggon; at every jolt of which he suffered such anguish, as to draw forth the most piercing shrieks even from his manly bosom. After some time, an old chaise was discovered; a piece of artillery was thrown away to supply it with horses, and the wounded general was laid in it, — his head being supported in the lap of Agatha, his mother's faithful waiting-woman, and now the only attendant of his wife and infant. In three painful days they reached Laval; — Madame de L. frequently suffering from absolute want, and sometimes getting nothing to eat the whole day, but one or two sour apples. M. de L. was nearly insensible during the whole journey. He was roused but once, when there was a report that a party of the enemy were in sight. He then called for his musket, and attempted to get out of the carriage; — addressed exhortations and reproaches to the troops that were flying around him, and would not rest till an officer in whom he had confidence came up and restored some order to the detachment. — The alarm turned out to be a false one.

At Laval they halted for several days; and he was so much recruited by the repose, that he was able to get for half an hour on horseback, and seemed to be fairly in the way of recovery; when his excessive zeal, and anxiety for the good behaviour of the troops, tempted him to premature exertions, from the consequences of which he never afterwards recovered. The troops being all collected and refreshed at Laval, it was resolved to turn upon their pursuers, and give battle to the advancing army of the republic. The conflict was sanguinary; but ended most decidedly in favour of the Vendeans. The first encounter was in the night, — and was characterized with more than the usual confusion of night attacks. The two armies crossed each other in so extraordinary a manner, that the artillery of each was supplied, for a part of the battle, from the *caissons* of the enemy; and one of the Vendean leaders, after exposing himself to great hazard in helping a brother officer, as he took him to be, out of a ditch, discovered, by the next flash of the cannon, that it was an enemy — and immediately cut him down. After daybreak, the battle became more orderly, and ended in a complete victory. This was the last grand crisis of the insurrection. The way to La Vendée was once more open; and the fugitives had it in their power to return triumphant to their fastnesses and their homes, after rousing Brittany by the example of their valour and success. M. de L. and Henri both inclined to this course; but other counsels prevailed. Some were for marching on to Nantes — others for proceeding to Rennes — and some, more sanguine than the rest, for pushing directly for Paris. Time was irretrievably lost in these deliberations; and the republicans had leisure to rally, and bring up their reinforcements, before any thing was definitively settled.

In the meantime, M. de L. became visibly worse; and one morning, when his wife alone was in the room, he called her to him, and told her that he felt his death was at hand; — that his only regret was for leaving her in the midst of such a war, with a helpless child, and in a state of pregnancy. For himself, he added, he died happy, and with humble reliance on the Divine mercy; — but her sorrow he could not bear to think of; — and he entreated her pardon for any neglect or unkindness he might

ever have shown her. He added many other expressions of tenderness and consolation; and seeing her overwhelmed with anguish at the despairing tone in which he spoke, concluded by saying, that he might perhaps be mistaken in his prognosis;—and hoped still to live for her. Next day they were under the necessity of moving forward; and, on the journey, he learned accidentally from one of the officers the dreadful details of the Queen's execution, which his wife had been at great pains to keep from his knowledge. This intelligence seemed to bring back his fever—though he still spoke of living to avenge her—"If I do live," he said, "it shall now be for vengeance only—no more mercy from me!"—That evening, Madame de L., entirely overcome with anxiety and fatigue, had fallen into a deep sleep on a mat before his bed:—and soon after, his condition became altogether desperate. He was now speechless, and nearly insensible;—the sacraments were administered, and various applications made without awaking the unhappy sleeper by his side. Soon after midnight, however, she started up, and instantly became aware of the full extent of her misery. To fill up its measure, it was announced in the course of the morning, that they must immediately resume their march with the last division of the army. The thing appeared altogether impossible; Madame de L. declared she would rather die by the hands of the republicans, than permit her husband to be moved in the condition in which he then was. When she recollected, however, that these barbarous enemies had of late not only butchered the wounded that fell into their power, but mutilated and insulted their remains, she submitted to the alternative, and prepared for this miserable journey with a heart bursting with anguish. The dying man was roused only to heavy moanings by the pain of lifting him into the carriage,—where his faithful Agatha again supported his head, and a surgeon watched all the changes in his condition. Madame de L. was placed on horseback; and, surrounded by her father and mother, and a number of officers, went forward, scarcely conscious of any thing that was passing—only that sometimes, in the bitterness of her heart, when she saw the dead bodies of the republican soldiers on the road, she made her horse trample upon them, as if in vengeance for the slaughter of her husband. In the course of little more than an hour, she thought she heard some little stir in the carriage, and insisted upon stopping to inquire into the cause. The officers, however, crowded around her; and then her father came up and said that M. de L. was in the same state as before, but that he suffered dreadfully from the cold, and would be very much distressed if the door was again to be opened. Obliged to be satisfied with this answer, she went on in a sullen and gloomy silence for some hours longer in a dark and rainy day of November. It was night when they reached the town of Fougeres; and, when lifted from her horse at the gate, she was unable either to stand or walk: she was carried into a wretched house, crowded with troops of all descriptions, where she waited two hours in agony till she heard that the carriage with M. de L. was come up. She was left alone for a dreadful moment with her mother; and then M. de Beauvolliers came in, bathed in tears,—and taking both her hands, told her she must now think only of saving the child she carried within her! Her husband had expired when she heard the noise in the carriage, soon after their setting out—and the surgeon had accordingly left it as soon as the order of the march had carried her ahead;—but the faithful Agatha, fearful lest her appearance might alarm her mistress in the midst of the journey, had remained alone with the dead body for all the rest of the day! Fatigue, grief, and anguish of mind, now threatened Madame de L. with consequences which it seems altogether miraculous that she should have escaped. She was seized with violent pains, and was threatened with a miscarriage in a room which served as a common passage to the crowded and miserable lodging she had procured. It was thought necessary to bleed her—and, after some difficulty, a surgeon was procured. She can never forget, she says, the formidable apparition of this warlike phlebotomist. A figure six feet high, with ferocious whiskers, a great sabre at his side, and four huge pistols in his belt, stalked up with a fierce and careless air to her bed-side; and when she said she was timid about the operation, answered harshly, "So am not I—I have killed three hundred men and upwards in the field in my time—one of them only this

morning—I think then I may venture to bleed a woman — Come, come, let us see your arm." She was bled accordingly — and, contrary to all expectation, was pretty well again in the morning. She insisted for a long time in carrying the body of her husband in the carriage along with her; — but her father, after indulging her for a few days, contrived to fall behind with this precious deposit, and informed her when he came up again, that it had been found necessary to bury it privately in a spot which he would not specify.

This abstract is grown to such a bulk that we find we cannot afford to continue it on the same scale. Nor is this very necessary; for though there is more than a third part of the book, of which we have given no account— and that, to those who have a taste for tales of sorrow, the most interesting portion of it—we believe that most readers will think they have had enough of La Vendée; and that all will now be in a condition to judge of the degree of interest or amusement which the work is likely to afford them. We shall add, however, a brief sketch of the rest of its contents.—After a series of murderous battles, to which the mutual refusal of quarter gave an exasperation unknown in any other history, and which left the field so cumbered with dead bodies that Madame de L. assures us that it was dreadful to feel the lifting of the wheels, and the cracking of the bones, as her heavy carriage passed over them, — the wreck of the Vendeans succeeded in reaching Angers upon the Loire, and trusted to a furious assault upon that place for the means of repassing the river, and regaining their beloved country. The garrison, however, proved stronger and more resolute than they had expected. Their own gay and enthusiastic courage had sunk under a long course of suffering and disaster; and, after losing a great number of men before the walls, they were obliged to turn back in confusion, they did not well know whither, but farther and farther from the land to which all their hopes and wishes were directed. In the tumult of this retreat, Madame de L. lost sight of her venerable aunt, who had hitherto been the mild and patient companion of their wanderings; and learned afterwards that she had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and, at the age of eighty, been publicly executed at Rennes, for the crime of rebellion! At Fougeres, at Laval, at Dol, and Savenay, the dwindled force of the insurgents had to sustain new attacks from their indefatigable pursuers, in which the officers and most of the soldiery gave still more extraordinary proofs, than any we have yet recorded, of undaunted valour, and constancy worthy of better fortune. The weather was now, in the latter end of November, extremely cold and rainy; the roads almost impassable; and provisions very scarce. Often, after a march of ten hours, Madame de L. has been obliged to fish for a few cold potatoes in the bottom of a dirty cauldron, filled with greasy water, and polluted by the hands of half the army. Her child sickened from its teething, and insufficient nourishment; and every day she witnessed the death of some of those gallant leaders whom the spring had seen assembled in her halls in all the flush of youthful confidence and glory. After many a weary march, and desperate struggle, about 10,000 sad survivors got again to the banks of that fatal Loire, which now seemed to divide them from hope and protection. Henri, who had arranged the whole operation with consummate judgment, found the shores on both sides free of the enemy: — but all the boats had been removed; and, after leaving orders to construct rafts with all possible despatch, he himself, with a few attendants, ventured over in a little wherry, which he had brought with him on a cart, to make arrangements for covering their landing. But they never saw the daring Henri again! The vigilant enemy came down upon them at this critical moment — intercepted his return — and, stationing several armed vessels in the stream, rendered the passage of the army altogether impossible. They fell back in despair upon Savenay; and there the brave and indefatigable Marigny told Madame de L. that all was now over — that it was altogether impossible to resist the attack that would be made next day — and advised her to seek her safety in flight and disguise, without the loss of an instant. She set out accordingly, with her mother, in a gloomy day of December, under the conduct of a drunken peasant; and, after being out most of the night, at length obtained shelter in a dirty farm house, — from which, in the course of the day, she had the misery of seeing her unfortunate

countrymen scattered over the whole open country, chased and butchered without mercy by the republicans, who now took a final vengeance for all the losses they had sustained. She had long been clothed in shreds and patches, and needed no disguise to conceal her quality. She was sometimes hidden in the mill, when the troopers came to search for fugitives in her lonely retreat; and oftener sent, in the midst of winter, to herd the sheep or cattle of her faithful and compassionate host, along with his rawboned daughter.

In this situation they remained till late in the following spring; — and it would be endless to enumerate the hairbreadth 'scapes and unparalleled sufferings to which they were every day exposed — reduced frequently to live upon alms, and forced every two or three days to shift their quarters, in the middle of night, from one royalist cabin to another. Such was the long-continued and vindictive rigour of the republican party, that the most eager and unrelaxing search was made for fugitives of all descriptions; and every adherent of the insurgent faction who fell into their hands was barbarously murdered, without the least regard to age, sex, or individual innocence! While skulking about in this state of peril and desolation, they had glimpses and occasional rencounters with some of their former companions, whom similar misfortunes had driven upon similar schemes of concealment. In particular, they twice saw the daring and unsubduable M. de Marigny, who had wandered over the whole country from Angers to Nantes; and notwithstanding his gigantic form and remarkable features, had contrived so to disguise himself as to elude all detection or pursuit. He could counterfeit all ages and dialects, and speak in perfection the *patois* of every village. He now appeared before them in the character of an itinerant dealer in poultry; and retired unsuspected by all but themselves. In this wretched condition, the term of Madame de L.'s confinement drew on; and, after a thousand frights and disasters, she was delivered of two daughters, without any other assistance than that of her mother. One of the infants had its wrist dislocated; and so subdued was the poor mother's mind to the level of her fallen fortunes, that she had now no other anxiety, than that she might recover strength enough to carry it herself to the waters of Bareges, which she fancied might be of service to it; — but the poor baby died within a fortnight after it was born.

Towards the end of 1794, their lot was somewhat softened by the compassionate kindness of a Madame Dumoutiers, who offered them an asylum in her house; in which, though still liable to the searches of the bloodhounds of the municipality, they had more assistance in eluding them, and less misery to endure in the intervals. The whole history of their escapes would make the adventures of Caleb Williams appear a cold and barren chronicle; but we have room only to mention, that after the death of Robespierre, there was a great abatement in the rigour of pursuit; and that a general amnesty was speedily proclaimed, for all who had been concerned in the insurrection. After several inward struggles with pride and principle, Madame de L. was prevailed on to repair to Nantes, to avail herself of this amnesty; — but, first of all, she rode in to reconnoitre, and consult with some friends of her hostess; and proceeded boldly through the hostile city, in the dress of a peasant, with a sack at her back, and a pair of fowls in her hand. She found that the tone was now to flatter and conciliate the insurgents by all sorts of civilities and compliments; and after some time, she and her mother applied for, and obtained, a full pardon for all their offences against the republican government.

This amnesty drew back to light many of her former friends, who had been universally supposed to be dead; and proved, by the prodigious numbers whom it brought from their hiding places in the neighbourhood, how generally the lower orders were attached to their cause, or how universal the virtues of compassion and fidelity to confiding misery are in the national character. It also brought to the writer's knowledge many shocking particulars of the cruel executions which so long polluted that devoted city. We may give a few of the instances in her own words, as a specimen of her manner of writing; to which, in our anxiety to condense the information she affords us, we have paid perhaps too little attention.

"Madame de Jourdain fut menée sur la Loire, pour être noyée avec ses trois filles. Un soldat voulut sauver la plus jeune, qui était fort belle. Elle se

jeta à l'eau pour partager le sort de sa mère. La malheureuse enfant tomba sur des cadavres, et n'enfonça point. Elle criait: Poussez-moi, je n'ai pas assez d'eau! et elle périt.

"Mademoiselle de Cuissard, âgée de seize ans, qui était plus belle encore, s'attira aussi le même intérêt d'un officer qui passa trois heures à ses pieds, la suppliant de se laisser sauver. Elle était avec une vieille parente que cet homme ne voulait pas se risquer à dérober au supplice. Mademoiselle de Cuissard se précipita dans la Loire avec elle.

"Une mort affreuse fut celle de Mademoiselle de la Roche St. André. Elle était grosse: on l'épargna. On lui laissa nourrir son enfant; mais il mourut, et on la fit périr le lendemain! Au reste, il ne faut pas croire que toutes les femmes enceintes fussent respectées. Cela était même fort rare: plus communément les soldats massacraient femmes et enfants. Il n'y avait que devant les tribunaux, où l'on observait ces exceptions; et on y laissait aux femmes le temps de nourrir leurs enfants, comme étant une *obligation républicaine*. C'est en quoi consistait l'humanité des gens d'alors.

"Ma pauvre Agathe avait couru de bien grands dangers. Elle m'avait quitté à Nort, pour profiter de cette amnistie pretendue, dont on avait parlé dans ce moment. Elle vint à Nantes, et fut conduite devant le général Lamberty, le plus féroce des amis de Carrier. La figure d'Agathe lui plait: 'As-tu peur, brigande?' lui dit-il. 'Non, général,' répondit-elle. 'Hé bien! quand tu auras peur, souviens-toi de Lamberty,' ajouta-t-il. Elle fut conduite à l'entrepôt. C'est la trop fameuse prison où l'on entassoit les victimes destinées à être noyées. Chaque nuit on venait en prendre par centaines, pour les mettre sur les bateaux. Là, on liait les malheureux deux à deux, et on les poussait dans l'eau, à coups de baïonnette. On saisissait indistinctement tout ce qui se trouvait à l'entrepôt; tellement qu'on noya un jour l'état major d'une corvette Anglaise, qui était prisonnier de guerre. Une autre fois, Carrier, voulant donner un exemple de l'austérité des mœurs rêpublicaines, fit enfermer trois cents filles publiques de la ville, et les malheureuses créatures furent noyées! Enfin, l'on estime qu'il a péri à l'entrepôt quinze mille personnes dans un mois. Il est vrai qu'outre les supplices, la misère et la maladie ravageaient les prisonniers, qui étaient pressés sur la paille, et qui ne recevaient aucun soin. A peine les connaissait-on. Les cadavres restaient quelquefois plus d'un jour sans qu'on vint les emporter.

"Agathe ne doutant plus d'une mort prochaine, envoya chercher Lamberty. Il la conduisit dans un petit bâtiment à soupape, dans lequel on avait noyé les prêtres, et que Carrier lui avait donné. Il était seul avec elle, et voulut en profiter: elle résista. Lamberty la menaça de la noyer: elle courut pour se jeter elle-même à l'eau. Alors cet homme lui dit: Allons! tu es une brave fille, je te sauverai. Il la laissa huit jours seule dans le bâtiment, où elle entendait les noyades qui se faisaient la nuit; ensuite il la cacha chez un nommé S* * *, qui était, comme lui, un fidèle exécuteur des ordres de Carrier.

"Quelque temps après, la discorde divisa les républicains de Nantes. On prit le prétexte d'accuser Lamberty d'avoir dérobé des femmes aux noyades, et d'en avoir noyé qui ne devaient pas l'être. Un jeune homme, nommé Robin, qui était fort dévoué à Lamberty, vint saisir Agathe, chez Madame S* * *, la traîna dans le bateau, et voulut la poignarder, pour faire disparaître une preuve du crime qu'on reprochait à son patron. Agathe se jeta à ses pieds; parvint à l'attendrir, et il la cacha chez un de ses amis, nommé Lavaux, qui était honnête homme, et qui avait déjà recueilli Madame de l'Epinay: mais on sut dès le lendemain l'asile d'Agathe, et on vint l'arrêter.

"Cependant le parti ennemi de Lamberty continuait à vouloir le détruire. Il résulta de cette circonstance, qu'on jeta de l'intérêt sur Agathe. On loua S* * * et Lavaux de leur humanité, et l'on parvint à faire périr Lamberty! Peu après arriva la mort de Robespierre. Agathe resta encore quelques mois en prison, puis obtint sa liberté." — Vol. ii. pp. 171—175.

When the means of hearing of her friends were thus suddenly restored, there was little to hear but what was mournful. Her father had taken refuge in a wood with a small party of horsemen, after the rout of Savenay, and afterwards collected a little force, with which they seized on the town of Ancenis, and had nearly forced the passage of the Loire; but they were surrounded, and made prisoners, and all shot in the market-place! The brave Henri de Larochejaquelein had gained the north bank with about twenty followers, and wandered many days over the burnt and bloody solitudes of the once happy La Vendée. Overcome with fatigue and hunger, they at last reached an inhabited farm-house, and fell fast asleep in the barn. They were soon roused, however, by the news that a party of the republicans were approaching the same house; but were so worn out, that they would not rise, even to provide against that extreme hazard. The party accordingly entered; and being almost as much exhausted as the others, threw themselves down, without asking any questions, at the other end of the barn, and slept quietly beside them. Henri afterwards found out M. de la Charrette, by whom he was coldly, and even rudely received; but he soon raised a little army of his own, and became again formidable in the scenes of his first successes: — till one day, riding a little in front of his party, he fell in with two republican soldiers, upon

whom his followers were about to fire, when he said, "No, no, they shall have quarter;" and pushing up to them, called upon them to surrender. Without saying a word, one of them raised his piece, and shot him right through the forehead. He fell at once dead before them, and was buried where he fell.

"Ainsi périt, à vingt et un ans, Henri de la Rochejaquelein. Encore à présent, quand les paysans se rappellent l'ardeur et l'éclat de son courage, sa modestie, sa facilité, et ce caractère de guerrier, et de bon enfant, *ils* parlent de lui avec fierté et avec amour. Il n'est pas un Vendéen dont on ne voie le regard s'animer, quand il raconte comment il a seivi sous M. Henri." — Vol. ii. pp. 187, 188.

The fate of the gallant Marigny was still more deplorable. He joined Charrette and Stofflet; but some misunderstanding having arisen among them upon a point of discipline, they took the rash and violent step of bringing him to a court-martial, and sentencing him to death for disobedience. To the horror of all the Vendeans, and the great joy of the republicans, this unjust and imprudent sentence was carried into execution; and the cause deprived of the ablest of its surviving champions.

When they had gratified their curiosity with these melancholy details, Madame de L. and her mother set out for Bourdeaux, and from thence to Spain, where they remained for nearly two years — but were at last permitted to return; — and, upon Bonaparte's accession to the sovereignty, were even restored to a great part of their possessions. On the earnest entreaty of her mother, she was induced at last to give her hand to Louis de Larochejàquelein, brother to the gallant Henri — and the inheritor of his principles and character. This match took place in 1802, and they lived in peaceful retirement till the late movements for the restoration of the house of Bourbon. The notice of this new alliance terminates the original Memoirs; but there is a supplement, containing rather a curious account of the intrigues and communications of the royalist party in Bourdeaux and the South, through the whole course of the Revolution, — and of the proceedings by which they conceive that they accelerated the restoration of the King in 1814. It may not be uninteresting to add, that since the book was published, the second husband of the unfortunate writer fell in battle in the same cause which proved fatal to the first, during the short period of Bonaparte's last reign, and but a few days before the decisive battle of Waterloo.

We have not left room now for any general observations — and there is no need of them. The book is, beyond all question, extremely curious and interesting — and we really have no idea that any reflections of ours could appear half so much so as the abstract we have now given in their stead. One remark, however, we shall venture to make, now that our abstract is done. If all France were like La Vendée in 1793, we should anticipate nothing but happiness from the restoration of the Bourbons and of the old government. But the very fact that the Vendeans were crushed by the rest of the country proves that this is not the case: and indeed it requires but a moment's reflection to perceive, that the rest of France could not well resemble La Vendée in its royalism, unless it had resembled it in the other peculiarities upon which that royalism was founded — unless it had all its noblesse resident on their estates; and living in their old feudal relations with a simple and agricultural vassalage. The book indeed shows two things very plainly — and both of them well worth remembering. In the first place, that there may be a great deal of kindness and good affection among a people of insurgents against an established government; —and, secondly, that where there is such an aversion to a government, as to break out in spontaneous insurrection, it is impossible entirely to subdue that aversion, either by severity or forbearance — although the difference of the two courses of policy is, that severity, even when carried to the savage extremity of devastation and indiscriminate slaughter, leads only to the adoption of similar atrocities in return — while forbearance is at least rewarded by the acquiescence of those who are conscious of weakness, and gives time and opportunity for those mutual concessions by which alone contending factions or principles can ever be permanently reconciled.

MARGRAVINE OF BAREITH.

(NOVEMBER, 1812.)

Mémoires de FRÉDERIQUE SOPHIE WILHELMINE DE PRUSSE, *Margrave de Bareith, Sœur de Frédéric le Grand. Ecrits de sa Main.* 8vo. 2 tomes. Brunswick, Paris, et Londres: 1812.

PHILOSOPHERS have long considered it as probable, that the private manners of absolute sovereigns are vulgar, their pleasures low, and their dispositions selfish; — that the two extremes of life, in short, approach pretty closely to each other; and that the Masters of mankind, when stripped of the artificial pomp and magnificence which invests them in public, resemble nothing so nearly as the meanest of the multitude. The ground of this opinion is, that the very highest and the very lowest of mankind are equally beyond the influence of that wholesome control, to which all the intermediate classes are subjected, by their mutual dependence, and the need they have for the good will and esteem of their fellows. Those who are at the very bottom of the scale are below the sphere of this influence; and those at the very top are above it. The one have no chance of distinction by any effort they are capable of making; and the other are secure of the highest degree of it, without any. Both therefore are indifferent, or very nearly so, to the opinion of mankind: the former, because the naked subsistence which they earn by their labour will not be affected by that opinion; and the latter, because their legal power and preeminence are equally independent of it. Those who have nothing to lose, in short, are not very far from the condition of those who have nothing more to gain; and the maxim of reckoning one's self last, which is the basis of all politeness, and leads, insensibly, from the mere practice of dissimulation, to habits of kindness and sentiments of generous independence, is equally inapplicable to the case of those who are obviously and in reality the last of their kind, and those who are quite indisputably the first. Both therefore are deprived of the checks and of the training, which restrain the selfishness, and call out the sensibilities of other men: and, remote and contrasted as their actual situation must be allowed to be, are alike liable to exhibit that disregard for the feelings of others, and that undisguised preference for their own gratification, which it is the boast of modern refinement to have subdued, or at least effectually concealed, among the happier orders of society. In a free country, indeed, the monarch, if he share at all in the spirit of liberty, may escape this degradation; because he will then feel for how much he is dependent on the good opinion of his countrymen; and, in general, where there is a great ambition for popularity, this pernicious effect of high fortune will be in a great degree avoided. But the ordinary class of arbitrary rulers, who found their whole claim to distinction upon the accident of their birth and station, may be expected to realize all that we have intimated as to the peculiar manners and dispositions of the *Caste;* to sink, like their brethren of the theatre, when their hour of representation is over, into gross sensuality, paltry intrigues, and dishonourable squabbles; and, in short, to be fully more likely to beat their wives and cheat their benefactors, than any other set of persons — out of the condition of tinkers.

But though these opinions have long seemed pretty reasonable to those who presumed to reason at all on such subjects, and even appeared to be tolerably well confirmed by the few indications that could be obtained as to the state of the fact, there was but little prospect of the world at large getting at the exact truth, either by actual observation or by credible report. The tone of adulation and outrageous compliment is so firmly established, and as it were positively prescribed, for all authorized communications from the interior of a palace, that it would be ridiculous even to form a guess, as to its actual condition, from such materials: and, with regard to the casual observers who might furnish less suspected information, a great part are too vain, and too grateful for the opportunities they have enjoyed, to do any thing which might prevent their recurrence; while others are kept silent by a virtuous shame; and the remainder are discredited, and perhaps not always without reason, as the instruments of faction or envy. There seemed great reason to fear, therefore, that this curious branch of Natural History would be left to mere theory and conjecture, and never be elucidated by the testimony of any competent observer; when

the volumes before us made their appearance, to set theory and conjecture at rest, and make the private character of such sovereigns a matter of historical record.

They bear to be Memoirs of a Princess of Prussia, written by herself; and are in fact memoirs of the private life of most of the princes of Germany, written by one of their own number — with great freedom indeed — but with an evident partiality to the fraternity; and unmasking more of the domestic manners and individual habits of persons in that lofty station, than any other work with which we are acquainted. It is ushered into the world without any voucher for its authenticity, or even any satisfactory account of the manner in which the manuscript was obtained: but its genuineness, we understand, is admitted even by those whose inclinations would lead them to deny it, and appears to us indeed to be irresistibly established by internal evidence.* It is written in the vulgar gossiping style of a chambermaid; but at the same time with very considerable cleverness and sagacity, as to the conception and delineation of character. It is full of events and portraits — and also of egotism, detraction, and inconsistency; but all delivered with an air of good faith that leaves us little room to doubt of the facts that are reported on the writer's own authority, or, in any case, of her own belief in the justness of her opinions. Indeed, half the edification of the book consists in the lights it affords as to the character of the writer, and consequently as to the effects of the circumstances in which she was placed: nor is there any thing, in the very curious picture it presents, more striking than the part she unintentionally contributes, in the peculiarity of her own taste in the colouring and delineation. The heartfelt ennui, and the affected contempt of greatness, so strangely combined with her tenacity of all its privileges, and her perpetual intrigues and quarrels about precedence — the splendid encomiums on her own inflexible integrity, intermixed with the complacent narrative of perpetual trick and duplicity — her bitter complaints of the want of zeal and devotedness in her friends, and the desolating display of her own utter heartlessness in every page of the history — and, finally, her outrageous abuse of almost every one with whom she is connected, alternating with professions of the greatest regard, and occasional apologies for the most atrocious among them, when they happen to conduct themselves in conformity to her own little views at the moment — are all, we think, not only irrefragable proofs of the authenticity of the singular work before us, but, together with the lowness of its style and diction, are features — and pretty prominent ones — in that portraiture of royal manners and dispositions which we conceive it to be its chief office and chief merit to display. In this point of view, we conceive the publication to be equally curious and instructive; and there is a vivacity in the style, and a rapidity in the narrative, which renders it at all events very entertaining, though little adapted for abstract or abridgement. — We must endeavour, however, to give our readers some notion of its contents.

What is now before us is but a fragment, extending from the birth of the author in 1707 to the year 1742, and is chiefly occupied with the court of Berlin, down till her marriage with the Prince of Bareith in 1731. She sets off with a portrait of her father Frederic William, whose peculiarities are already pretty well known by the dutiful commentaries of his son, and Voltaire. His daughter begins with him a little more handsomely; and assures us, that he had "talents of the first order" — "an excellent heart" — and, in short, "all the qualities which go to the constitution of great men." Such is the flattering outline: but candour required some shading; and we must confess that it is laid on freely, and with good effect. His temper, she admits, was ungovernable, and often hurried him into excesses altogether unworthy of his rank and situation. Then it must also be allowed that he was somewhat hard-hearted; and throughout his whole life gave a decided preference to the cardinal virtue of Justice over the weaker at-

* I have not recently made any enquiries on this subject: and it is possible that the authenticity of this strange book may have been discredited, since the now remote period when I last heard it discussed. It is obvious at first sight that it is full of exaggerations: but *that* is too common a characteristic of genuine memoirs written in the *tranchant* style to which it belongs, to detract much from the credit to which the minuteness and confidence of its details may otherwise be thought to entitle it.

tribute of Mercy. Moreover, "his excessive love of money exposed him" (her Royal Highness seems to think very unjustly) "to the imputation of avarice." And, finally, she informs us, without any circumlocution, that he was a crazy bigot in religion — suspicious, jealous, and deceitful — and entertained a profound contempt for the whole sex to which his dutiful biographer belongs.

This "great and amiable" prince was married, as every body knows, to a princess of Hanover, a daughter of our George the First; of whom he was outrageously jealous, and whom he treated with a degree of brutality that would almost have justified *any* form of revenge. The princess, however, seems to have been irreproachably chaste: but had, notwithstanding, some of the usual vices of slaves; and tormented her tyrant to very good purpose by an interminable system of the most crooked and provoking intrigues, chiefly about the marriages of her family, but occasionally upon other subjects, carried on by the basest tools and instruments, and for a long time in confederacy with the daughter who has here recorded their history. But though she had thus the satisfaction of frequently enraging her husband, we cannot help thinking that she had herself by far the worst of the game; and indeed it is impossible to read, without a mixed feeling of pity and contempt, the catalogue of miserable shifts which this poor creature was perpetually forced to employ to avoid detection, and escape the beatings with which it was frequently accompanied! — feigned sicknesses — midnight consultations—hidings behind screens and under beds—spies at her husband's drunken orgies — burning of letters, pocketing of inkstands, and all the paltry apparatus of boarding-school imposture; — together with the more revolting criminality of lies told in the midst of caresses, and lessons of falsehood anxiously inculcated on the minds of her children. — It is edifying to know, that, with all this low cunning, and practice in deceiving, this poor lady was herself the dupe of a preposterous and unworthy confidence. She told every thing to a favourite chambermaid — who told it over again to one of the ministers — who told it to the King: and though the treachery of her confidante was perfectly notorious, and she herself was reduced privately to borrow money from the King of England in order to bribe her to secrecy, she never could keep from her any one thing that it was of importance to conceal.

The ingenious Princess before us had for many years no other brother than the Great Frederic, who afterwards succeeded to the throne, but whose extreme ill health in his childhood seemed to render her accession a matter of considerable probability. Her alliance consequently became an early object of ambition to most of the Protestant princes of her time; and before she was fully eight years old, her father and mother had had fifty quarrels about her marriage. About the same time, she assures us that a Swedish officer, who was a great conjuror, informed her, after inspecting her hand, "that she would be sought in marriage by the Kings of Sweden, England, Russia, and Poland, but would not be united to any of them:" — a prediction, the good Princess declares, that was afterwards verified in a very remarkable manner. The Swedish proposition indeed follows hard upon the prophecy; for the very next year engagements are taken for that match, which are afterwards abandoned on account of the tender age of the parties. — The Princess here regales us with an account of her own vivacity and *angelic* memory at this period, and with a copious interlude of all the court scandal during the first days of her existence. But as we scarcely imagine that the scandalous chronicle of Berlin for the year 1712 would excite much interest in this country in the year 1812, we shall take the liberty to pass over the gallantries of Madame de Blaspil and the treasons of M. Clement; merely noticing, that after the execution of the latter, the King ordered every letter that came to his capital to be opened, and never slept without drawn swords and cocked pistols at his side. But while he was thus trembling at imaginary dangers, he was, if we can believe his infant daughter, upon the very brink of others sufficiently serious. His chief favourites were the Prince of Anhalt, who is briefly characterized in these Memoirs as brutal, cruel, and deceitful, and the minister Grumkow, who is represented, on the same authority, as a mere concentration of all the vices. These worthy persons had set their hearts upon our author's

marriage with the nephew of the former, and her ultimate elevation to the throne by the death of her sickly brother. But when that brother begins to improve in health, and the old King not only makes his will without consulting them, but threatens to live to an unreasonable age, they naturally become impatient for the accomplishment of their wishes, and resolve to cut off both father and son, the first time they can catch them together at an exhibition of ropedancing — with which elegant entertainment it seems the worthy monarch was in the habit of recreating himself almost every evening. The whole of this dreadful plot, we are assured, was revealed to the King, with all its *particularités*, by a lady in the confidence of the conspirators; but they contrive, somehow or other, to play their parts so adroitly, that, after a long investigation, they are reinstated in favour, and their fair accuser sent to pine, on bread and water, in a damp dungeon at Spandau.

In the year 1717, Peter the Great came with his Empress and court to pay a visit at Berlin — and as the whole scene is described with great vivacity in the work before us, and serves to illustrate its great theme of the private manners of sovereigns, we shall make rather a fuller abstract of it than we can afford for most parts of the narrative. The degrees of grossness and pretension are infinite — and the court of Prussia, where the Sovereign got drunk, and kicked his counsellors, and beat the ladies of his family, thought itself entitled to treat Peter and his train as a set of Barbarians! — On his first presentation, the Czar took Frederic firmly by the hand, and said, he was glad to see him; he then offered to kiss the Queen — but she declined the honour. He next presented his son and daughter, and *four hundred* ladies in waiting — the greater part of whom, our Princess assures us, were washerwomen and scullions promoted to that nominal dignity. *Almost every one of them*, however, she adds, had a baby richly dressed in her arms — and when any one asked whose it was, answered with great coolness and complacency, that "the Czar had done her the honour to make her the mother of it." — The Czarine was very short, tawny, and ungraceful — dressed like a provincial German player, in an old-fashioned robe, covered with dirt and silver, and with some dozens of medals and pictures of saints strung down the front, which clattered every time she moved, like the bells of a packhorse. She spoke little German, and no French; and finding that she got on but ill with the Queen and her party, she called *her fool* into a corner to come and entertain her in Russian — which she did with such effect, that she kept her in a continual roar of laughter before all the court. The Czar himself is described as tall and rather handsome, though with something intolerably harsh in his physiognomy. On first seeing our royal author he took her up in his arms, and rubbed the skin off her face in kissing her with his rough beard; laughing very heartily at the airs with which she resented this familiarity. He was liable at times to convulsive starts and spasms, and being seized with one of them when at table, with his knife in his hand, put his hosts into no little bodily terror. He told the Queen, however, that he would do her no harm, and took her hand in token of his good humour; but squeezed it so unmercifully that she was forced to cry out — at which he laughed again with great violence, and said, "her bones were not so well knit as his Catherine's." There was to be a grand ball in the evening; but as soon as he had done eating, he got up, and trudged home by himself to his lodgings in the suburbs. Next day they went to see the curiosities of the place. — What pleased him most was a piece of antique sculpture, most grossly indecent. Nothing, however, would serve him but that his wife should kiss this figure; and when she hesitated, he told her he would cut off her head if she refused. He then asked this piece and several other things of value from the King, and packed them off for Petersburgh, without ceremony. In a few days after, he took his departure; leaving the palace in which he had been lodged in such a state of filth and dilapidation as to remind one, says the Princess, of the desolation of Jerusalem.

We now come to a long chapter of the author's personal sufferings, from a sort of half governess, half chambermaid, of the name of Letti, who employed herself all day in beating and scratching her, for refusing to repeat all that the King and the Queen said in her hearing, and kept her awake all night by

snoring like fifty troopers. This accomplished person also invented ingenious nicknames, which seem to have had much currency, for all the leading persons about the court. The Queen she always called *La grande ânesse*, and her two favourites respectively *La grosse vache*, and *La sotte bête*. Sometimes she only kicked the Princess's shins — at other times she pummelled her on the nose till "she bled like a calf;" and occasionally excoriated her face by rubbing it with acrid substances. Such, however, was the magnanimity of her royal pupil, that she never made the least complaint of this dreadful usage; but an old lady found it out, and told the Queen, that "her daughter was beaten every day like plaster," and that she would be brought to her one morning with her bones broken, if she did not get another attendant. So La Letti is dismissed, though with infinite difficulty, and after a world of intrigue; because she had been recommended by my Lady Arlington, who had a great deal to say with the court of England, with which it was, at that time, a main object to keep well! But she is got rid of at last, and decamps with all the Princess's wardrobe, who is left without a rag to cover her nakedness. Soon after this, the King is taken with a colic one very hot June, and is judiciously shut up in a close room with a large comfortable fire; by the side of which he commands his daughter to sit, and watch like a vestal, till her eyes are ready to start from her head; and she falls into a dysentery, of which she gives a long history.

Being now at the ripe age of twelve, her mother takes her into her confidence, and begins with telling her, that there are certain people who are her enemies, to whom she commands her never to show any kindness or civility. She then proceeds to name "three fourths of all Berlin." But her great object is to train her daughter to be a spy on her father, and at the same time to keep every thing secret from him and his counsellors; and to arrange measures for a match between her and her nephew the Duke of Gloucester — afterwards Prince of Wales, on the accession of his father George II. In 1723, George I. comes to visit his daughter at Berlin, and is characterised, we cannot say very favourably, by his grandchild. He was very stupid, she says, with great airs of wisdom — had no generosity but for his favourites, and the mistresses by whom he let himself be governed — spoke little, and took no pleasure in hearing any thing but *niaiseries*: — since his accession to the English throne he had also become insupportably haughty and imperious. When the fair author was presented to him, he took up a candle, held it close to her face, and examined her all over without saying a word: at table he preserved the same magnificent silence; judging wisely, the Princess observes, that it was better to say nothing than to expose himself by talking. Before the end of the repast he was taken ill; and tumbled down on the floor, his hat falling off on one side, and his wig on the other. It was a full hour before he came to himself; and it was whispered that it was a sort of apoplexy: however, he was well enough next day; and arranged every thing for the marriage of the author with his grandson, and of her brother with the Princess Amelia. Obstacles arose, however, to the consummation of this double alliance; and although the two Sovereigns had another meeting on the subject the year after, still the necessity of obtaining the consent of parliament occasioned an obstruction; and in the mean time Frederic having thought fit to seize several tall Hanoverians, and enroll them by force in his regiment of giants, the English monarch resented this outrage, and died of another attack of apoplexy before matters could be restored to a right footing.

Soon after this catastrophe, Frederic takes to drinking with the Imperial ambassador; and, when his stomach gets into disorder, becomes outrageously pious; orders his valet to sing psalms before him, and preaches himself to his family every afternoon. The Princess and her brother are ready to suffocate with laughter at these discourses; but the hypochondria gains ground; and at last the King talks seriously of resigning his crown, and retiring with his family to a small house in the country; where his daughter should take care of the linen, his son of the provisions, and his wife of the kitchen. To divert these melancholy thoughts, he is persuaded to pay a visit to the Elector of Saxony, Augustus King of Poland; and there, large potations of Hungarian wine speedily dissipate all his dreams of devotion. Nothing in modern history, we suppose, comes near the

profligacy of the Court of Dresden at that period. Augustus, who never closed a day in sobriety, openly kept a large seraglio in his palace, and had about 350 children by its inhabitants. One of those who had all along been recognized as his daughter, was at this time his favourite mistress; while she, disdaining to be faithful to this incestuous connection, lavished all her favour on a brother, who was her avowed lover, and the rival of their common parent! — Frederic, however, was so much pleased with these doings, that he entered into a treaty for marrying his daughter to this virtuous elector, who was then fifty years of age; and the year after, Augustus came to Berlin, to follow out his suit, where he was received in great state, and the daughter-mistress caressed by the chaste queen and her daughter. There is a good description of a grand court dinner given on this occasion; in which, after a long account of the marshalling of princes and princesses, the business of the day is summed up in the following emphatic words — *On but force santés — on parla peu — et on s'ennuya beaucoup!* The two kings, however, had various *tête-à-tête* parties that were more jolly; and in which they continued at table from one o'clock, which was their hour of dinner, till near midnight. In spite of all this cordiality, however, the treaty of marriage was broken off: the heir-apparent of Augustus having obstinately refused to ratify those articles in it which required his concurrence.

The King now resolved to match his daughter with a poor German prince, called the Duke of Weissenfield; at which his wife, who had been all this time intriguing busily to bring about the union originally projected with the Prince of Wales, is in despair, and persuades him to let her make one effort more to bring her brother of England to a determination. And here we have a very curious piece of secret history, which, though it touches the policy of the Court of England, has hitherto been unknown, we believe, in this country. A confidential agent arrives from Hanover, who informs the Queen, that the Prince of Wales has made up his mind to come immediately to Berlin, and to marry her daughter, without waiting for the formal consent of his father, or the English Parliament, who, however, he has no doubt, will neither of them hesitate to ratify the act, when it is once over. The Queen is transported with this news; and is so much intoxicated with joy on the occasion, that she bethinks herself of confiding the whole story in the evening to the English ambassador — who instantly writes home to his Court; and, his letter being addressed to the Secretary of State, produces an immediate mandate to the Prince, to set out for England without the delay of a moment. This mandate arrives just as his Royal Highness is taking post with bridal impatience for Berlin: and, as it is addressed to him through the public offices, requires his implicit obedience. The truth of the matter is, the Princess assures us, that George II. was himself desirous that the match should be concluded without waiting for the uncertain sanction of his Parliament, and had suggested this device of a seeming *etourderie* on the part of his son; but the indiscretion of her mother, in blabbing the matter to the ambassador, and his communication to the ministry, left the monarch no choice, but to dissemble his mortification, and lend his authority to prevent the execution of a project which had originated with himself.

But, whatever may be the true theory of this disaster, it seems to be certain, that the disappointment put the King of Prussia into exceeding bad humour, and, concurring with an untimely fit of the gout, made the lives of his family still more uncomfortable than he took care at all times to render them. The account indeed which is here given of the domestic habits of this worthy sovereign, though humiliating in some degree to human nature, has yet something in it so extravagant, as to be actually ludicrous and farcical. He ordered his children to come to his apartment at nine o'clock every morning, and kept them close prisoners there the whole day, not letting them once out of his sight, "*pour quelque raison que ce fut.*" His employment was to curse and abuse them with every coarse term of reproach — his daughter getting no other name than *la Canaille Angluise*, and his son *le Coquin de Fritz.* He had always been in the practice of famishing them; partly out of avarice, and partly from the love of tormenting; but now even the soup made of bare bones and salt was retrenched. He often refused to let them have any thing whatsoever; and spit into the dishes

out of which he had helped himself, in order to prevent their touching them! At other times he would insist upon their eating all sorts of unwholesome and disgusting compositions—"ce qui nous obligeait quelquefois de rendre, en sa presence, tout ce que nous avions dans le corps!" Even this, however, was not the worst of it. He very frequently threw the plates at their heads; and scarcely ever let his daughter go out of the room, without aiming a sly blow at her with the end of his crutch. The unhappy Frederic he employed himself almost every morning in caning and kicking for a long time together; and was actually, upon one occasion, in the act of strangling him with the cord of a window curtain, when he was interrupted by one of his domestics. To make amends, however, he once hung up himself; when the Queen, by a rare act of folly, was induced to cut him down. When free from gout, he was still more dangerous; for then he could pursue his daughters with considerable agility when they ran away from his blows; and once caught the author, after a chase of this kind, when he clutched her by the hair, and pushed her into the fireplace, till her clothes began to burn. During the heats of summer, he frequently carried his family to a country-house, called Vousterhausen, which was an old ruinous mansion, surrounded with a putrid ditch; and there they dined every day, in a tent pitched on the terrace, with scarcely any thing to eat, and their feet up to the ancles in mud, if the weather happened to be rainy. After dinner, which was served exactly at noon, the good King set himself down to sleep for two hours, in a great chair placed in the full glare of the sun, and compelled all his family to lie on the ground around him, exposed to the same intolerable scorching.

After some little time, England sends another ambassador, who renews in due form the proposal of the double marriage, and offers such baits to the avarice of the King that matters appear once more to be finally adjusted, and the Princess is saluted by her household with the title of Princess of Wales. This, however, was not her destiny. Grumkow intrigues with the Imperial ambassador to break off the match—and between them they contrive to persuade the King that he is made a tool of by the Queen and her brother of England: and inflame him to such a rage by producing specimens of their secret correspondence, that when the English ambassador appears next day with decisive proofs of Grumkow's treachery and insolence, the King throws the papers in his face, and actually lifts his foot, as if to give him the family salute of a kick. The blood of the Englishman rouses at this insult; and he puts himself in a posture to return the compliment with interest, when the King makes a rapid retreat—and the ambassador, in spite of the entreaties of the Queen and her children, and various overtures of apology from the King himself, shakes the dust of Berlin from his feet, and sets off in high dudgeon for London. The King then swears that his daughter shall have no husband at all, but that he will make her abbess in the monastery of Herford;—and her brother Frederic, to her great mortification, tells her it is the best thing she can do, and that he sees no other way to restore peace in the family.

We now proceed to the adventures of this brother, which, as their outline is already generally known, need not be fully narrated in this place. Tired of being beaten and kicked and reviled all day long, he resolves to withdraw from his country, and makes some movements to that effect in confederacy with an officer of the name of Katt, who was to have been the companion of his flight. Both, however, are arrested by the King's order, who makes several attempts upon the life of his son, when he is brought as a prisoner before him—and comes home foaming and black with passion, crying out to the Queen that her accursed son was dead at last; and felling his daughter to the earth with his fist, as he tells her to go and bear her brother company. He then gets hold of a box of his son's papers, which had been surprised at Katt's lodgings, and goes out with it in great spirits, exclaiming that he was sure he should find in it enough to justify him in cutting off the heads both of *le Coquin de Fritz*, and *la Canaille de Wilhelmine*. Wilhelmine, however, and her politic mother had been beforehand with him—for they had got hold of this same box the day preceding, and by false keys and seals had taken all the papers out of it, and replaced them by harmless and insignificant letters, which they had fabricated in the

course of one day, to the amount of near seven hundred. The King, therefore, found nothing to justify immediate execution; but kept the Prince a close prisoner at Custrin, and shut the Princess up in her own chamber. His son and Katt were afterwards tried for *desertion*, before a court-martial composed of twelve officers: two were for sparing the life of the Prince, but all the rest were base enough to gratify the sanguinary insanity of their master by condemning them both to death. All Germany, however, exclaimed loudly against this sentence; and made such representations to the King, that he was at last constrained to spare his son. But the unhappy Katt was sacrificed. His scaffold was erected immediately before the window of his unhappy master, who was dressed by force in the same funeral garment with his friend, and was held up at the window by two soldiers, while the executioner struck off the head of his companion. There is no record of such brutal barbarity in the history of Nero or Domitian.

After this, the family feuds about his daughter's marriage revive with double fury. The Queen, whose whole heart is set on the English alliance, continues her petty intrigues to effect that object; while the King, rendered furious by the haughty language adopted by the English ministry on the subject of the insult offered to their ambassador, determines to have her married without a moment's delay; and after threatening the Queen with his cane, sends to offer her the hand of the Prince of Bareith; which she dutifully accepts, in spite of the bitter lamentations and outrageous fury of the Queen. That intriguing princess, however, does not cease to intrigue, though deserted by her daughter — but sends again in greater urgency than ever to England; — and that court, if we are to believe the statement before us, at last seriously afraid of losing a match every way desirable, sends off despatches, containing an entire and unqualified acquiescence in all Frederic's stipulations as to the marriage — which arrive at Berlin the very morning of the day on which the Princess was to be solemnly betrothed to M. de Bareith, but are wickedly kept back by Grumkow and the Imperial Envoy, till after the ceremony had been publicly and irrevocably completed. Their disclosure then throws all parties into rage and despair; and the intriguers are made the ridiculous victims of their own baseness and duplicity. The indefatigable Queen, however, does not despair even yet; but sends off another courier to England, and sets all her emissaries to prepare the King to break off the match in the event of the answer being favourable; — nay, the very night before the marriage, she takes her daughter apart, and begs her to live with her husband as a sister with a brother, for a few days, till the result of the embassage is known. But her usual destiny pursues her. The fatal evening arrives; and the Princess, with a train forty-five feet in length, and the spousal crown placed on twenty-four twisted locks of false hair, each thicker than her arm, enters the grand saloon, and takes the irrevocable vow! — and her mother has just put her to bed, when she hears that her courier has arrived, and leaves her in rage and anguish.

The humours of the rest of the family appear to no great advantage during the bridal festivities. In the first place, the Princess's sister, Charlotte, falls in love with the bridegroom, and does her *possible* to seduce him. Then old Frederic cheats the bride in her settlements, which amount to a gross sum of near 500*l.* a year; — and, finally, her brother-in-law, the Margrave of Anspach, rallies her husband so rudely upon his mother's gallantries, that the latter gives him a brave defiance in face of the whole court; at which the poor Margrave is so dreadfully frightened, that he bursts out into screams and tears, and runs for refuge into the Queen's apartment, where he hides himself behind the arras, from which he is taken in a filthy condition, and carried to his apartments, "où il exhala sa colère par des vomissemens et un diarrhée qui pensa l'envoyer à l'autre monde." — Yet the good Princess assures us, that this reptile had "a good heart and a good understanding," — with no fault but being a little passionate; and then, in the very next page, she records a malignant and detected falsehood which he had vented against her husband, and which rendered him odious in the eyes of the whole court. Being dissatisfied with her settlements, she puts the King in good humour by giving a grand dinner to him and his officers, at which they are all

"ivres morts;" but having mentioned her distresses through the Queen, he is so much moved with them, that he calls for the settlements, and strikes off about one fourth of her allowance.

All this happened in autumn, 1731; and in January, 1732, the Princess being far advanced in pregnancy, and the roads almost impassable, it was thought advisable for her to set out for her husband's court at Bareith. She is overturned of course several times, and obliged to walk half the way: — but we pass over the disasters of the journey, to commemorate her arrival in this ancient principality. The first village she reached was Hoff, which is on the frontier — and has also the convenience of being within three miles of the centre of the territory: and here the grand marshal, and all the nobility of the province, are mustered to receive her at the bottom of the staircase, or, in other words, of the wooden ladder which led to her apartments. However, various guns were fired off very successfully, and the chief nobility were invited to dinner. The Princess's description of these personages is really very edifying. They had all faces, she says, which a child could not look on without screaming; — huge masses of hair on their heads, filled with a race of vermin as ancient as their pedigrees; — clothed in old laced suits that had descended through many generations, the most part in rags, and no way fitting their present wearers; — the greater part of them covered with itch; — and their conversation, of oxen. Immediately after dinner they began with the Princess's health in a huge bumper, and proceeded regularly in the same gallant manner through the whole of her genealogy; — so that in less than half an hour she found herself in the middle of thirty-four monsters, so drunk that none of them could articulate "et rendant les boyaux à tous ces désastreux visages." Next day being Sunday, there was a sermon in honour of the occasion, in which the preacher gave an exact account of all the marriages that had happened in the world, from the days of Adam down to the last of the patriarchs — illustrated with so many circumstantial details as to the antecedents and consequents in each, that the male part of the audience laughed outright, and the females pretended to blush throughout the whole discourse. The dinner scene was the same as on the day preceding; with the addition of the female nobility who came in the evening, with their heads enveloped in greasy wigs like swallow's nests, and ancient embroidered dresses, stuck all over with knots of faded ribands.

The day following, the Margrave, her father-in-law, came himself to meet her. This worthy prince was nearly as amiable, and not quite so wise, as the royal parent she had left. He had read but two books in the world, Telemaque, and Amelot's Roman history, and discoursed out of them so very tediously, that the poor Princess fainted from mere *ennui*, at the very first interview; — then he drank night and day — and occasionally took his cane to the prince his son, and his other favourites. Though living in poverty and absolute discomfort, he gave himself airs of the utmost magnificence — went to dinner with three flourishes of cracked trumpets — received his court, leaning with one hand on a table, in imitation of the Emperor — and conferred his little dignities in harangues so pompous, and so awkwardly delivered, that his daughter-in-law at once laughed and was ashamed of him. He was awkward, too, and embarrassed in the society of strangers of good breeding — but made amends by chattering without end, about himself and his two books, to those who were bound to bear with him. Under the escort of this great potentate the Princess made her triumphal entry into the city of Bareith the next morning: the whole procession consisting of one coach, containing the constituted authorities who had come out to meet her, her own carriage drawn by six carrion post-horses, that containing her attendants, and six or seven waggons loaded with furniture. The Margrave then conducted her from the palace gate in great state to her apartments, through a long passage, hung with cobwebs, and so abominably filthy as to turn her stomach in hurrying through it. This opened into an antechamber, adorned with old tapestry, so torn and faded that the figures on it looked like so many ghosts; and through that into a cabinet furnished with green damask all in tatters. Her bedchamber was also furnished with the same stuff — but in such a condition, that the curtains fell in pieces whenever they were touched. Half of the windows were broken, and there was no

fire; though it was midwinter. The dinners were not eatable; and lasted three hours, with thirty flourishes of the old trumpets for the bumper toasts with which they were enlivened: add to all this, that the poor Princess was very much indisposed—that the Margrave came and talked to her out of Telemaque and Amelot, five or six hours every day—and that she could not muster cash enough to buy herself a gown: and it will not appear wonderful, that in the very midst of the wedding revelries, she spent half her time in bed, weeping over the vanity of human grandeur.

By and by, however, she found occupation in quarrelling with her sisters-in-law, and in making and appeasing disputes between her husband and his father. She agrees so ill, indeed, with all the family, that her proposal of returning to lie-in at Berlin is received with great joy:—but while they are deliberating about raising money for this journey of 200 miles, she becomes too ill to move. Her sister of Anspach, and her husband, come, and quarrel with her upon points of etiquette; the Margrave falls in love with one of her attendants; and in the midst of all manner of perplexities she is delivered of a daughter. The Margrave, who was in the country, not happening to hear the cannon which proclaimed this great event, conceives that he is treated with great disrespect, and gives orders for having his son imprisoned in one of his fortresses. He relents, however, at the christening; and is put in good humour by a visit from another son and a brother—the first of whom is described as a kind of dwarf and natural fool, who could never take seriously to any employment but catching flies; and the other as a furious madman, in whose company no one was sure of his life. This amiable family party is broken up by an order on the Princess's husband to join his regiment at Berlin, and another order from her father for her to pay a visit to her sister at Anspach. On her way she visits an ancient beauty, with a nose like a beetroot, and two maids of honour so excessively fat that they could not sit down; and, in stooping to kiss the Princess's hand, fell over, and rolled like balls of flesh on the carpet. At Anspach, she finds the Margrave deep in an intrigue with the housemaid; and consoles her sister under this affliction. She then makes a great effort, and raises money enough to carry her to Berlin; where she is received with coldness and ridicule by the Queen, and neglect and insult by all her sisters. Her brother's marriage with the Princess of Brunswick was just about to take place, and we choose to give in her own words her account of the manner in which she was *talked over* in this royal circle.

"La reine, à table, fit tomber la conversation sur la princesse royale future. 'Votre frère,' me dit-elle en le regardant, 'est au désespoir de l'épouser, et n'a pas tort: *c'est une vrai bête;* elle répond à tout ce qu'on lui dit par un oui et un non, accompagné d'un rire niais qui fait mal au cœur. Oh! dit ma sœur Charlotte, votre Majesté ne connoit pas encore tout son mérite. J'ai été un matin à sa toilette; j'ai cru y suffoquer; elle exhaloit une odeur insupportable! Je crois qu'elle a pour le moins dix ou douze fistules—car cela n'est pas naturel. J'ai remarqué aussi qu'elle est contrefaite; son corps de jupe est rembourré d'un côté, et elle a une hanche plus haute que l'autre.' Je fus fort étonnée de ces propos, qui se tenoient en présence des domestiques—et surtout de mon frère! Je m'aperçus qu'ils lui faisoient de la peine et qu'il changeoit de couleur. Il se retira aussitôt après souper. J'en fis autant. Il vint me voir un moment après. Je lui demandai s'il étoit satisfait du roi? Il me répondit que sa situation changeoit à tout moment; que tantôt il étoit en faveur et, tantôt en disgrâce; que son plus grand bonheur consistoit dans l'absence; qu'il menoit une vie douce et tranquille à son régiment; que l'étude et la musique y faisoient ses principales occupations; qu'il avoit fait bâtir une maison et fait faire un jardin charmant où il pouvoit lire et se promener. Je le priai de me dire si le portrait que la reine et ma sœur m'avoient fait de la Princesse de Brunswick étoit véritable? 'Nous sommes seuls,' repartit-il, 'et je n'ai rien de caché pour vous. Je vous parlerai avec sincérité. La reine, par ses misérables intrigues, est la seule source de nos malheurs. A peine avez-vous été partie qu'elle a renoué avec l'Angleterre; elle a voulu vous substituer ma sœur Charlotte, et lui faire épouser le Prince de Galles. Vous jugez bien qu'elle a employé tous ses efforts pour faire réussir son plan et pour me marier avec la Princesse Amélie.'"

The poor Prince, however, confesses that he cannot say much for the intellect of his intended bride;—and really does not use a much nobler language than the rest of the family, even when speaking in her presence; for on her first presentation to his sister, finding that she made no answer to the compliments that were addressed to her, the enamoured youth encourages her bridal timidity by this polite exclamation, "Peste soit de la bête!—remercie donc ma sœur!" The account of the festivities which

accompanied this marriage really excites our compassion; and is well calculated to disabuse any inexperienced person of the mistake of supposing, that there can be either comfort or enjoyment in the cumbrous splendours of a court. Scanty and crowded dinners at midday — and formal balls and minuets immediately after, in June, followed up with dull gaming in the evening; — the necessity of being up in full dress by three o'clock in the morning to see a review — and the pleasure of being stifled in a crowded tent without seeing any thing, or getting any refreshment for seven or eight hours, and then to return famishing to a dinner of eighty covers; — at other times to travel ten miles at a foot-pace in an open carriage during a heavy rain, and afterwards to stand shivering on the wet grass to see fireworks — to pay twenty visits of ceremony every morning, and to present and be presented in stately silence to persons whom you hate and despise. Such were the general delights of the whole court; — and our Princess had the additional gratification of being forced from a sick bed to enjoy them, and of undergoing the sneers of her mother, and the slights of her whole generation. Their domestic life, when these galas were over, was nearly as fatiguing, and still more lugubrious. The good old custom of famishing was kept up at table; and immediately after dinner the King had his great chair placed right before the fire, and snored in it for three hours, during all which they were obliged to keep silence, for fear of disturbing him. When he awoke, he set to smoking tobacco; — and then sat four hours at supper, listening to long stories of his ancestors, in the taste of those sermons which are prescribed to persons afflicted with insomnolency. Then the troops began their exercise under the windows before four o'clock every morning, — and not only kept the whole household awake from that hour by their firing, but sometimes sent a ramrod through the glass to assist at the Princess's toilette. One afternoon the King was seized with a sort of apoplexy in his sleep, which, as he always snored extremely loud, might have carried him off without much observation, had not his daughter observed him grow black in the face, and restored him by timely applications. She is equally unfortunate about the same time in her father-in-law the Margrave, who is mischievous enough to recover, after breaking a blood-vessel by falling down stairs in a fit of drunkenness. At last she gets away with great difficulty, and takes her second leave of the parental roof with even less regard for its inhabitants than she had felt on first quitting its shelter.

On her return to Bareith, she finds the old Margrave quite broken in health, but extravagantly and *honourably* in love with a lame, dwarfish, middle-aged lady, the sister of her ancient governess, whom he proposes to marry, to the great discomfiture of the Princess and his son. They remonstrate with the lady, however, on the absurdity of such an union; and she promises to be cruel, and live single. In the mean time, one of the Margrave's daughters is taken with a kind of madness of a very indecorous character; which indicates itself by frequent improprieties of speech, and a habit of giving invitations, of no equivocal sort, to every man that comes near her. The worthy Margrave, at first, undertakes to cure this very troublesome complaint by a brisk course of beating; but this not being found to answer, it is thought expedient to try the effect of marriage; and, that there may be no more harm done to anybody, they look out a certain Duke of Weimar, who is as mad as the lady — though somewhat in a different way. This prince's malady consisted chiefly in great unsteadiness of purpose, and a trick of outrageous and inventive boasting. Both the Princess and her husband, however, take great pains to bring about this well-assorted match; and, by dint of flattery and intimidation, it is actually carried through — though the bridegroom sends a piteous message on the morning of his wedding-day, begging to be off, and keeps them from twelve till four o'clock in the morning before he can be persuaded to go to bed. In the mean time, the Princess gives great offence to the populace and the preachers of Bareith, by giving a sort of masked ball, and riding occasionally on horseback. Her husband goes to the wars; and returns very much out of humour with her brother Frederic, who talks contemptuously of little courts and little princes. The old Margrave falls into a confirmed hectic, and writes *billets-doux* to his little lady, so

tender as to turn one's stomach; but at last dies in an edifying manner, to the great satisfaction of all his friends and acquaintances. Old Frederic promises fair, at the same time, to follow his example; for he is seized with a confirmed dropsy. His legs swell, and burst; and give out so much water, that he is obliged for several days to sit with them in buckets. By a kind of miracle, however, he recovers, and goes a campaigning for several years after.

The Memoirs are rather dull for four or five years after the author's accession to the throne of Bareith. She makes various journeys, and suffers from various distempers — has innumerable quarrels with all the neighbouring potentates about her own precedence and that of her attendants; fits up several villas, gives balls; and sometimes quarrels with her husband, and sometimes nurses him in his illness. In 1740 the King her father dies in good earnest; and makes, it must be acknowledged, a truly heroic, though somewhat whimsical, ending. Finding himself fast going, he had himself placed early in the morning in his wheel-chair, and goes himself to tell the Queen that she must rise, and see him die. He then takes farewell of his children; and gives some sensible advice to his son, and the ministers and generals whom he had assembled. Afterwards he has his best horse brought, and presents it with a good grace to the oldest of his generals. He next ordered all the servants to put on their best liveries; and, when this was done, he looked on them with an air of derision, and said, "Vanity of vanities!" He then commanded his physician to tell him exactly how long he had to live; and when he was answered, "about half an hour," he asked for a looking-glass, and said, with a smile, that he certainly did look ill enough, and saw "*qu'il ferait une vilaine grimace en mourant!*" When the clergyman proposed to come and pray with him, he said, "he knew already all they had to say, and that they might go about their business." In a short time after he expired, in great tranquillity.

Though the new King came to visit his sister soon after his accession, and she went to return the compliment at Berlin, she says there was no longer any cordiality between them; and that she heard nothing but complaints of his avarice, his ill temper, his ingratitude, and his arrogance. She gives him great credit for talents; but entreats her readers to suspend their judgment as to the real character of this celebrated monarch, till they have perused the whole of her Memoirs. What seems to have given her the worst opinion of him, was his impolite habit of making jokes about the small domains and scanty revenues of her husband. For the two following years she travels all over Germany, abusing all the *principautés* she meets with. In 1742, she goes to see the coronation of the new Emperor at Frankfort, and has a long negotiation about the ceremony of her introduction to the Empress. After various *projets* had been offered and rejected, she made these three conditions: — 1st, That the whole *cortège* of the Empress should receive her at the bottom of the staircase. 2dly, That the Empress herself should come to meet her at the outside of the door of her bedchamber. And, 3dly, That she should be allowed an arm-chair during the interview. Whole days were spent in the discussion of this proposition; and at last the first two articles were agreed to; but all that she could make of the last was, that she should have a very large chair, without arms; and the Empress a very small one, with them! — Her account of the interview we add in her own words.

"Je vis cette Princesse le jour suivant. J'avoue qu'à sa place j'aurois imaginé toutes les étiquettes et les cérémonies du monde pour m'empêcher de paroître. L'Impératrice est d'une taille au-dessous de la petite, et si puissante qu'elle semble une boule; elle est laide au possible, sans air et sans grace. Son esprit répond à sa figure; elle est bigotte à l'excès, et passe les nuits et les jours dans son oratoire: les vieilles et les laides sont ordinairement le partage du bon Dieu! Elle me reçut en tremblant et d'un air si décontenancé qu'elle ne put me dire un mot. Nous nous assîmes. Après avoir gardé quelque temps le silence, je commençai la conversation en français. Elle me répondit, dans son jargon autrichien, qu'elle n'entendoit pas bien cette langue, et qu'elle me prioit de lui parler en allemand. Cet entretien ne fut pas long. Le dialecte autrichien et le bas-saxon sont si différens, qu'à moins d'y être accoutumé on ne se comprend point. C'est aussi ce qui nous arriva. Nous aurions préparé à rire à un tiers par les coq-à-l'âne que nous faisions, n'entendant que par-ci par-là un mot, qui nous faisoit deviner le reste. Cette princesse étoit si fort esclave de son étiquette qu'elle auroit cru faire un crime de lèse-grandeur en m'entretenant dans une langue étrangère; car elle savoit

le français! L'Empereur devoit se trouver à cette visite; mais il étoit tombé si malade qu'on craignoit même pour ses jours."—Pp. 345, 346.

After this she comes home in very bad humour; and the Memoirs break off abruptly with her detection of an intrigue between her husband and her favourite attendant, and her dissatisfaction with the dull formality of the court of Stutgard. We hope the sequel will soon find its way to the public.

Some readers may think we have dwelt too long on such a tissue of impertinencies; and others may think an apology requisite for the tone of levity in which we have spoken of so many atrocities. The truth is, that we think this book of no trifling importance; and that we could not be serious upon the subject of it without being both sad and angry. Before concluding, however, we shall add one word in seriousness—to avoid the misconstructions to which we might otherwise be liable.

We are decidedly of opinion, that Monarchy, and Hereditary Monarchy, is by far the best form of government that human wisdom has yet devised for the administration of considerable nations; and that it will always continue to be the most perfect which human virtue will admit of. We are not readily to be suspected, therefore, of any wish to produce a distaste or contempt for this form of government; and beg leave to say, that though the facts we have now collected are certainly such as to give no favourable impression of the private manners or personal dispositions of absolute sovereigns, we conceive that good, rather than evil, is likely to result from their dissemination. This we hold, in the first place, on the strength of the general maxim, that all truth must be ultimately salutary, and all deception pernicious. But we think we can see a little how this maxim applies to the particular case before us.

In the first place, then, we think it of service to the cause of royalty, in an age of violent passions and rash experiments, to show that most of the vices and defects which such times are apt to bring to light in particular sovereigns, are owing, not so much to any particular unworthiness or unfitness in the individual, as to the natural operation of the circumstances in which he is placed; and are such, in short, as those circumstances have always generated in a certain degree in those who have been exposed to them. Such considerations, it appears to us, when taken along with the strong and irresistible arguments for monarchical government in general, are well calculated to allay that great impatience and dangerous resentment with which nations in turbulent times are apt to consider the faults of their sovereigns; and to unite with a steady attachment and entire respect for the office, a very great degree of indulgence for the personal defects of the individual who may happen to fill it. Monarchs, upon this view of things, are to be considered as persons who are placed, for the public good, in situations where, not only their comfort, but their moral qualities, are liable to be greatly impaired; and who are poorly paid in empty splendour, and anxious power, for the sacrifice of their affections, and of the many engaging qualities which might have blossomed in a lower region. If we look with indulgence upon the roughness of sailors, the pedantry of schoolmasters, and the frivolousness of beauties, we should learn to regard, with something of the same feelings, the selfishness and the cunning of kings.

In the second place, we presume to think that the general adoption of these opinions as to the personal defects that are likely to result from the possession of sovereign power, may be of use to the sovereigns themselves from whom the knowledge of their prevalence cannot be very long concealed. Such knowledge, it is evident, will naturally stimulate the better sort of them to counteract the causes which tend to their personal degradation; and enable them more generally to surmount their pernicious operation, by such efforts and reflections, as have every now and then rescued some powerful spirits from their dominion, under all the disadvantages of the delusions with which they were surrounded.

Finally, if the general prevalence of these sentiments as to the private manners and dispositions of sovereigns *should* have the effect of rendering the bulk of their subjects less prone to blind admiration, and what may be called personal attachment to them, we do not imagine that any great harm will be done. The less the public knows or cares about the private wishes of their monarch, and the more his individual will is actually consubstantiated with

the deliberate sanctions of his responsible counsellors, the more perfectly will the practice of government correspond with its admitted theory; the more wisely will affairs be administered for the public, and the more harmoniously and securely both for the sovereign and the people. An adventurous warrior may indeed derive signal advantages from the personal devotedness and enthusiastic attachment of his followers; but in the civil office of monarchy, as it exists in modern times, the only safe attachment is to the office, and to the measures which it sanctions. The personal popularity of princes, in so far as we know, has never done any thing but harm: and indeed it seems abundantly evident, that whatever is done merely for the personal gratification of the reigning monarch, that would not have been done at any rate on grounds of public expediency, must be an injury to the community, and a sacrifice of duty to an unreturned affection; and whatever is forborne out of regard to his pleasure, which the interest of the country would otherwise have required, is in like manner an act of base and unworthy adulation. We do not speak, it will be understood, of trifles or things of little moment; but of such public acts of the government as involve the honour or the interest of the nation.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

(SEPTEMBER, 1828.)

History of the Life and Voyages of CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. By WASHINGTON IRVING. 4 vols. 8vo. London: 1828.

THIS, on the whole, is an excellent book; and we venture to anticipate that it will be an enduring one. Neither do we hazard this prediction lightly, or without a full consciousness of all that it implies. We are perfectly aware that there are but few modern works that are likely to verify it; and that it probably could not be extended with safety to so many as one in a hundred even of those which we praise. For we mean, not merely that the book will be familiarly known and referred to some twenty or thirty years hence, and will pass in solid binding into every considerable collection; but that it will supersede all former works on the same subject, and never be itself superseded. The first stage of triumph indeed, over past or existing competitors, may often be predicted securely of works of no very extraordinary merit; which, treating of a progressive science, merely embody, with some small additions, a judicious digest of all that was formerly known; and are for the time the best works on the subject, merely because they are the last. But the second stage of literary beatitude, in which an author not only eclipses all existing rivals, but obtains an immunity from the effects of all future competition, certainly is not to be so cheaply won; and can seldom, indeed, be secured to any one, unless the intrinsic merit of his production is assisted by the concurrence of some such circumstances, as we think now hold out the promise of this felicity to the biographer of Columbus.

Though the event to which his work relates is one which can never sink into insignificance or oblivion, but, on the contrary, will probably excite more interest with every succeeding generation, till the very end of the world, yet its importance has been already long enough apparent to have attracted the most eager attention to every thing connected with its details; and we think we may safely say, that all the documents which relate to it have now been carefully examined, and all the channels explored through which any authentic information was likely to be derived. In addition to the very copious, but rambling and somewhat garrulous and extravagant accounts, which were published soon after the discovery, and have since been methodised and arranged, Don F. M. Navarette, a Spanish gentleman of great learning and industry, and secretary to the Royal Academy of History at Madrid, has lately given to the world a very extensive collection of papers, relating to the history and voyages of Columbus; a very considerable portion of which appears not to have been known to any of those who had formerly written on the subject. Mr. Irving's first design was merely to publish a translation of this collection, with occasional remarks; but having, during his residence at Madrid, had access, by the kindness of the Duke of Veraguas, the descendant of the great Admiral, to the archives of his family, and to various

other documents, still remaining in manuscript, which had escaped the research even of Navarette, he fortunately turned his thoughts to the compilation of the more comprehensive and original work now before us — in which, by those great helps, he has been enabled, not only to supply many defects, but to correct many errors, and reconcile some apparent contradictions in the earlier accounts.

It was evidently very desirable that such a work should at length be completed; and we think it peculiarly fortunate that the means of completing it should have fallen into such hands as Mr. Irving's. The materials, it was obvious, were only to be found in Spain, and were not perhaps very likely to be intrusted without reserve to a stranger; while there was reason to fear that a Spaniard might not have courage to speak of the errors and crimes of his countrymen in the tone which the truth of history might require; or might not think it safe, even yet, to expose the impolicy, or canvass the pretensions, of the government. By a happy concurrence of circumstances, an elegant writer, altogether unconnected either with Spain or her rivals and enemies, and known all over the civilized world as a man of intelligence and principle, of sound judgment, and a calm and indulgent temper, repaired to Madrid at a time when the publication of Navarette had turned the public attention, in an extraordinary degree, to the memorable era of Columbus; and, by the force of his literary and personal character, obtained the fullest disclosure of every thing that bore upon his history that was ever made, to native or foreigner, — at the same time that he had the means of discussing personally, with the best informed individuals of the nation, all the points on which the written documents might seem to leave room for doubt or explanation.

Of these rare advantages Mr. Irving has availed himself, we think, with singular judgment and ability. He has written the history of the greatest event in the annals of mankind, with the fulness and the feeling it deserved; and has presented us with a flowing and continuous narrative of the events he had to record, far more luminous and comprehensive than any which previously existed, and yet much less diffuse and discursive than the earlier accounts, from which it is mainly derived: while, without sacrificing in any degree the intense interest of personal adventure and individual sympathy, he has brought the lights of a more cultivated age to bear on the obscure places of the story: and touched skilfully on the errors and prejudices of the times — at once to enliven his picture by their singularity, and to instruct us by their explanation or apology. Above all, he has composed the whole work in a temper that is beyond all praise. It breathes throughout a genuine spirit of humanity; and embellished as it is with beautiful descriptions and wonderful tales, its principal attraction in our eyes consists in its soft-hearted sympathy with suffering, its fearless reprobation of injustice and oppression, and the magnanimous candour of its judgments, even on the delinquent.

But though we think all this of Mr. Irving's work, we suspect it may not be altogether unnecessary to caution our more sensitive and sanguine readers against giving way to certain feelings of disappointment, which it is not impossible they may encounter at the outset of their task; and to which two or three very innocent causes are likely enough to expose them. In the first place, many great admirers of Mr. Irving's former works will probably miss the brilliant, highly finished, and rythmical style, which attracted them so much in those performances; and may find the less artificial and elaborate diction of this history comparatively weak and careless. In this judgment, however, we can by no means agree. Mr. Irving's former style, though unquestionably very elegant and harmonious, always struck us as somewhat too laboured and exquisite — and, at all events, but ill fitted for an extensive work, where the interest turned too much on the weight of the matter to be safely divided with the mere polish of the diction, or the balance of the periods. He has done well, therefore, we think, to discard it on this occasion, for the more varied, careless, and natural style, which distinguishes the volumes before us — a style not only without sententious pretension, or antithetical prettiness, but even in some degree loose and unequal—flowing easily on, with something of the fulness and clearness of Herodotus or Boccaccio — sometimes languid, indeed, and often inexact, but furnishing, in its very freshness and variety, the very best mirror, perhaps, in which

the romantic adventures, the sweet descriptions, or the soft humanities, with which the author had to deal, could have been displayed.

Another, and perhaps a more general source of disappointment to impatient readers, is likely to be found in the extent and minuteness of the prefatory details, with which Mr. Irving has crowded the foreground of his picture, and detained us, apparently without necessity, from its principal features. The genealogy and education of Columbus — his early love of adventure — his long and vain solicitations at the different European courts — the intrigues and jealousies by which he was baffled — the prejudices against which he had to contend, and the lofty spirit and doubtful logic by which they were opposed, — are all given with a fulness for which, however instructive it may be, the reader, who knows already what it is to end in, will be apt to feel any thing but grateful. *His* mind, from the very title-page, is among the billows of the Atlantic and the islands of the Caribs; and he does not submit without impatience to be informed of all the energy that was to be exerted, and all the obstacles to be overcome, before he can get there. It is only after we have perused the whole work that we perceive the fitness of these introductory chapters; and then, when the whole grand series of sufferings and exploits has been unfolded, and the greatness of the event, and of the character with which it is inseparably blended, have been impressed on our minds, we feel how necessary it was to tell, and how grateful it is to know, all that can now be known of the causes by which both were prepared; and instead of murmuring at the length of these precious details, feel nothing but regret that time should have so grievously abridged them.

The last disappointment, for which the reader should be prepared, will probably fall upon those who expect much new information as to the first great voyage of discovery; or suppose that the chief interest of the work must be exhausted by its completion. That portion of the story of Columbus has always, from obvious causes, been given with more amplitude and fidelity than any other; and Mr. Irving, accordingly, has been able to add but few additional traits of any considerable importance. But it is not there, we think, that the great interest or the true character of the work is to be found. The mere geographical discovery, sublime as it undoubtedly is, is far less impressive, to our minds, than the moral emotions to which it opens the scene. The whole history of the settlement of Hispaniola, and the sufferings of its gentle people — the daring progress of the great discoverer, through unheard-of forms of peril, and the overwhelming disasters that seem at last to weigh him down, constitute the real business of the piece, and are what truly bring out, not only the character of the man, but that of the events with which his memory is identified. It is here, too, that both the power and the beauty of the author's style chiefly display themselves—in his account of the innocence and gentleness of the simple races that were then first introduced to their elder brethren of Europe, and his glowing pictures of the lovely land, which ministered to their primitive luxury — or in his many sketches of the great commander himself, now towering in paternal majesty in the midst of his newly-found children — now invested with the dark gorgeousness of deep and superstitious devotion, and burning thirst of fame — or, still more sublime, in his silent struggles with malevolence and misfortune, and his steadfast reliance on the justice of posterity.

The work before us embodies all these, and many other touching representations; and in the vivacity of its colouring, and the novelty of its scene, possesses all the interests of a novel of invention, with the startling and thrilling assurance of its actual truth and exactness — a sentiment which enhances and every moment presses home to our hearts the deep pity and resentment inspired by the sufferings of the confiding beings it introduces to our knowledge — mingled with a feeling of something like envy and delighted wonder, at the story of their child-like innocence, and humble apparatus of enjoyment. No savages certainly ever were so engaging and loveable as those savages. Affectionate, sociable, and without cunning, sullenness, inconstancy, or any of the savage vices, but an aversion from toil, which their happy climate at once inspired, and rendered innoxious, they seem to have passed their days in blissful ignorance of all that human intellect has contrived for human misery; and almost to have enjoyed an

exemption from the doom that followed man's first unhallowed appetite for knowledge of good and evil. It is appalling to think with what tremendous rapidity the whole of these happy races were swept away! How soon, after the feet of civilized Christians had touched their shores, those shores were desolate, or filled only with mourning! How soon, how frightfully soon, the swarming myriads of idle and light-hearted creatures, who came trooping from their fragrant woods to receive them with smiles of welcome and gestures of worship, and whose songs and shoutings first hailed them so sweetly over their fresh and sunny bays, were plunged, by the hands of those fatal visitants, into all the agonies of despair!—how soon released from them by a bloody extermination! It humbles and almost crushes the heart, even at this distance of time, to think of such a catastrophe, brought about by such instruments. The learned, the educated, the refined, the champions of chivalry, the messengers of the gospel of peace, come to the land of the ignorant, the savage, the heathen. They find them docile in their ignorance, submissive in their rudeness, and grateful and affectionate in their darkness: and the result of the mission is mutual corruption, misery, desolation! The experience or remorse of four centuries has not yet been able to expiate the crime, or to reverse the spell. Those once smiling and swarming shores are still silent and mournful; or resound only to the groans of the slave and the lash of the slave-driver — or to the strange industry of another race, dragged by a yet deeper guilt from a distant land, and now calmly establishing themselves on the graves of their oppressors.

We do not propose to give any thing like an abstract of a story, the abstract of which is already familiar to every one; while the details, like most other details, would lose half their interest, and all their character, by being disjoined from the narrative on which they depend. We shall content ourselves, therefore, by running over some of the particulars that are less generally known, and exhibiting a few specimens of the author's manner of writing and thinking.

Mr. Irving has settled, we think satisfactorily, that Columbus was born in Genoa, about the year 1435. It was fitting that the hemisphere of republics should have been discovered by a republican. His proper name was Colombo, though he is chiefly known among his contemporaries by the Spanish synonyme of Colon. He was well educated, but passed his youth chiefly at sea, and had his full share of the hardships and hazards incident to that vocation. From the travels of Marco Polo he seems first to have imbibed his taste for geographical discovery, and to have derived his grand idea of reaching the eastern shores of India by sailing straight to the west. The spirit of maritime enterprise was chiefly fostered in that age by the magnanimous patronage of Prince Henry of Portugal, and it was to that court, accordingly, that Columbus first offered his services in the year 1470. We will not withhold from our readers the following brief but graphic sketch of his character and appearance at that period:—

"He was at that time in the full vigour of manhood, and of an engaging presence. Minute descriptions are given of his person by his son Fernando, by Las Casas, and others of his contemporaries. According to these accounts, he was tall, well-formed, muscular, and of an elevated and dignified demeanour. His visage was long, and neither full nor meagre; his complexion fair and freckled, and inclined to ruddy; his nose aquiline; his cheekbones were rather high: his eyes light grey, and apt to enkindle; his whole countenance had an air of authority. His hair, in his youthful days, was of a light colour; but care and trouble, according to Las Casas, soon turned it grey, and at thirty years of age it was quite white. He was moderate and simple in diet and apparel, eloquent in discourse, engaging and affable with strangers, and of an amiableness and suavity in domestic life, that strongly attached his household to his person. His temper was naturally irritable; but he subdued it by the magnanimity of his spirit; comporting himself with a courteous and gentle gravity, and never indulging in any intemperance of language. Throughout his life he was noted for a strict attention to the offices of religion, observing rigorously the fasts and ceremonies of the church; nor did his piety consist in mere forms, but partook of that lofty and solemn enthusiasm with which his whole character was strongly tinctured."

For eighteen long years did the proud and ardent spirit of Columbus urge his heroic suit at the courts of most of the European monarchs; and it was not till after encountering in every form the discouragements of withering poverty, insulting neglect, and taunting ridicule, that, in his fifty-sixth year, he at last

prevailed with Ferdinand and Isabella, to supply him with three little ships, to achieve for them the dominion of a world! Mr. Irving very strikingly remarks.

"After the great difficulties made by various courts in furnishing this expedition, it is surprising how inconsiderable an armament was required. It is evident that Columbus had reduced his requisitions to the narrowest limits, lest any great expense should cause impediment. Three small vessels were apparently all that he had requested. Two of them were light barques, called caravals, not superior to river and coasting craft of more modern days. Representations of this class of vessels exist in old prints and paintings. They are delineated as open, and without deck in the centre, but built up high at the prow and stern, with forecastles and cabins for accommodation of the crew. Peter Martyr, the learned contemporary of Columbus, says that only one of the three vessels was decked. The smallness of the vessels was considered an advantage by Columbus, in a voyage of discovery, enabling him to run close to the shores, and to enter shallow rivers and harbours. In his third voyage, when coasting the gulf of Paria, he complained of the size of his ship, being nearly a hundred tons burden. But that such long and perilous expeditions into unknown seas should be undertaken in vessels without decks, and that they should live through the violent tempests by which they were frequently assailed, remain among the singular circumstances of these daring voyages."

It was on Friday, the 3d of August, 1492, that the bold adventurer sailed forth, with the earliest dawn, from the little port of Palos, on his magnificent expedition; and immediately began a regular journal, addressed to the sovereigns, from the *exordium* of which, as lately printed by Navarette, we receive a strong impression both of the gravity and dignity of his character, and of the importance he attached to his undertaking. We subjoin a short specimen.

"Therefore your highnesses, as Catholic Christians and princes, lovers and promoters of the Holy Christian faith, and enemies of the sect of Mahomet, and of all idolatries and heresies, determined to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the said parts of India, to see the said princes, and the people, and lands, and discover the nature and disposition of them all, and the means to be taken for the conversion of them to our holy faith; and ordered that I should not go by land to the East, by which it is the custom to go, but by a voyage to the West, by which course, unto the present time, we do not know for certain that any one hath passed; and for this purpose bestowed great favours upon me, ennobling me, that thenceforward I might style myself Don, appointing me high admiral of the Ocean Sea, and perpetual viceroy and governor of all the islands and continents I should discover and gain, and which henceforward may be discovered and gained, in the Ocean Sea; and that my eldest son should succeed me, and so on, from generation to generation for ever. I departed, therefore, from the city of Granada, on Saturday, the 12th of May, of the same year 1492, to Palos, a seaport, where I armed three ships well calculated for such service, and sailed from that port well furnished with provisions, and with many seamen, on Friday the 3rd of August of the same year, half an hour before sunrise, and took the route for the Canary Islands of your highnesses, to steer my course thence, and navigate until I should arrive at the Indies, and deliver the embassy of your highnesses to those princes, and accomplish that which you had commanded. For this purpose, I intend to write during this voyage very punctually, from day to day, all that I may do, and see, and experience, as will hereafter be seen. Also, my sovereign princes, beside describing each night all that has occurred in the day, and in the day the navigation of the night, I propose to make a chart, in which I will set down the waters and lands of the Ocean Sea, in their proper situations, under their bearings; and, further, to compose a book, and illustrate the whole in picture by latitude from the equinoctial, and longitude from the West; and upon the whole it will be essential that I should forget sleep, and attend closely to the navigation, to accomplish these things, which will be a great labour."

As a guide by which to sail, Mr. Irving also informs us, he had prepared "a map, or chart, improved upon that sent him by Paolo Toscanelli. Neither of these now exist; but the globe, or planisphere, finished by Martin Behem in this year of the admiral's first voyage, is still extant, and furnishes an idea of what the chart of Columbus must have been. It exhibits the coasts of Europe and Africa, from the south of Ireland to the end of Guinea; and opposite to them, on the other side of the Atlantic, the extremity of Asia, or, as it was termed, India. Between them is placed the island of Cipango (or Japan), which, according to Marco Polo, lay fifteen hundred miles distant from the Asiatic coast. In his computations Columbus advanced this island about a thousand leagues too much to the east; supposing it to lie in the situation of Florida, and at this island he hoped first to arrive."

We pass over the known incidents of this celebrated voyage, which are here repeated with new interest and additional detail; but we cannot refrain from extracting Mr. Irving's

account of its fortunate conclusion. The growing panic and discontent of his mutinous crew, and their resolution to turn back if land was not discovered in three days, are well known.

"And when on the evening of the third day they beheld the sun go down upon a shoreless horizon, they broke forth into clamorous turbulence. Fortunately, however, the manifestations of neighbouring land were such on the following day as no longer to admit a doubt. Besides a quantity of fresh weeds, such as grow in rivers, they saw a green fish of a kind which keeps about rocks; then a branch of thorn, with berries on it, and recently separated from the tree, floated by them; then they picked up a reed, a small board, and, above all, a staff artificially carved. All gloom and mutiny now gave way to sanguine expectation; and throughout the day each one was eagerly on the watch, in hopes of being the first to discover the long-sought-for land.

"In the evening, when, according to invariable custom on board of the admiral's ship, *the mariners had sung the* salvo regina, *or vesper hymn to the Virgin*, he made an impressive address to his crew. He pointed out the goodness of God in thus conducting them by such soft and favouring breezes across a tranquil ocean, cheering their hopes continually with fresh signs, increasing as their fears augmented, and thus leading and guiding them to a promised land.

"The breeze had been fresh all day, with more sea than usual, and they had made great progress. At sunset they had stood again to the west, and were ploughing the waves at a rapid rate, the Pinta keeping the lead, from her superior sailing. The greatest animation prevailed throughout the ships; not an eye was closed that night. As the evening darkened, Columbus took his station on the top of the castle or cabin on the high poop of his vessel. However he might carry a cheerful and confident countenance during the day, it was to him a time of the most painful anxiety; and now when he was wrapped from observation by the shades of night, he maintained an intense and unremitting watch, ranging his eye along the dusky horizon, in search of the most vague indications of land. Suddenly, about ten o'clock, he thought he beheld a light glimmering at a distance! Fearing that his eager hopes might deceive him, he called to Pedro Gutierrez, gentleman of the king's bed-chamber, and inquired whether he saw a light in that direction; the latter replied in the affirmative. Columbus, yet doubtful whether it might not be some delusion of the fancy, called Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, and made the same inquiry. By the time the latter had ascended the round-house, the light had disappeared. They saw it once or twice afterwards in sudden and passing gleams; as it were a torch in the bark of a fisherman, rising and sinking with the waves: or in the hand of some person on shore, borne up and down as he walked from house to house. So transient and uncertain were these gleams, that few attached any importance to them; Columbus, however, considered them as certain signs of land, and moreover, that the land was inhabited.

"They continued their course until two in the morning, when a gun from the Pinta gave the joyful signal of land. It was first discovered by a mariner named Rodrigo de Triana; but the reward was afterwards adjudged to the admiral, for having previously perceived the light. The land was now clearly seen about two leagues distant; whereupon they took in sail and lay-to, waiting impatiently for the dawn.

"The thoughts and feelings of Columbus in this little space of time must have been tumultuous and intense. At length, in spite of every difficulty and danger, he had accomplished his object. The great mystery of the ocean was revealed; his theory, which had been the scoff of sages, was triumphantly established; he had secured to himself a glory which must be as durable as the world itself.

"It is difficult even for the imagination to conceive the feelings of such a man at the moment of so sublime a discovery. What a bewildering crowd of conjectures must have thronged upon his mind, as to the land which lay before him, covered with darkness! That it was fruitful was evident, from the vegetables which floated from its shores. He thought, too, that he perceived in the balmy air the fragrance of aromatic groves. The moving light which he had beheld, had proved that it was the residence of man. But what were its inhabitants? Were they like those of the other parts of the globe; or were they some strange and monstrous race, such as the imagination in those times was prone to give to all remote and unknown regions? Had he come upon some wild island far in the Indian Sea; or was this the famed Cipango itself, the object of his golden fancies? A thousand speculations of the kind must have swarmed upon him, as, with his anxious crews, he waited for the night to pass away: wondering whether the morning light would reveal a savage wilderness, or dawn upon spicy groves, and glittering fanes, and gilded cities, and all the splendour of oriental civilization."

The land to which he was thus triumphantly borne was the island of San Salvador, since called Cat Island by the English; and at early dawn he landed with a great company, splendidly armed and attired, and bearing in his hand the royal standard of Castile.

"As they approached the shores, they were refreshed by the sight of the ample forests, which in those climes have extraordinary beauty of vegetation. They beheld fruits of tempting hue, but unknown kind, growing among the trees which overhung the shores. The purity and suavity of the atmosphere, the crystal transparency of the seas which bathe these islands, give them a wonderful beauty, and must have had their effect upon the susceptible feelings of Columbus. No sooner did he land, than

he threw himself upon his knees, kissed the earth, and returned thanks to God with tears of joy. His example was followed by the rest, whose hearts indeed overflowed with the same feelings of gratitude."

"The natives of the island, when, at the dawn of day, they had beheld the ships, with their sails set, hovering on their coast, had supposed them some monsters which had issued from the deep during the night. They had crowded to the beach, and watched their movements with awful anxiety. Their veering about, apparently without effort; the shifting and furling of their sails, resembling huge wings, filled them with astonishment. When they beheld their boats approach the shore, and a number of strange beings, clad in glittering steel, or raiment of various colours, landing upon the beach, they fled in affright to their woods. Finding, however, that there was no attempt to pursue nor molest them, they gradually recovered from their terror, and approached the Spaniards with great awe; frequently prostrating themselves on the earth, and making signs of adoration. During the ceremonies of taking possession, they remained gazing in timid admiration at the complexion, the beards, the shining armour, and splendid dress of the Spaniards. The admiral particularly attracted their attention, from his commanding height, his air of authority, his dress of scarlet, and the deference which was paid him by his companions; all which pointed him out to be the commander. When they had still further recovered from their fears, they approached the Spaniards, touched their beards, and examined their hands and faces, admiring their whiteness. Columbus, pleased with their simplicity, their gentleness, and the confidence they reposed in beings who must have appeared to them so strange and formidable, suffered their scrutiny with perfect acquiescence. The wondering savages were won by this benignity; they now supposed that the ships had sailed out of the crystal firmament which bounded their horizon, or that they had descended from above on their ample wings, and that these marvellous beings were inhabitants of the skies."

Nothing is more remarkable in the journal of the great discoverer, than his extraordinary sensibility to the beauty of the scenery, and the charms of the climate, of this new world; and on his arrival at Cuba, these raptures are, if possible, redoubled.

"As he approached this noble island, he was struck with its magnitude, and the grandeur of its features; its high and airy mountains, which reminded him of those of Sicily; its fertile valleys, and long sweeping plains, watered by noble rivers; its stately forests; its bold promontories, and stretching headlands, which melted away into the remotest distance. He anchored in a beautiful river, free from rocks or shoals, of transparent water, its banks overhung with trees. Here, landing, and taking possession of the island, he gave it the name of Juana, in honour of Prince Juan, and to the river the name of San Salvador.

"Returning to his boat, he proceeded for some distance up the river, more and more enchanted with the beauty of the country. The forests which covered each bank were of high and wide-spreading trees; some bearing fruits, others flowers, while in some both fruit and flowers were mingled, bespeaking a perpetual round of fertility: among them were many palms, but differing from those of Spain and Africa; with the great leaves of these the natives thatched their cabins.

"The continual eulogies made by Columbus on the beauty of the scenery were warranted by the kind of scenery he was beholding. There is a wonderful splendour, variety, and luxuriance in the vegetation of those quick and ardent climates. The verdure of the groves, and the colours of the flowers and blossoms, derive a vividness to the eye from the transparent purity of the air, and the deep serenity of the azure heavens. The forests, too, are full of life, swarming with birds of brilliant plumage. Painted varieties of parrots, and woodpeckers, create a glitter amidst the verdure of the grove; and humming-birds rove from flower to flower, resembling, as has well been said, animated particles of a rainbow. The scarlet flamingoes, too, seen sometimes through an opening of a forest in a distant savannah, have the appearance of soldiers drawn up in battalion, with an advanced scout on the alert, to give notice of approaching danger. Nor is the least beautiful part of animated nature the various tribes of insects that people every plant, displaying brilliant coats of mail, which sparkle to the eye like precious gems.

"From his continual remarks on the beauty of the scenery, and from the pleasure which he evidently derived from rural sounds and objects, he appears to have been extremely open to those delicious influences, exercised over some spirits by the graces and wonders of nature. He gives utterance to these feelings with characteristic enthusiasm, and at the same time with the artlessness and simplicity of diction of a child. When speaking of some lovely scene among the groves, or along the flowery shore of this favoured island, he says, 'one could live there for ever.' Cuba broke upon him like an elysium. 'It is the most beautiful island,' he says, 'that eyes ever beheld, full of excellent ports and profound rivers.' The climate was more temperate here than in the other islands, the nights being neither hot nor cold, while the birds and grasshoppers sang all night long. Indeed there is a beauty in a tropical night, in the depth of the dark-blue sky, the lambent purity of the stars, and the resplendent clearness of the moon, that spreads over the rich landscape and the balmy groves a charm more touching than the splendour of the day.

"In the sweet smell of the woods, and the odour of the flowers, which loaded every breeze, Columbus fancied he perceived the fragrance of oriental spices; and along the shores he found shells of the kind of oyster which produces pearls. From the grass grow-

ing to the very edge of the water, he inferred the peacefulness of the ocean which bathes these islands, never lashing the shore with angry surges. Ever since his arrival among these Antilles, he had experienced nothing but soft and gentle weather, and he concluded that a perpetual serenity reigned over these happy seas. He was little suspicious of the occasional bursts of fury to which they are liable."

Hispaniola was still more enchanting.

"In the transparent atmosphere of the tropics, objects are descried at a great distance, and the purity of the air and serenity of the deep blue sky gave a magical effect to the scenery. Under these advantages, the beautiful island of Hayti revealed itself to the eye as they approached. Its mountains were higher and more rocky than those of the other islands; but the rocks reared themselves from among rich forests. The mountains swept down into luxuriant plains and green savannahs; while the appearance of cultivated fields, with the numerous fires at night, and the columns of smoke which rose in various parts by day, all showed it to be populous. It rose before them in all the splendour of tropical vegetation, one of the most beautiful islands in the world, and doomed to be one of the most unfortunate."

The first interview with the friendly cacique Guacanagari, as well as his generous attentions on the wreck of one of their vessels, are described with great beauty. But we can only find room for the concluding part of it.

"The extreme kindness of the cacique, the gentleness of his people, the quantities of gold which were daily brought to be exchanged for the veriest trifles, and the information continually received of the sources of wealth in the bosom of this beautiful island, all contributed to console the admiral for the misfortune he had suffered.

"The shipwrecked crew also, living on shore, and mingling freely with the natives, became fascinated with their easy and idle mode of life. Exempted by their simplicity from the painful cares and toils which civilized man inflicts upon himself by his many artificial wants, the existence of these islanders seemed to the Spaniards like a pleasant dream. They disquieted themselves about nothing. A few fields, cultivated almost without labour, furnished the roots and vegetables which formed a great part of their diet. Their rivers and coasts abounded with fish; their trees were laden with fruits of golden or blushing hue, and heightened by a tropical sun to delicious flavour and fragrance. Softened by the indulgence of nature, a great part of their day was passed in indolent repose —in that luxury of sensation inspired by a serene sky and a voluptuous climate; and in the evenings they danced in their fragrant groves, to their national songs, or the rude sounds of their sylvan drums.

"Such was the indolent and holiday life of these simple people; which, if it had not the great scope of enjoyment, nor the high-seasoned poignancy of pleasure, which attend civilization, was certainly destitute of most of its artificial miseries."

It was from this scene of enchantment and promise, unclouded as yet by any shadow of animosity or distrust, that Columbus, without one drop of blood on his hands, or one stain of cruelty or oppression on his conscience, set sail on his return to Europe, with the proud tidings of his discovery. In the early part of his voyage he fell in with the Caribbee Islands, and had some striking encounters with the brave but ferocious tribes who possessed them. The distresses which beset him on his home passage are well known; but we willingly pass these over, to treat our readers with Mr. Irving's splendid description of his magnificent reception by the court at Barcelona.

"It was about the middle of April that Columbus arrived at Barcelona, where every preparation had been made to give him a solemn and magnificent reception. The beauty and serenity of the weather in that genial season and favoured climate, contributed to give splendour to this memorable ceremony. As he drew near the place, many of the more youthful courtiers, and hidalgos of gallant bearing, together with a vast concourse of the populace, came forth to meet and welcome him. His entrance into this noble city has been compared to one of those triumphs which the Romans were accustomed to decree to conquerors. First were paraded the Indians, painted according to their savage fashion, and decorated with their national ornaments of gold. After these were borne various kinds of live parrots, together with stuffed birds and animals of unknown species, and rare plants, supposed to be of precious qualities; while great care was taken to make a conspicuous display of Indian coronets, bracelets, and other decorations of gold, which might give an idea of the wealth of the newly-discovered regions. After this, followed Columbus on horseback, surrounded by a brilliant cavalcade of Spanish chivalry. The streets were almost impassable from the countless multitude; the windows and balconies were crowded with the fair; the very roofs were covered with spectators. It seemed as if the public eye could not be sated with gazing on these trophies of an unknown world; or on the remarkable man by whom it had been discovered. There was a sublimity in this event that mingled a solemn feeling with the public joy. It was looked upon as a vast and signal dispensation of Providence, in reward for the piety of the monarchs; and the majestic and venerable appearance of the discoverer, so different from the youth and buoyancy that are generally expected from roving enterprise, seemed in harmony with the grandeur and dignity of his achievement.

"To receive him with suitable pomp and distinction, the sovereigns had ordered their throne to be placed in public under a rich canopy of brocade of gold, in a

vast and splendid saloon. Here the king and queen awaited his arrival, seated in state, with the Prince Juan beside them, and attended by the dignitaries of their court, and the principal nobility of Castile, Valentia, Catalonia, and Arragon, all impatient to behold the man who had conferred so incalculable a benefit upon the nation. At length Columbus entered the hall, surrounded by a brilliant crowd of cavaliers, among whom, says Las Casas, he was conspicuous for his stately and commanding person, which, with his countenance, rendered venerable by his grey hairs, gave him the august appearance of a senator of Rome; a modest smile lighted up his features, showing that he enjoyed the state and glory in which he came; and certainly nothing could be more deeply moving to a mind inflamed by noble ambition, and conscious of having greatly deserved, than these testimonials of the admiration and gratitude of a nation, or rather of a world. As Columbus approached, the sovereigns rose, as if receiving a person of the highest rank. Bending his knees, he requested to kiss their hands; but there was some hesitation on the part of their majesties to permit this act of vassalage. Raising him in the most gracious manner, they ordered him to seat himself in their presence; a rare honour in this proud and punctilious court."

In his second voyage he falls in again with the Caribs, of whose courage and cannibal propensities he had now sufficient assurance. Mr. Irving's remarks upon this energetic but untameable race are striking, and we think original.

"The warlike and unyielding character of these people, so different from that of the pusillanimous nations around them, and the wide scope of their enterprises and wanderings, like those of the Nomade tribes of the Old World, entitled them to distinguished attention. They were trained to war from their infancy. As soon as they could walk, their intrepid mothers put in their hands the bow and arrow, and prepared them to take an early part in the hardy enterprises of their fathers. Their distant roamings by sea made them observant and intelligent. The natives of the other islands only knew how to divide time by day and night, by the sun and moon; whereas these had acquired some knowledge of the stars, by which to calculate the times and seasons.

"The traditional accounts of their origin, though of course extremely vague, are yet capable of being verified to a great degree by geographical facts, and open one of the rich veins of curious inquiry and speculation which abound in the New World. They are said to have migrated from the remote valleys embosomed in the Apalachian mountains. The earliest accounts we have of them represent them with their weapons in their hands, continually engaged in wars, winning their way and shifting their abode, until, in the course of time, they found themselves at the extremity of Florida. Here, abandoning the northern continent, they passed over to the Lucayos, and from thence gradually, in the process of years, from island to island of that vast and verdant chain, which links, as it were, the end of Florida to the coast of Paria, on the southern continent. The Archipelago, extending from Porto Rico to Tobago, was their stronghold, and the island of Guadaloupe in a manner their citadel. Hence they made their expeditions, and spread the terror of their name through all the surrounding countries. Swarms of them landed upon the southern continent, and overran some parts of Terra Firma. Traces of them have been discovered far in the interior of the country through which flows the Oroonoko. The Dutch found colonies of them on the banks of the Ikouteka, which empties into the Surinam, along the Esquibi, the Maroni, and other rivers of Guayana, and in the country watered by the windings of the Cayenne; and it would appear that they have extended their wanderings to the shores of the southern ocean, where, among the aboriginals of Brazil, were some who called themselves Caribs, distinguished from the surrounding Indians by their superior hardihood, subtlety, and enterprise.

"To trace the footsteps of this roving tribe throughout its wide migrations from the Apalachian mountains of the northern continent, along the clusters of islands which stud the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean sea to the shores of Paria, and so across the vast regions of Guayana and Amazonia to the remote coast of Brazil, would be one of the most curious researches in aboriginal history, and might throw much light upon the mysterious question of the population of the New World."

We pass over the melancholy story of the ruined fort, and murdered garrison, to which our adventurer returned on his second voyage; and of the first dissensions that broke out in his now increasing colony; but must pause for a moment to accompany him on his first march, at the head of 400 armed followers, into the interior of the country, and to the mountain region of expected gold. For two days the party proceeded up the banks of a stream, which seemed at last to lose itself in a narrow and rocky recess.

"On the following day, the army toiled up this steep defile, and arrived where the gorge of the mountain opened into the interior. Here a land of promise suddenly burst upon their view. It was the same glorious prospect which had delighted Ojeda and his companions. Below lay a vast and delicious plain, painted and enamelled, as it were, with all the rich variety of tropical vegetation. The magnificent forests presented that mingled beauty and majesty of vegetable forms known only to these generous climates. Palms of prodigious height, and spreading mahogany trees, towered from amid a wilderness of variegated foliage. Universal freshness and verdure

were maintained by numerous streams, which meandered gleaming through the deep bosom of the woodland; while various villages and hamlets, peeping from among the trees, and the smoke of others rising out of the midst of the forests, gave signs of a numerous population. The luxuriant landscape extended as far as the eye could reach, until it appeared to melt away and mingle with the horizon. The Spaniards gazed with rapture upon this soft voluptuous country, which seemed to realize their idea of a terrestrial paradise; and Columbus, struck with its vast extent, gave it the name of the Vega Real, or Royal Plain.

"Having descended the rugged pass, the army issued upon the plain, in military array, with great clangour of warlike instruments. When the Indians beheld this shining band of warriors, glittering in steel, emerging from the mountains with prancing steeds and flaunting banners, and heard, for the first time, their rocks and forests echoing to the din of drum and trumpet, they might well have taken such a wonderful pageant for a supernatural vision.

"On the next morning they resumed their march up a narrow and steep glen, winding among craggy rocks, where they were obliged to lead the horses. Arrived at the summit, they once more enjoyed a prospect of the delicious Vega, which here presented a still grander appearance, stretching far and wide on either hand, like a vast verdant lake. This noble plain, according to Las Casas, is eighty leagues in length, and from twenty to thirty in breadth, and of incomparable beauty."

"The natives appeared to them a singularly idle and improvident race, indifferent to most of the objects of human anxiety and toil. They were impatient of all kinds of labour, scarcely giving themselves the trouble to cultivate the yuca root, the maze, and the potato, which formed the main articles of subsistence. For the rest, their streams abounded with fish; they caught the utia or coney, the guana, and various birds; and they had a perpetual banquet from the fruits spontaneously produced by their groves. Though the air was sometimes cold among the mountains, yet they preferred submitting to a little temporary suffering, rather than take the trouble to weave garments from the gossampine cotton which abounded in their forests. Thus they loitered away existence in vacant inactivity, under the shade of their trees, or amusing themselves occasionally with various games and dances.

"Having accomplished the purposes of his residence in the Vega, Columbus, at the end of a few days, took leave of its hospitable inhabitants, and resumed his march for the harbour, returning with his little army through the lofty and rugged gorge of the mountains called the Pass of the Hidalgos. As we accompany him in imagination over the rocky height, from whence the Vega first broke upon the eye of the Europeans, we cannot help pausing to cast back a look of mingled pity and admiration over this beautiful but devoted region. The dream of natural liberty, of ignorant content, and loitering idleness, was as yet unbroken, but the fiat had gone forth; the white man had penetrated into the land; avarice, and pride, and ambition, and pining care, and sordid labour, were soon to follow, and the indolent paradise of the Indian to disappear for ever!"

There is something to us inexpressibly pleasing in these passages; but we are aware that there are readers to whom they may seem tedious — and believe, at all events, that we have now given a large enough specimen of the kind of beauty they present. For persons of a different taste we ought to have extracted some account of the incredible darings, and romantic adventures, of Alonzo de Ojeda; or of the ruder prowess and wild magnanimity of the cacique Caonabo, who alone of the island chieftains dared to offer any resistance to the invaders. When made prisoner, and carried off from the centre of his dominions, by one of the unimaginable feats of Ojeda, Mr. Irving has reported that

"He always maintained a haughty deportment towards Columbus, while he never evinced the least animosity against Ojeda for the artifice to which he had fallen a victim. It rather increased his admiration of him, as a consummate warrior, looking upon it as the exploit of a master spirit to have pounced upon him, and borne him off, in this hawk-like manner, from the very midst of his fighting-men. There is nothing that an Indian more admires in warfare, than a deep well-executed stratagem.

"Columbus was accustomed to bear himself with an air of dignity and authority as admiral and viceroy, and exacted great personal respect. When he entered the apartment, therefore, where Caonabo was confined, all present rose, according to custom, and paid him reverence. The cacique alone neither moved, nor took any notice of him. On the contrary, when Ojeda entered, though small in person and without external state, Caonabo immediately rose and saluted him with profound respect. On being asked the reason of this Columbus being Guamiquina, or great chief over all, and Ojeda but one of his subjects, the proud Carib replied, that the admiral had never dared to come personally to his house and seize him, it was only through the valour of Ojeda he was his prisoner; to Ojeda, therefore, he owed reverence, not to the admiral."

The insolent license of the Spaniards, and the laborious searches for gold which they imposed on the natives, had at last overcome their orignal feelings of veneration; and, trusting to their vast superiority in numbers, they ventured to make war on their heaven-descended visitants. The result was unresisted

carnage and hopeless submission! A tax of a certain quantity of gold dust was imposed on all the districts that afforded that substance, and of certain quantities of cotton and of grain on all the others — and various fortresses were erected and garrisons stationed, to assist the collection of the tribute.

"In this way," says Mr. Irving, "was the yoke of servitude fixed upon the island, and its thraldom effectually ensured. Deep despair now fell upon the natives, when they found a perpetual task inflicted upon them, enforced at stated and frequently recurring periods. Weak and indolent by nature, unused to labour of any kind, and brought up in the untasked idleness of their soft climate and their fruitful groves, death itself seemed preferable to a life of toil and anxiety. They saw no end to this harassing evil, which had so suddenly fallen upon them; no escape from its all-pervading influence; no prospect of return to that roving independence and ample leisure, so dear to the wild inhabitants of the forest. The pleasant life of the island was at an end; the dream in the shade by day; the slumber during the sultry noontide heat by the fountain or the stream, or under the spreading palm-tree; and the song, the dance, and the game in the mellow evening, when summoned to their simple amusements by the rude Indian drum. They were now obliged to grope day by day, with bending body and anxious eye, along the borders of their rivers, sifting the sands for the grains of gold which every day grew more scanty; or to labour in their fields beneath the fervour of a tropical sun, to raise food for their task-masters, or to produce the vegetable tribute imposed upon them. They sunk to sleep, weary and exhausted at night, with the certainty that the next day was but to be a repetition of the same toil and suffering. Or if they occasionally indulged in their national dances, the ballads to which they kept time were of a melancholy and plaintive character. They spoke of the times that were past before the white men had introduced sorrow, and slavery, and weary labour among them; and they rehearsed pretended prophecies, handed down from their ancestors, foretelling the invasion of the Spaniards; that strangers should come into their island clothed in apparel, with swords capable of cleaving a man asunder at a blow, under whose yoke their posterity should be subdued. These ballads, or areytos, they sang with mournful tunes and doleful voices, bewailing the loss of their liberty and their painful servitude."

There is an interest of another kind in following the daring route of Columbus along the shores of Cuba and Jamaica, and through the turbulent seas that boil among the keys in the gulf of Paria. The shores still afforded the same beauty of aspect — the people the same marks of submission and delighted wonder.

"It is impossible to resist noticing the striking contrasts which are sometimes forced upon the mind. The coast here described as so populous and animated, rejoicing in the visit of the discoverers, is the same that extends westward of the city of Trinidad, along the gulf of Xagua. All is now silent and deserted. Civilization, which has covered some parts of Cuba with glittering cities, has rendered this a solitude. The whole race of Indians has long since passed away, pining and perishing beneath the domination of the strangers whom they welcomed so joyfully to their shores. Before me lies the account of a night recently passed on this very coast, by a celebrated traveller (Humboldt), but with what different feelings from those of Columbus! 'I passed,' says he, 'a great part of the night upon the deck. What deserted coasts! not a light to announce the cabin of a fisherman. From Batabano to Trinidad, a distance of fifty leagues, there does not exist a village. Yet in the time of Columbus this land was inhabited even along the margin of the sea. When pits are digged in the soil, or the torrents plough open the surface of the earth, there are often found hatchets of stone and vessels of copper, relics of the ancient inhabitants of the island.'"

We cannot resist the temptation of adding the following full-length picture; which has all the splendour of a romance, with the additional charm of being true.

"One morning, as the ships were standing along the coast, with a light wind and easy sail, they beheld three canoes issuing from among the islands of the bay. They approached in regular order; one, which was very large and handsomely carved and painted, was in the centre, a little in advance of the two others, which appeared to attend and guard it. In this were seated the cacique and his family, consisting of his wife, two daughters, two sons, and five brothers. One of the daughters was eighteen years of age, beautiful in form and countenance; her sister was somewhat younger; both were naked, according to the custom of these islands, but were of modest demeanour. In the prow of the canoe stood the standard-bearer of the cacique, clad in a kind of mantle of variegated feathers, with a tuft of gay plumes on his head, and bearing in his hand a fluttering white banner. Two Indians, with caps or helmets of feathers of uniform shape and colour, and their faces painted in a similar manner, beat upon tabors; two others, with hats curiously wrought of green feathers, held trumpets of a fine black wood, ingeniously carved; and there were six others, in large hats and white feathers, who appeared to be guests to the cacique. This gallant little armada having arrived alongside of the admiral's ship, the cacique entered on board with all his train. He appeared in his full

regalia. Around his head was a band of small stones of various colours, but principally green, symmetrically arranged, with large white stones at intervals, and connected in front by a large jewel of gold. Two plates of gold were suspended to his ears by rings of small green stones. To a necklace of white beads, of a kind deemed precious by them, was suspended a large plate, in the form of a fleur-de-lys, of guanin, an inferior species of gold: and a girdle of variegated stones, similar to those round his head, completed his regal decorations. His wife was adorned in a similar manner, having also a very small apron of cotton, and bands of the same round her arms and legs. The daughters were without ornaments, excepting the eldest and handsomest, who had a girdle of small stones, from which was suspended a tablet, the size of an ivy leaf, composed of various-coloured stones, embroidered on net-work of cotton.

"When the cacique entered on board the ship, he distributed presents of the productions of his island among the officers and men. The admiral was at this time in his cabin, engaged in his morning devotions. When he appeared on deck, the chieftain hastened to meet him with an animated countenance. 'My friend,' said he, 'I have determined to leave my country, and to accompany thee. I have heard from these Indians who are with thee, of the irresistible power of thy sovereigns, and of the many nations thou hast subdued in their name. Whoever refuses obedience to thee is sure to suffer. Thou hast destroyed the canoes and dwellings of the Caribs, slaying their warriors, and carrying into captivity their wives and children. All the islands are in dread of thee; for who can withstand thee now, that thou knowest the secrets of the land and the weakness of the people? Rather, therefore, than thou shouldst take away my dominions, I will embark with all my household in thy ships, and will go to do homage to thy king and queen, and to behold their marvellous country, of which the Indians elate such wonders.' When this speech was explained to Columbus, and he beheld the wife, the sons and daughters of the cacique, and thought upon the snares to which their ignorance and simplicity would be exposed, he was touched with compassion, and determined not to take them from their native land. He replied to the cacique, therefore, that he received him under his protection as a vassal of his sovereigns; but having many lands yet to visit before he returned to his country, he would at some future time fulfil his desire. Then, taking leave with many expressions of amity, the cacique, with his wife and daughters, and all his retinue, re-embarked in the canoes, returning reluctantly to their island, and the ships continued on their course."

But we must turn from these bright legends; and hurry onward to the end of our extracts. It is impossible to give any abstract of the rapid succession of plots, tumults, and desertions, which blighted the infancy of this great settlement; or of the disgraceful calumnies, jealousies, and intrigues, which gradually undermined the credit of Columbus with his sovereign, and ended at last in the mission of Bobadilla, with power to supersede him in command — and in the incredible catastrophe of his being sent home *in chains* by this arrogant and precipitate adventurer! When he arrived on board the caravel which was to carry him to Spain, the master treated him with the most profound respect, and offered instantly to release him from his fetters.

"But to this he would not consent. 'No,' said he proudly, 'their majesties commanded me by letter to submit to whatever Bobadilla should order in their name; by their authority he has put upon me these chains — I will wear them until they shall order them to be taken off, and I will preserve them afterwards as relics and memorials of the reward of my services.'"

"'He did so,' adds his son Fernando; 'I saw them always hanging in his cabinet, and he requested that when he died they might be buried with him!'"

If there is something in this memorable brutality which stirs the blood with intense indignation, there is something soothing and still more touching in the instant retribution.

"The arrival," says Mr. Irving, "of Columbus at Cadiz, a prisoner and in chains, produced almost as great a sensation as his triumphant return from his first voyage. It was one of those striking and obvious facts, which speak to the feelings of the multitude, and preclude the necessity of reflection. No one stopped to inquire into the case. It was sufficient to be told that Columbus was brought home in irons from the world he had discovered! A general burst of indignation arose in Cadiz, and in the powerful and opulent Seville, which was immediately echoed throughout all Spain."

"Ferdinand joined with his generous queen in her reprobation of the treatment of the admiral, and both sovereigns hastened to give evidence to the world that his imprisonment had been without their authority, and contrary to their wishes. Without waiting to receive any documents that might arrive from Bobadilla, they sent orders to Cadiz that the prisoners should be instantly set at liberty, and treated with all distinction. They wrote a letter to Columbus couched in terms of gratitude and affection, expressing their grief at all he had suffered, and inviting him to court. They ordered, at the same time, that two thousand ducats should be advanced to defray his expenses.

"The loyal heart of Columbus was again cheered by this declaration of his sovereigns. He felt con-

scious of his integrity, and anticipated an immediate restitution of all his rights and dignities. He appeared at Court in Granada on the 17th of December, not as a man ruined and disgraced, but richly dressed, and attended by an honourable retinue. He was received by their majesties with unqualified favour and distinction. When the queen beheld this venerable man approach, and thought on all he had deserved and all that he had suffered, she was moved to tears. Columbus had borne up firmly against the stern conflicts of the world,—he had endured with lofty scorn the injuries and insults of ignoble men; but he possessed strong and quick sensibility. When he found himself thus kindly received by his sovereigns, and beheld tears in the benign eyes of Isabella, his long-suppressed feelings burst forth: he threw himself upon his knees, and for some time could not utter a word for the violence of his tears and sobbings!"

In the year 1502, and in the sixty-sixth year of his age, the indefatigable discoverer set out on his fourth and last voyage. In this he reached the coast of Honduras; and fell in with a race somewhat more advanced in civilization than any he had yet encountered in these remote regions. They had mantles of woven cotton, and some small utensils of native copper. He then ran down the shores of Veragua, and came through tremendous tempests to Portobello, in search, it appears, of a strait or inlet, by which he had persuaded himself he should find a ready way to the shores of the Ganges: the extreme severity of the season, and the miserable condition of his ships, compelled him, however, to abandon this great enterprise; the account of which Mr. Irving winds up with the following quaint and not very felicitous observation: "If he was disappointed in his expectation of finding a strait through the Isthmus of Darien, it was because nature herself had been disappointed—for she appears to have attempted to make one, but to have attempted it in vain."

After this he returned to the coast of Veragua, where he landed, and formed a temporary settlement, with a view of searching for certain gold mines which he had been told were in the neighbourhood. This, however, was but the source of new disasters. The natives, who were of a fierce and warlike character, attacked and betrayed him—and his vessels were prevented from getting to sea, by the formation of a formidable bar at the mouth of the river.

At last, by prodigious exertions, and the heroic spirit of some of his officers, he was enabled to get away. But his altered fortune still pursued him. He was harassed by perpetual storms, and after having beat up nearly to Hispaniola, was assailed by

"A sudden tempest, of such violence, that, according to the strong expression of Columbus, it seemed as if the world would dissolve. They lost three of their anchors almost immediately, and the caravel Bermuda was driven with such violence upon the ship of the admiral, that the bow of the one, and the stern of the other, were greatly shattered. The sea running high, and the wind being boisterous, the vessels chafed and injured each other dreadfully, and it was with great difficulty that they were separated. One anchor only remained to the admiral's ship, and this saved him from being driven upon the rocks; but at daylight the cable was found nearly worn asunder. Had the darkness continued an hour longer, he could scarcely have escaped shipwreck.

"At the end of six days, the weather having moderated, he resumed his course, standing eastward for Hispaniola: 'his people,' as he says, 'dismayed and down-hearted, almost all his anchors lost, and his vessels bored as full of holes as a honeycomb."

His proud career seemed now to be hastening to a miserable end. Incapable of struggling longer with the elements, he was obliged to run before the wind to Jamaica, where he was not even in a condition to attempt to make any harbour.

"His ships, reduced to mere wrecks, could no longer keep the sea, and were ready to sink even in port. He ordered them, therefore, to be run aground, within a bow-shot of the shore, and fastened together, side by side. They soon filled with water to the decks. Thatched cabins were then erected at the prow and stern for the accommodation of the crews, and the wreck was placed in the best possible state of defence. Thus castled in the sea, Columbus trusted to be able to repel any sudden attack of the natives, and at the same time to keep his men from roving about the neighbourhood and indulging in their usual excesses. No one was allowed to go on shore without especial license, and the utmost precaution was taken to prevent any offence from being given to the Indians. Any exasperation of them might be fatal to the Spaniards in their present forlorn situation. A firebrand thrown into their wooden fortress might wrap it in flames, and leave them defenceless amidst hostile thousands."

"The envy," says Mr. Irving, "which had once sickened at the glory and prosperity of Columbus, could scarcely have devised for him a more forlorn heritage in the world he had discovered; the tenant of a wreck on a savage coast, in an untraversed ocean,

at the mercy of barbarous hordes, who, in a moment, from precarious friends, might be transformed into ferocious enemies; afflicted, too, by excruciating maladies which confined him to his bed, and by the pains and infirmities which hardship and anxiety had heaped upon his advancing age. But Columbus had not yet exhausted his cup of bitterness. He had yet to experience an evil worse than storm, or shipwreck, or bodily anguish, or the violence of savage hordes, in the perfidy of those in whom he confided."

The account of his sufferings during the twelve long months he was allowed to remain in this miserable condition, is full of the deepest interest, and the strangest variety of adventure. But we can now only refer to it. Two of his brave and devoted adherents undertook to cross to Hispaniola in a slender Indian canoe, and, after incredible miseries, at length accomplished this desperate undertaking—but from the cold-hearted indecision, or paltry jealousy, of the new governor Ovando, it was not till the late period we have mentioned, that a vessel was at length dispatched to the relief of the illustrious sufferer.

But he was not the only or even the most memorable sufferer. From the time he was superseded in command, the misery and oppression of the natives of Hispaniola had increased beyond all proportion or belief. By the miserable policy of the new governor, their services were allotted to the Spanish settlers, who compelled them to work by the cruel infliction of the scourge: and withholding from them the nourishment necessary for health, exacted a degree of labour which could not have been sustained by the most vigorous men.

"If they fled from this incessant toil and barbarous coercion, and took refuge in the mountains, they were hunted out like wild beasts, scourged in the most inhuman manner, and laden with chains to prevent a second escape. Many perished long before their term of labour had expired. Those who survived their term of six or eight months, were permitted to return to their homes, until the next term commenced. But their homes were often forty, sixty, and eighty leagues distant. They had nothing to sustain them through their journey but a few roots or agi peppers, or a little cassava-bread. Worn down by long toil and cruel hardships, which their feeble constitutions were incapable of sustaining, many had not strength to perform their journey, but sunk down and died by the way; some by the side of a brook, others under the shade of a tree, where they had crawled for shelter from the sun. 'I have found many dead in the road,' says Las Casas, 'others gasping under the trees, and others in the pangs of death, faintly crying, Hunger; hunger!' Those who reached their homes most commonly found them desolate. During the eight months that they had been absent, their wives and children had either perished or wandered away; the fields on which they depended for food were overrun with weeds, and nothing was left them but to lie down, exhausted and despairing, and die at the threshold of their habitations.

"It is impossible to pursue any farther the picture drawn by the venerable Las Casas, not of what he had heard, but of what he had seen—nature and humanity revolt at the details. Suffice it to say, that so intolerable were the toils and sufferings inflicted upon this weak and unoffending race, that they sunk under them, dissolving as it were from the face of the earth. Many killed themselves in despair, and even mothers overcame the powerful instinct of nature, and destroyed the infants at their breasts, to spare them a life of wretchedness. Twelve years had not elapsed since the discovery of the island, and several hundred thousands of its native inhabitants had perished, miserable victims to the grasping avarice of the white men."

These pictures are sufficiently shocking; but they do not exhaust the horrors that cover the brief history of this ill-fated people. The province or district of Xaragua, which was ruled over by a princess, called Anacaona, celebrated in all the contemporary accounts for the grace and dignity of her manners, and her confiding attachment to the strangers, had hitherto enjoyed a happy exemption from the troubles which distracted the other parts of the island, and when visited about ten years before by the brother of Columbus, had impressed all the Spaniards with the idea of an earthly paradise: both from the fertility and sweetness of the country, the gentleness of its people, and the beauty and grace of the women. Upon some rumours that the neighbouring caciques were assembling for hostile purposes, Ovando now marched into this devoted region with a well-appointed force of near 400 men. He was hospitably and joyfully received by the princess: and affected to encourage and join in the festivity which his presence had excited. He was even himself engaged in a sportful game with his officers, when the signal for massacre was given—and the place was instantly covered with blood! Eighty of the caciques were burnt over slow fires! and thousands of the unarmed and unresisting people butchered, without regard to sex or age. "Humanity," Mr. Irving

very justly observes, "turns with horror from such atrocities, and would fain discredit them: but they are circumstantially and still more minutely recorded by the venerable Las Casas — who was *resident in the island at the time*, and conversant with the principal actors in the tragedy."

Still worse enormities signalized the final subjugation of the province of Higuey—the last scene of any attempt to resist the tyrannical power of the invaders. It would be idle to detail here the progress of that savage and most unequal warfare: but it is right that the butcheries perpetrated by the victors should not be forgotten — that men may see to what incredible excesses civilized beings may be tempted by the possession of absolute and unquestioned power — and may learn, from indisputable memorials, how far the abuse of delegated and provincial authority may be actually carried. If it be true, as Homer has alleged, that the day which makes a man a slave, takes away half his worth—it seems to be still more infallibly and fatally true, that the master generally suffers a yet larger privation.

"Sometimes," says Mr. Irving, "they would hunt down a straggling Indian, and compel him, by torments, to betray the hiding-place of his companions, binding him and driving him before them as a guide. Wherever they discovered one of these places of refuge, filled with the aged and the infirm, with feeble women and helpless children, they massacred them without mercy! They wished to inspire terror throughout the land, and to frighten the whole tribe into submission. They cut off the hands of those whom they took roving at large, and sent them, as they said, to deliver them as letters to their friends, demanding their surrender. Numberless were those, says Las Casas, whose hands were amputated in this manner, and many of them sunk down and died by the way, through anguish and loss of blood.

"The conquerors delighted in exercising strange and ingenious cruelties. They mingled horrible levity with their bloodthirstiness. They erected gibbets long and low, so that the feet of the sufferers might reach the ground, and their death be lingering. They hanged thirteen together, in reverence, says the indignant Las Casas, of our blessed Saviour and the twelve apostles! While their victims were suspended, and still living, they hacked them with their swords, to prove the strength of their arms and the edge of their weapons. They wrapped them in dry straw, and setting fire to it, terminated their existence by the fiercest agony.

"These are horrible details; yet a veil is drawn over others still more detestable. They are related by the venerable Las Casas, *who was an eye-witness of the scenes he describes*. He was young at the time, but records them in his advanced years. 'All these things,' says he, 'and others, revolting to human nature, my own eyes beheld! and now I almost fear to repeat them, scarce believing myself, or whether I have not dreamt them.'

"The system of Columbus may have borne hard upon the Indians, born and brought up in untasked freedom; but it was never cruel nor sanguinary. He inflicted no wanton massacres nor vindictive punishments; his desire was to cherish and civilize the Indians, and to render them useful subjects, not to oppress, and persecute, and destroy them. When he beheld the desolation that had swept them from the land during his suspension from authority, he could not restrain the strong expression of his feelings. In a letter written to the king after his return to Spain, he thus expresses himself on the subject: 'The Indians of Hispaniola were and are the richest of the island; for it is they who cultivate and make the bread and the provisions for the Christians, who dig the gold from the mines, and perform all the offices and labours both of men and of beasts. I am informed that, since I left this island, (that is, in less than three years,) *six parts out of seven of the natives are dead*, all through ill-treatment and inhumanity! some by the sword, others by blows and cruel usage, others through hunger. The greater part have perished in the mountains and glens, whither they had fled from not being able to support the labour imposed upon them."

The story now draws to a close. Columbus returned to Spain, broken down with age and affliction — and after two years spent in unavailing solicitations at the court of the cold-blooded and ungrateful Ferdinand (his generous patroness, Isabella, having died immediately on his return), terminated with characteristic magnanimity a life of singular energy, splendour, and endurance. Independent of his actual achievements, he was undoubtedly a great and remarkable man; and Mr. Irving has summed up his general character in a very eloquent and judicious way.

"His ambition," he observes, "was lofty and noble. He was full of high thoughts and anxious to distinguish himself by great achievements. It has been said that a mercenary feeling mingled with his views, and that his stipulations with the Spanish Court were selfish and avaricious. The charge is inconsiderate and unjust. He aimed at dignity and wealth in the same lofty spirit in which he sought renown; and the gains that promised to arise from his discoveries, he intended to appropriate in the same princely and pious spirit in which they were demanded. He con-

templated works and achievements of benevolence and religion: vast contributions for the relief of the poor of his native city; the foundation of churches, where masses should be said for the souls of the departed; and armies for the recovery of the holy sepulchre in Palestine.

"In his testament, he enjoined on his son Diego, and whoever after him should inherit his estates, whatever dignities and titles might afterwards be granted by the king, always to sign himself simply 'the Admiral,' by way of perpetuating in the family its real source of greatness.

"He was devoutly pious; religion mingled with the whole course of his thoughts and actions, and shines forth in all his most private and unstudied writings. Whenever he made any great discovery, he celebrated it by solemn thanks to God. The voice of prayer and melody of praise rose from his ships when he first beheld the New World, and his first action on landing was to prostrate himself upon the earth and return thanksgivings. Every evening, the *Salve Regina*, and other vesper hymns, were chanted by his crew, and masses were performed in the beautiful groves that bordered the wild shores of this heathen land. The religion thus deeply seated in the soul, diffused a sober dignity and benign composure over his whole demeanour. His language was pure and guarded, free from all imprecations, oaths, and other irreverent expressions. But his piety was darkened by the bigotry of the age. He evidently concurred in the opinion, that all the nations who did not acknowledge the Christian faith were destitute of natural rights; that the sternest measures might be used for their conversion, and the severest punishment inflicted upon their obstinacy in unbelief. In this spirit of bigotry he considered himself justified in making captives of the Indians, and transporting them to Spain to have them taught the doctrines of Christianity, and in selling them for slaves if they pretended to resist his invasions He was countenanced in these views, no doubt, by the general opinion of the age. But it is not the intention of the author to justify Columbus on a point where it is inexcusable to err. Let it remain a blot on his illustrious name,—and let others derive a lesson from it."

He was a man too, undoubtedly, as all truly great men have been, of an imaginative and sensitive temperament — something, as Mr. Irving has well remarked, even of a visionary — but a visionary of a high and lofty order, controlling his ardent imagination by a powerful judgment and great practical sagacity, and deriving not only a noble delight but signal accessions of knowledge from this vigour and activity of his fancy.

"Yet with all this fervour of imagination," as Mr. Irving has strikingly observed, "its fondest lreams fell short of the reality. He died in ignorance of the real grandeur of his discovery. Until his last breath he entertained the idea that he had merely opened a new way to the old resorts of opulent commerce, and had discovered some of the wild regions of the East. He supposed Hispaniola to be the ancient Ophir which had been visited by the ships of Solomon, and that Cuba and Terra Firma were but remote parts of Asia. What visions of glory would have broke upon his mind could he have known that he had indeed discovered a new continent, equal to the whole of the old world in magnitude, and separated by two vast oceans from all the earth hitherto known by civilized man! And how would his magnanimous spirit have been consoled, amidst the afflictions of age and the cares of penury, the neglect of a fickle public, and the injustice of an ungrateful king, could he have anticipated the splendid empires which were to spread over the beautiful world he had discovered; and the nations, and tongues, and languages which were to fill its lands with his renown, and to revere and bless his name to the latest posterity."

The appendix to Mr. Irving's work, which occupies the greater part of the last volume, contains most of the original matter which his learning and research have enabled him to bring to bear on the principal subject, and constitutes indeed a miscellany of a singularly curious and interesting description. It consists, besides very copious and elaborate accounts of the family and descendants of Columbus, principally of extracts and critiques of the discoveries of earlier or contemporary navigators — the voyages of the Carthaginians and the Scandinavians, — of Behem, the Pinzons, Amerigo Vespucci, and others — with some very curious remarks on the travels of Marco Polo, and Mandeville — a dissertation on the ships used by Columbus, and his contemporaries — on the Atalantis of Plato — the imaginary island of St. Brandan, and of the Seven Cities — together with remarks on the writings of Peter Martyr, Oviedo, Herrera, Las Casas, and the other contemporary chroniclers of those great discoveries. The whole drawn up, we think, with singular judgment, diligence, and candour; and presenting the reader, in the most manageable form, with almost all the collateral information which could be brought to elucidate the transactions to which they relate.

Such is the general character of Mr. Irving's book — and such are parts of its contents. We do not pretend to give any view whatever of the substance of four large historical volumes; and fear that the specimens we have

ventured to exhibit of the author's way of writing are not very well calculated to do justice either to the occasional force, or the constant variety, of his style. But for judicious readers they will probably suffice — and, we trust, will be found not only to warrant the praise we have felt ourselves called on to bestow, but to induce many to gratify themselves by the perusal of the work at large.

Mr. Irving, we believe, was not in England when his work was printed: and we must say he has been very insufficiently represented by the corrector of the press. We do not recollect ever to have seen so handsome a book with so many gross typographical errors. In many places they obscure the sense — and are very frequently painful and offensive. It will be absolutely necessary that this be looked to in a new impression; and the author would do well to avail himself of the same opportunity, to correct some verbal inaccuracies, and to polish and improve some passages of slovenly writing.

MEMOIRS OF BABER.

(June, 1827.)

Memoirs of Zehir-ed-din Muhammed Baber, *Emperor of Hindustan, written by himself, in the Jaghatai Turki, and translated, partly by the late* John Leyden, Esq., M.D., *partly by* William Erskine, Esq. *With Notes and a Geographical and Historical Introduction: together with a Map of the Countries between the Oxus and Jaxartes, and a Memoir regarding its Construction, by* Charles Waddington, Esq., *of the East India Company's Engineers.* London: 1826.

This is a very curious, and admirably edited work. But the strongest impression which the perusal of it has left on our minds is the boundlessness of authentic history; and, if we might venture to say it, the uselessness of all history which does not relate to our own fraternity of nations, or even bear, in some way or other, on our own present or future condition.

We have here a distinct and faithful account of some hundreds of battles, sieges, and great military expeditions, and a character of a prodigious number of eminent individuals — men famous in their day, over wide regions, for genius or fortune — poets, conquerors, martyrs — founders of cities and dynasties — authors of immortal works — ravagers of vast districts abounding in wealth and population. Of all these great personages and events nobody in Europe, if we except a score or two of studious Orientalists, has ever heard before; and it would not, we imagine, be very easy to show that we are any better for hearing of them now. A few curious traits, that happen to be strikingly in contrast with our own manners and habits, may remain on the memory of a reflecting reader — with a general confused recollection of the dark and gorgeous phantasmagoria. But no one, we may fairly say, will think it worth while to digest or develope the details of the history; or be at the pains to become acquainted with the leading individuals, and fix in his memory the series and connexion of events. Yet the effusion of human blood was as copious — the display of talent and courage as imposing — the perversion of high moral qualities, and the waste of the means of enjoyment as unsparing, as in other long-past battles and intrigues and revolutions, over the details of which we still pore with the most unwearied attention; and to verify the dates or minute circumstances of which, is still regarded as a great exploit in historical research, and among the noblest employments of human learning and sagacity.

It is not perhaps very easy to account for the eagerness with which we still follow the fortunes of Miltiades, Alexander, or Cæsar — of the Bruce and the Black Prince, and the interest which yet belongs to the fields of Marathon and Pharsalia, of Crecy and Bannockburn, compared with the indifference, or rather reluctance, with which we listen to the details of Asiatic warfare — the conquests that transferred to the Moguls the vast sovereignties of India, or raised a dynasty of Manchew Tartars to the Celestial Empire of China. It will not do to say, that we want something nobler in character, and more exalted in intellect, than is to be met with among those murderous Orientals — that there is nothing to interest in the contentions of mere force and violence; and that it requires no very fine-drawn reasoning to explain why we should turn with disgust from the story, if it had been preserved, of the savage affrays which have

drenched the sands of Africa or the rocks of New Zealand — through long generations of murder — with the blood of their brutish population. This may be true enough of Madagascar or Dahomy; but it does not apply to the case before us. The nations of Asia generally — at least those composing its great states — were undoubtedly more polished than those of Europe, during all the period that preceded their recent connexion. Their warriors were as brave in the field, their statesmen more subtle and politic in the cabinet: in the arts of luxury, and all the elegancies of civil life, they were immeasurably superior; in ingenuity of speculation — in literature — in social politeness — the comparison is still in their favour.

It has often occurred to us, indeed, to consider what the effect would have been on the fate and fortunes of the world, if, in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, when the germs of their present civilization were first disclosed, the nations of Europe had been introduced to an intimate and friendly acquaintance with the great polished communities of the East, and had been thus led to take *them* for their masters in intellectual cultivation, and their models in all the higher pursuits of genius, polity, and art. The difference in our social and moral condition, it would not, perhaps, be easy to estimate: but one result, we conceive, would unquestionably have been, to make us take the same deep interest in their ancient story, which we now feel, for similar reasons, in that of the sterner barbarians of early Rome, or the more imaginative clans and colonies of immortal Greece. The experiment, however, though there seemed oftener than once to be some openings for it, was not made. Our crusading ancestors were too rude themselves to estimate or to feel the value of the oriental refinement which presented itself to their passing gaze, and too entirely occupied with war and bigotry, to reflect on its causes or effects; and the first naval adventurers who opened up India to our commerce, were both too few and too far off to communicate to their brethren at home any taste for the splendours which might have excited their own admiration. By the time that our intercourse with those regions was enlarged, our own career of improvement had been prosperously begun; and our superiority in the art, or at least the discipline of war, having given us a signal advantage in the conflicts to which that extending intercourse immediately led, naturally increased the aversion and disdain with which almost all races of men are apt to regard strangers to their blood and dissenters from their creed. Since that time the genius of Europe has been steadily progressive, whilst that of Asia has been at least stationary, and most probably retrograde; and the descendants of the feudal and predatory warriors of the West have at last attained a decided predominancy over those of their elder brothers in the East; to whom, at that period, they were unquestionably inferior in elegance and ingenuity, and whose hostilities were then conducted on the same system with our own. *They*, in short, have remained nearly where they were; while *we*, beginning with the improvement of our governments and military discipline, have gradually outstripped them in all the lesser and more ornamental attainments in which they originally excelled.

This extraordinary fact of the stationary or degenerate condition of the two oldest and greatest families of mankind — those of Asia and Africa, has always appeared to us a sad obstacle in the way of those who believe in the general progress of the race, and its constant advancement towards a state of perfection. Two or three thousand years ago, those vast communities were certainly in a happier and more prosperous state than they are now; and in many of them we know that their most powerful and flourishing societies have been corrupted and dissolved, not by any accidental or extrinsic disaster, like foreign conquest, pestilence, or elemental devastation, but by what appeared to be the natural consequences of that very greatness and refinement which had marked and rewarded their earlier exertions. In Europe, hitherto, the case has certainly been different: for though darkness did fall upon its nations also, after the lights of Roman civilization were extinguished, it is to be remembered that they did not burn out of themselves, but were trampled down by hosts of invading barbarians, and that they blazed out anew, with increased splendour and power, when the dulness of that superincumbent mass was at length vivified by

their contact, and animated by the fermentation of that leaven which had all along been secretly working in its recesses. In Europe certainly there has been a progress: and the more polished of its present inhabitants have not only regained the place which was held of old by their illustrious masters of Greece and Rome, but have plainly outgone them in the most substantial and exalted of their improvements. Far more humane and refined than the Romans — far less giddy and turbulent and treacherous than the Greeks, they have given a security to life and property that was unknown to the earlier ages of the world — exalted the arts of peace to a dignity with which they were never before invested; and, by the abolition of domestic servitude, for the first time extended to the bulk of the population those higher capacities and enjoyments which were formerly engrossed by a few. By the invention of printing, they have made all knowledge not only accessible, but imperishable; and by their improvements in the art of war, have effectually secured themselves against the overwhelming calamity of barbarous invasion — the risk of subjugation by mere numerical or animal force: whilst the alternations of conquest and defeat amongst civilized communities, who alone can now be formidable to each other, though productive of great local and temporary evils, may be regarded on the whole as one of the means of promoting and equalizing the general civilization. Rome polished and enlightened all the barbarous nations she subdued — and was herself polished and enlightened by her conquest of elegant Greece. If the European parts of Russia had been subjected to the dominion of France, there can be no doubt that the loss of national independence would have been compensated by rapid advances both in liberality and refinement; and if, by a still more disastrous, though less improbable contingency, the Moscovite hordes were ever to overrun the fair countries to the south-west of them, it is equally certain that the invaders would speedily be softened and informed by the union; and be infected more certainly than by any other sort of contact, with the arts and the knowledge of the vanquished.

All these great advantages, however, — this apparently irrepressible impulse to improvement — this security against backsliding and decay, seems peculiar to Europe*, and not capable of being communicated, even by her, to the most docile races of the other quarters of the world: and it is really extremely difficult to explain, upon what are called philosophical principles, the causes of this superiority. We should be very glad to ascribe it to our greater political freedom: — and no doubt, as a secondary cause, this is among the most powerful; as it is to the maintenance of that freedom that we are indebted for the self-estimation, the feeling of honour, the general equity of the laws, and the substantial security both from sudden revolution and from capricious oppression, which distinguish our portion of the globe. But we cannot bring ourselves to regard this freedom as a mere accident in our history, that is not itself to be accounted for, as well as its consequences: and when it is said that our greater stability and prosperity is owing to our greater freedom, we are immediately tempted to ask, by what that freedom has itself been produced? In the same way we might ascribe the superior mildness and humanity of our manners, the abated ferocity of our wars, and generally our respect for human life, to the influence of a Religion which teaches that all men are equal in the sight of God, and inculcates peace and charity as the first of our duties. But, besides the startling contrast between the profligacy, treachery, and cruelty of the Eastern Empire after its conversion to the true faith, and the simple and heroic virtues of the heathen republic, it would still occur to inquire, how it has happened that the nations of European descent have alone embraced the sublime truths, and adopted into their practice the mild precepts, of Christianity, while the people of the East have uniformly rejected and disclaimed them, as alien to their character and habits — in spite of all the efforts of the

* When we speak of Europe, it will be understood that we speak, not of the land, but of the people — and include, therefore, all the settlements and colonies of that favoured race, in whatever quarter of the globe they may now be established. Some situations seem more, and some less, favourable to the preservation of the original character. The Spaniards certainly degenerated in Peru — and the Dutch perhaps in Batavia; but the English remain, we trust, unimpaired in America.

apostles, fathers, and martyrs, in the primitive and most effective periods of their preaching? How, in short, it has happened that the sensual and sanguinary creed of Mahomet has superseded the pure and pacific doctrines of Christianity in most of those very regions where it was first revealed to mankind, and first established by the greatest of existing governments? The Christian revelation is no doubt the most precious of all Heaven's gifts to the benighted world. But it is plain, that there was a greater aptitude to embrace and to profit by it in the European than in the Asiatic race. A free government, in like manner, is unquestionably the most valuable of all human inventions — the great safeguard of all other temporal blessings, and the mainspring of all intellectual and moral improvement: — but such a government is not the result of a lucky thought or happy casualty; and could only be established among men who had previously learned both to relish the benefits it secures, and to understand the connexion between the means it employs and the ends at which it aims.

We come then, though a little reluctantly, to the conclusion, that there is a natural and inherent difference in the character and temperament of the European and the Asiatic races — consisting, perhaps, chiefly in a superior capacity of patient and persevering thought in the former — and displaying itself, for the most part, in a more sober and robust understanding, and a more reasonable, principled, and inflexible morality. It is this which has led us at once to temper our political institutions with prospective checks and suspicious provisions against abuses, and, in our different orders and degrees, to submit without impatience to those checks and restrictions; — to extend our reasonings by repeated observation and experiment, to larger and larger conclusions — and thus gradually to discover the paramount importance of discipline and unity of purpose in war, and of absolute security to person and property in all peaceful pursuits — the folly of all passionate and vindictive assertion of supposed rights and pretensions, and the certain recoil of long continued injustice on the heads of its authors — the substantial advantages of honesty and fair dealing over the most ingenious systems of trickery and fraud; — and even — though this is the last and hardest, as well as the most precious, of all the lessons of reason and experience — that the toleration even of religious errors is not only prudent and merciful in itself, and most becoming a fallible and erring being, but is the surest and speediest way to compose religious differences, and to extinguish that most formidable bigotry, and those most pernicious errors, which are fed and nourished by persecution. It is the want of this knowledge, or rather of the capacity for attaining it, that constitutes the palpable inferiority of the Eastern races; and, in spite of their fancy, ingenuity, and restless activity, condemns them, it would appear irretrievably, to vices and sufferings, from which nations in a far ruder condition are comparatively free. But we are wandering too far from the magnificent Baber and his commentators, — and must now leave these vague and general speculations for the facts and details that lie before us.

Zehir-ed-din Muhammed, surnamed Baber, or the Tiger, was one of the descendants of Zengiskhan and of Tamerlane; and though inheriting only the small kingdom of Ferghana in Bucharia, ultimately extended his dominions by conquest to Delhi and the greater part of Hindostan; and transmitted to his famous descendants, Akber and Aurengzebe, the magnificent empire of the Moguls. He was born in 1482, and died in 1530. Though passing the greater part of his time in desperate military expeditions, he was an educated and accomplished man; an elegant poet; a minute and fastidious critic in all the niceties and elegances of diction; a curious and exact observer of the statistical phenomena of every region he entered; a great admirer of beautiful prospects and fine flowers; and, though a devoted Mahometan in his way, a very resolute and jovial drinker of wine. Good-humoured, brave, munificent, sagacious, and frank in his character, he might have been a Henry IV. if his training had been in Europe; — and even as he is, is less stained, perhaps, by the Asiatic vices of cruelty and perfidy than any other in the list of her conquerors. The work before us is a faithful translation of his own account of his life and transactions; written, with some considerable blanks, up to the year 1508, in the form of a narrative—and continued afterwards, as a journal, till 1529. It is here illustrated by

the most intelligent, learned, and least pedantic notes we have ever seen annexed to such a performance; and by two or three introductory dissertations, more clear, masterly, and full of instruction than any it has ever been our lot to peruse on the history or geography of the East. The translation was begun by the late very learned and enterprising Dr. Leyden. It has been completed, and the whole of the valuable commentary added by Mr. W. Erskine, on the solicitation of the Hon. Mountstewart Elphinstone and Sir John Malcolm, the two individuals in the world best qualified to judge of the value or execution of such a work. The greater part of the translation was finished and transmitted to this country in 1817; but was only committed to the press in the course of last year.

The preface contains a learned account of the Turki language (in which these memoirs were written), the prevailing tongue of Central Asia, and of which the Constantinopolitan Turkish is one of the most corrupted dialects, — some valuable corrections of Sir William Jones's notices of the Institutes of Taimūr, — and a very clear explanation of the method employed in the translation, and the various helps by which the great difficulties of the task were relieved. The first Introduction, however, contains much more valuable matters: it is devoted to an account of the great Tartar tribes, who, under the denomination of the Turki, the Moghul, and the Mandshur races, may be said to occupy the whole vast extent of Asia, north of Hindostan and part of Persia, and westward from China. Of these, the Mandshurs, who have long been the sovereigns of China, possess the countries immediately to the north and east of that ancient empire, — the Turki, the regions immediately to the north and westward of India and Persia Proper, stretching round the Caspian, and advancing, by the Constantinopolitan tribes, considerably to the south-east of Europe. The Moghuls lie principally between the other two. These three tribes, speak, it would appear, totally different languages — the name of Tartar or Tatar, by which they are generally designated in Europe, not being acknowledged by any of them, and appearing to have been appropriated only to a small clan of Moghuls. The Huns, who desolated the declining empire under Attila*, are thought by Mr. Erskine to have been of the Moghul race; and Zengiskhan, the mighty conqueror of the thirteenth century, was certainly of that family. Their princes, however, were afterwards blended, by family alliances, with those of the Turki; and several of them, reigning exclusively over conquered tribes of that descent, came gradually, though of proper Moghul ancestry, to reckon themselves as Turki sovereigns. Of this description was Taimur Beg, or Tamerlane, whose family, though descended from Zengis, had long been settled in the Turki kingdom of Samarkand; and from him the illustrious Baber, the hero of the work before us, a decided Turki in language, character, and prejudices, was lineally sprung. The relative condition of these enterprising nations, and their more peaceful brethren in the south, cannot be more clearly or accurately described than in the words of Mr. Erskine: —

"The whole of Asia may be considered as divided into two parts by the great chain of mountains which runs from China and the Birman Empire on the east, to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean on the west. From the eastward, where it is of great breadth, it keeps a north-westerly course, rising in height as it advances, and forming the hill countries of Assâm, Bootân, Nepâl, Sirinagar, Tibet, and Ladâk. It encloses the valley of Kashmîr, near which it seems to have gained its greatest height, and thence proceeds westward, passing to the north of Peshâwer and Kâbul, after which it appears to break into a variety of smaller ranges of hills that proceed in a westerly and south-westerly direction, generally terminating in the province of Khorasân. Near Herât, in that province, the mountains sink away; but the range appears to rise again near Meshhed, and is by some considered as resuming its course, running to the south of the Caspian and bounding Mazenderân, whence it proceeds on through Armenia, and thence into Asia Minor, finding its termination in the mountains of ancient Lycia. This immense range, which some consider as terminating at Herât, while it divides Bengal, Hindustân, the Penjâb, Afghanistân, Persia, and part of the Turkish territory, from the country of the Moghul and Tûrki tribes, which, with few exceptions, occupy the whole extent of country from the borders of

* The learned translator conceives that the supposed name of this famous barbarian was truly only the denomination of his office. It is known that he succeeded his uncle in the government, though there were children of his alive. It is probable, therefore, that he originally assumed authority in the character of their guardian; and the word *Atalik*, in Tartar, signifies guardian, or *quasi parens*.

China to the sea of Azof, may also be considered as separating, in its whole course, nations of comparative civilization, from uncivilized tribes. To the south of this range, if we perhaps except some part of the Afghân territory, which, indeed, may rather be held as part of the range itself than as south of it, there is no nation which, at some period or other of its history, has not been the seat of a powerful empire, and of all those arts and refinements of life which attend a numerous and wealthy population, when protected by a government that permits the fancies and energies of the human mind to follow their natural bias. The degrees of civilization and of happiness possessed in these various regions may have been extremely different; but many of the comforts of wealth and abundance, and no small share of the higher treasures of cultivated judgment and imagination, must have been enjoyed by nations that could produce the various systems of Indian philosophy and science, a drama so polished as the Sakontala, a poet like Ferdousi, or a moralist like Sadi. While to the south of this range we every where see flourishing cities, cultivated fields, and all the forms of a regular government and policy; to the north of it, if we except China and the countries to the south of the Sirr or Jaxartes, and along its banks, we find tribes who, down to the present day, wander over their extensive regions as their forefathers did, little if at all more refined than they appear to have been at the very dawn of history. Their flocks are still their wealth, their camp their city, and the same government exists of separate chiefs, who are not much exalted in luxury or information above the commonest of their subjects around them."

These general remarks are followed up by an exact and most luminous geographical enumeration of all the branches of this great northern family, — accompanied with historical notices, and very interesting elucidations of various passages both in ancient and modern writers. The following observations are of more extensive application: —

"The general state of society which prevailed in the age of Baber, within the countries that have been described, will be much better understood from a perusal of the following Memoirs than from any prefatory observations that could be offered. It is evident that, in consequence of the protection which had been afforded to the people of Mâweralhnaher by their regular governments, a considerable degree of comfort, and perhaps still more of elegance and civility, prevailed in the towns. The whole age of Baber, however, was one of great confusion. Nothing contributed so much to produce the constant wars, and eventual devastation of the country, which the Memoirs exhibit, as the want of *some fixed rule of Succession to the Throne.* The ideas of regal descent, according to primogeniture, were very indistinct, as is the case in all Oriental, and, in general, in all purely despotic kingdoms. When the succession to the crown, like every thing else, is subject to the will of the prince, on his death it necessarily becomes the subject of contention; — since the will of a dead king is of much less consequence than the intrigues of an able minister, or the sword of a successful commander. It is the privilege of liberty and of law alone to bestow equal security on the rights of the monarch and of the people. The death of the ablest sovereign was only the signal for a general war. The different parties at court, or in the haram of the prince, espoused the cause of different competitors, and every neighbouring potentate believed himself to be perfectly justified in marching to seize his portion of the spoil. In the course of the Memoirs, we shall find that the grandees of the court, while they take their place by the side of the candidate of their choice, do not appear to believe that fidelity to him is any very necessary virtue. The nobility, unable to predict the events of one twelvemonth, degenerate into a set of selfish, calculating, though perhaps brave partizans. Rank and wealth, and present enjoyment, become their idols. The prince feels the influence of the general want of stability, and is himself educated in the loose principles of an adventurer. In all about him he sees merely the instruments of his power. The subject, seeing the prince consult only his pleasures, learns on his part to consult only his private convenience. In such societies, the steadiness of principle that flows from the love of right and of our country can have no place. It may be questioned whether the prevalence of the Mahommedan religion, by swallowing up civil in religious distinctions, has not a tendency to increase this indifference to country, wherever it is established."

"That the fashions of the East are unchanged, is, in general, certainly true; because the climate and the despotism, from the one or other of which a very large proportion of them arises, have continued the same. Yet one who observes the way in which a Musulman of rank spends his day, will be led to suspect that the maxim has sometimes been adopted with too little limitation. Take the example of his pipe and his coffee. The Kalliûn, or Hukkâ, is seldom out of his hand; while the coffee-cup makes its appearance every hour, as if it contained a necessary of life. Perhaps there are no enjoyments the loss of which he would feel more severely; or which, were we to judge only by the frequency of the call for them, we should suppose to have entered from a more remote period into the system of Asiatic life. Yet we know that the one (which has indeed become a necessary of life to every class of Musulmans) could not have been enjoyed before the discovery of America; and there is every reason to believe that the other was not introduced into Arabia from Africa, where coffee is indigenous, previously to the sixteenth century*: and what marks the circumstance more strongly, both of these habits have forced their way, in spite of the re-

* La Roque, Traité Historique de l'Origine et du Progrès du Café, &c Paris, 1716, 12mo.

monstrances of the rigorists in religion. Perhaps it would have been fortunate for Baber had they prevailed in his age, as they might have diverted him from the immoderate use, first of wine, and afterwards of deleterious drugs, which ruined his constitution, and hastened on his end."

The *Yâsi*, or institutions of Chengîz, are often mentioned.

"They seem," says Mr. Erskine, "to have been a collection of the old usages of the Moghul tribes, comprehending some rules of state and ceremony, and some injunctions for the punishment of particular crimes. The punishments were only two — death and the bastinado*; the number of blows extending from seven to seven hundred. There is something very Chinese in the whole of the Moghul system of punishment, even princes advanced in years, and in command of large armies, being punished by bastinado with a stick, by their father's orders.† Whether they received their usage in this respect from the Chinese, or communicated it to them, is not very certain. As the whole body of their laws or customs was formed before the introduction of the Musulman religion, and was probably in many respects inconsistent with the Koran, as, for instance, in allowing the use of the blood of animals, and in the extent of toleration granted to other religions, it gradually fell into decay."

The present Moghul tribes, it is added, punish most offences by fines of cattle. The art of war in the days of Baber had not been very greatly matured; and though matchlocks and unwieldy cannon had been recently introduced from the West, the arms chiefly relied on were still the bow and the spear, the sabre and the battle-axe. Mining was practised in sieges, and cavalry seems to have formed the least considerable part of the army.

There is a second Introduction, containing a clear and brief abstract of the history of those regions from the time of Tamerlane to that of Baber,—together with an excellent Memoir on the annexed map, and an account of the hills and rivers of Bokara, of which it would be idle to attempt any abstract.

As to the Memoirs themselves, we have already said that we think it in vain to recommend them as a portion of History with which our readers should be acquainted, — or consequently to aim at presentiug them with any thing in the nature of an abstract, or connected account of the events they so minutely detail. All that we propose to do, therefore, is, to extract a few of the traits which appear to us the most striking and characteristic, and to endeavour, in a very short compass, to give an idea of whatever curiosity or interest the work possesses. The most remarkable thing about it, or at least that which first strikes us, is the simplicity of the style, and the good sense, varied knowledge, and extraordinary industry of the royal author. It is difficult, indeed, to believe that it is the work of an Asiatic, and a sovereign. Though copiously, and rather diffusely written, it is perfectly free from the ornamental verbosity, the eternal metaphor, and puerile exaggerations of most Oriental compositions; and though savouring so far of royalty as to abound in descriptions of dresses and ceremonies, is yet occupied in the main with concerns greatly too rational and humble to be much in favour with monarchs. As a specimen of the adventurous life of the chieftains of those days, and of Baber's manner of describing it, we may pass at once to his account of his being besieged in Samarkand, and the particulars of his flight after he was obliged to abandon it: —

"During the continuance of the siege, the rounds of the rampart were regularly gone, once every night, sometimes by Kâsim Beg, and sometimes by other Begs and captains. From the Firozeh gate to the Sheikh-Zâdeh gate, we were able to go along the ramparts on horseback; every where else we were obliged to go on foot. Setting out in the beginning of the night, it was morning before we had completed our rounds.

"One day Sheibâni Khan made an attack between the Iron gate and that of the Sheikh-Zâdeh. As I was with the reserve, I immediately led them to the quarter that was attacked, without attending to the Washing-green gate or the Needlemakers' gate. That same day, from the top of the Sheikh-Zâdeh's gateway, I struck a palish white-coloured horse an excellent shot with my cross-bow: it fell dead the moment my arrow touched it: but in the meanwhile they had made such a vigorous attack, near the Camel's Neck, that they effected a lodgment close under the rampart. Being hotly engaged in repelling the enemy where I was, I had entertained no apprehensions of danger on the other side, where they had prepared and brought with them twenty-five or twenty-six scaling-ladders, each of them so broad that two and three men could mount a-breast. He had placed in ambush, opposite to the city-wall, seven or eight hundred chosen men with these ladders, between the Ironsmiths' and Needlemakers' gates, while he himself moved to the other side, and made a

* D'Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. art. Turk.

† Hist. de Timur Bec, vol. iii. pp. 227. 263. 326, &c.

false attack. Our attention was entirely drawn off to this attack; and the men in ambush no sooner saw the works opposite to them empty of defenders, by the watch having left them, than they rose from the place where they had lain in ambush, advanced with extreme speed, and applied their scaling-ladders all at once between the two gates that have been mentioned, exactly opposite to Muhammed Mazîd Terkhan's house. The Begs who were on guard had only two or three of their servants and attendants about them. — Nevertheless Kuch Beg, Muhammed Kûli Kochin, Shah Sûfi, and another brave cavalier, boldly assailed them, and displayed signal heroism. Some of the enemy had already mounted the wall, and several others were in the act of scaling it, when the four persons who have been mentioned arrived on the spot, fell upon them sword in hand, with the greatest bravery, and dealing out furious blows around them, drove the assailants back over the wall, and put them to flight. Kuch Beg distinguished himself above all the rest; and this was an exploit for ever to be cited to his honour. He twice during this siege performed excellent service by his valour.

"It was now the season of the ripening of the grain, and nobody had brought in any new corn. As the siege had drawn out to great length, the inhabitants were reduced to extreme distress, and things came to such a pass, that the poor and meaner sort were forced to feed on dogs' and asses' flesh. Grain for the horses becoming scarce, they were obliged to be feed on the leaves of trees; and it was ascertained from experience, that the leaves of the mulberry and black-wood answered best. Many used the shavings and raspings of wood, which they soaked in water, and gave to their horses. For three or four months Sheibâni Khan did not approach the fortress, but blockaded it at some distance on all sides, changing his ground from time to time.

"The ancients have said, that in order to maintain a fortress, a head, two hands, and two feet are necessary. The head is a captain, the two hands are two friendly forces that must advance from opposite sides; the two feet are water and stores of provision within the fort. I looked for aid and assistance from the princes my neighbours; but each of them had his attention fixed on some other object. For example, Sultan Hûssain Mirza was undoubtedly a brave and experienced monarch, yet neither did he give me assistance, nor even send an ambassador to encourage me."

He is obliged, in consequence, to evacuate the city, and moves off privately in the night. The following account of his flight, we think, is extremely picturesque and interesting.

"Having entangled ourselves among the great branches of the canals of the Soghd, during the darkness of the night, we lost our way, and after encountering many difficulties we passed Khwâjeh Dîdâr about dawn. By the time of early morning prayers, we arrived at the hillock of Karbogh, and passing it on the north below the village of Kherdek, we made for Ilân-ûtî. On the road, I had a race with Kamber Ali and Kâsim Beg. My horse got the lead. As I turned round on my seat to see how far I had left them behind, my saddle-girth being slack, the saddle turned round, and I came to the ground, right on my head. Although I immediately sprang up and mounted, yet I did not recover the full possession of my faculties till the evening, and the world and all that occurred at the time, passed before my eyes and apprehension like a dream, or a phantasy, and disappeared. The time of afternoon prayers was past ere we reached Ilân-ûtî, where we alighted, and having killed a horse, cut him up, and dressed slices of his flesh; we stayed a little time to rest our horses, then mounting again, before day-break we alighted at the village of Khalileh. From Khalileh we proceeded to Dizak. At that time Tâher Dûldai, the son of Hâfez Muhammed Beg Dûldai, was governor of Dizak. Here we found nice fat flesh, bread of fine flour well baked, sweet melons, and excellent grapes in great abundance; thus passing from the extreme of famine to plenty, and from an estate of danger and calamity to peace and ease.

"In my whole life, I never enjoyed myself so much, nor at any period of it felt so sensibly the pleasures of peace and plenty. Enjoyment after suffering, abundance after want, come with increased relish, and afford more exquisite delight. I have four or five times in the course of my life, passed in a similar manner from distress to ease, and from a state of suffering to enjoyment: but this was the first time that I had ever been delivered at once from the injuries of my enemy, and the pressure of hunger, and passed to the ease of security and the pleasures of plenty. Having rested and enjoyed ourselves two or three days in Dizak, we proceeded on to Uratippa.

"Dekhat is one of the hill-districts of Uratippa. It lies on the skirts of a very high mountain, immediately on passing which you come on the country of Masikha. The inhabitants, though Sarts, have large flocks of sheep, and herds of mares, like the Tûrks. The sheep belonging to Dekhat may amount to forty thousand. We took up our lodgings in the peasants' houses. I lived at the house of one of the head men of the place. He was an aged man, seventy or eighty years old. His mother was still alive, and had attained an extreme old age, being at this time a hundred and eleven years old. One of this lady's relations had accompanied the army of Taimur Beg, when it invaded Hindustân. The circumstances remained fresh in her memory, and she often told us stories on that subject. In the district of Dekhat alone, there still were of this lady's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren, to the number of ninety-six persons; and including those deceased, the whole amounted to two hundred. One of her great-grandchildren was at this time a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, with a fine black beard. While I

remained in Dekhat, I was accustomed to walk on foot all about the hills in the neighbourhood. I generally went out barefoot, and, from this habit of walking barefoot, I soon found that our feet became so hardened that we did not mind rock or stone in the least. In one of these walks, between afternoon and evening prayers, we met a man who was going with a cow in a narrow road. I asked him the way. He answered, Keep your eye fixed on the cow; and do not lose sight of her till you come to the issue of the road, when you will know your ground. Khwâjeh Asedûlla, who was with me, enjoyed the joke, observing, What would become of us wise men, were the cow to lose her way?

"It was wonderfully cold, and the wind of Hâderwîsh had here lost none of its violence, and blew keen. So excessive was the cold, that in the course of two or three days we lost two or three persons from its severity. I required to bathe on account of my religious purifications; and went down for that purpose to a rivulet, which was frozen on the banks, but not in the middle, from the rapidity of the current. I plunged myself into the water, and dived sixteen times. The extreme chillness of the water quite penetrated me."

"It was now spring, and intelligence was brought that Sheibâni Khan was advancing against Uratippa. As Dekhat was in the low country, I passed by Abbûrden and Amâni, and came to the hill-country of Masîkha. Abbûrden is a village which lies at the foot of Masîkha. Beneath Abbûrden is a spring, and close by the spring is a tomb. From this spring towards the upland, the country belongs to Masîkha, but downwards from the spring it depends on Yelghar. On a stone which is on the brink of this spring, on one of its sides, I caused the following verses * to be inscribed: —

I have heard that the exalted Jemshid
Inscribed on a stone beside a fountain,
'Many a man like us has rested by this fountain,
And disappeared in the twinkling of an eye!
Should we conquer the whole world by our manhood and strength,
Yet could we not carry it with us to the grave.'

In this hill-country, the practice of cutting verses and other inscriptions on the rocks is extremely common."

After this, he contrives partly to retrieve his affairs, by uniting himself with a warlike Khan of his family, and takes the field with a considerable force against Tambol. The following account of a night skirmish reminds us of the chivalrous doings of the heroes of Froissart: —

"Just before the dawn, while our men were still enjoying themselves in sleep, Kamber Ali Beg galloped up, exclaiming, 'The enemy are upon us — rouse up!' Having spoken these words, without halting a moment, he passed on. I had gone to sleep, as was my custom even in times of security, without taking off my *jâmâ*, or frock, and instantly arose, girt on my sabre and quiver, and mounted my horse. My standard-bearer seized the standard, but without having time to tie on the horse-tail and colours; but, taking the banner staff in his hand just as it was, leaped on horseback, and we proceeded towards the quarter from which the enemy were advancing. When I first mounted, there were ten or fifteen men with me. By the time I had advanced a bow-shot, we fell in with the enemy's skirmishers. At this moment there might be about ten men with me. Riding quick up to them, and giving a discharge of our arrows, we came upon the most advanced of them, attacked and drove them back, and continued to advance, pursuing them for the distance of another bowshot, when we fell in with the main body of the enemy. Sultan Ahmed Tambol was standing, with about a hundred men. Tambol was speaking with another person in front of the line, and in the act of saying, 'Smite them! Smite them!' but his men were sideling in a hesitating way, as if saying, 'Shall we flee? Let us flee!' but yet standing still. At this instant there were left with me only three persons: one of these was Dost Nâsir, another Mirza Kûli Gokultâsh, and Kerîmdad Khodâidâd, the Turkoman, the third. One arrow, which was then on the notch, I discharged on the helmet of Tambol, and again applied my hand to my quiver, and brought out a green-tipped barbed arrow, which my uncle, the Khan, had given me. Unwilling to throw it away, I returned it to the quiver, and thus lost as much time as would have allowed of shooting two arrows. I then placed another arrow on the string, and advanced, while the other three lagged a little behind me. Two persons came on right to meet me; one of them was Tambol, who preceded the other. There was a highway between us. He mounting on one side of it as I mounted on the other, we encountered on it in such a manner that my right hand was towards my enemy, and Tambol's right hand towards me. Except the mail for his horse, Tambol had all his armour and accoutrements complete. I had only my sabre and bow and arrows. I drew up to my ear, and sent right for him the arrow which I had in my hand. At that very moment, an arrow of the kind called Sheibah struck me on the right thigh, and pierced through and through. I had a steel cap on my head. Tambol, rushing on, smote me such a blow on it with his sword as to stun me; though not a thread of the cap was penetrated, yet my head was severely wounded. I had neglected to clean my sword, so that it was rusty, and I lost time in drawing it. I was alone and single in the midst of a multitude of enemies. It was no season for standing still; so I turned my bridle round, receiving another sabre stroke on the arrows in my quiver. I had gone back seven or eight paces, when three foot soldiers came up and

* From the Bostan of Sadi.—*Leyden.*

joined us. Tambol now attacked Dost Nâsir sword in hand. They followed us about a bowshot. Arigh-Jakânshah is a large and deep stream, which is not fordable every where; but God directed us right, so that we came exactly upon one of the fords of the river. Immediately on crossing the river, the horse of Dost Nâsir fell from weakness. We halted to remount him, and, passing among the hillocks that are between Khirabûk and Feraghîneh, and going from one hillock to another, we proceeded by bye-roads towards Ush."

We shall conclude our warlike extracts with the following graphic and lively account of the author's attack on Akhsi, and his subsequent repulse: —

" Sheikh Bayezîd had just been released, and was entering the gate, when I met him. I immediately drew to the head the arrow which was on my notch, and discharged it full at him. It only grazed his neck, but it was a fine shot. The moment he had entered the gate, he turned short to the right, and fled by a narrow street in great perturbation. I pursued him. Mirza Kuli Gokultâsh struck down one foot-soldier with his mace, and had passed another, when the fellow aimed an arrow at Ibrâhim Beg, who startled him by exclaiming, Hai! Hai! and went forward; after which the man, being about as far off as the porch of a house is from the hall, let fly at me an arrow, which struck me under the arm. I had on a Kalmuk mail; two plates of it were pierced and broken from the blow. After shooting the arrow, he fled, and I discharged an arrow after him. At that very moment a foot-soldier happened to be flying along the rampart, and my arrow pinned his cap to the wall, where it remained shot through and through, and dangling from the parapet. He took off his turban, which he twisted round his arm, and ran away. A man on horseback passed close by me, fleeing up the narrow lane by which Sheikh Bayezîd had escaped. I struck him such a blow on the temples with the point of my sword, that he bent over as if ready to fall from his horse: but supporting himself on the wall of the lane, he did not lose his seat, but escaped with the utmost hazard. Having dispersed all the horse and foot that were at the gate, we took possession of it. There was now no reasonable chance of success; for they had two or three thousand well-armed men in the citadel, while I had only a hundred, or two hundred at most, in the outer stone fort; and, besides, Jehangîr Mirza, about as long before as milk takes to boil, had been beaten and driven out, and half of my men were with him."

Soon after this there is an unlucky *hiatus* in all the manuscripts of the Memoirs, so that it is to this day unknown by what means the heroic prince escaped from his treacherous associates, only that we find him, the year after, warring prosperously against a new set of enemies. Of his military exploits and adventures, however, we think we have now given a sufficient specimen.

In these, we have said, he resembles the paladins of Europe, in her days of chivalric enterprise. But we doubt greatly whether any of her knightly adventurers could have given so exact an account of the qualities and productions of the countries they visited as the Asiatic Sovereign has here put on record. Of Kâbul, for example, after describing its boundaries, rivers, and mountains, he says —

"This country lies between Hindustân and Khorasân. It is an excellent and profitable market for commodities. Were the merchants to carry their goods as far as Khitâ or Rûm *, they would scarcely get the same profit on them. Every year, seven, eight, or ten thousand horses arrive in Kâbul. From Hindustân, every year, fifteen or twenty thousand pieces of cloth are brought by caravans. The commodities of Hindustân are slaves, white cloths, sugar candy, refined and common sugar, drugs, and spices. There are many merchants that are not satisfied with getting thirty or forty for ten.† The productions of Khorasân, Rûm, Irâk, and Chîn ‡, may all be found in Kâbul, which is the very emporium of Hindustân. Its warm and cold districts are close by each other. From Kâbul you may in a single day go to a place where snow never falls, and in the space of two astronomical hours, you may reach a spot where snow lies always, except now and then when the summer happens to be peculiarly hot. In the districts dependent on Kâbul, there is great abundance of the fruits both of hot and cold climates, and they are found in its immediate vicinity. The fruits of the cold districts in Kâbul are grapes, pomegranates, apricots, peaches, pears, apples, quinces, jujubes, damsons, almonds, and walnuts; all of which are found in great abundance. I caused the sour cherry-tree § to be brought here and planted; it produced excellent fruit and continues thriving. The fruits it possesses peculiar to a warm climate, are the orange, citron ||, the amlûk, and sugar-cane, which are brought from the Lamghanât. I caused the sugar-cane to be brought and planted it here. They bring the Jelghûzek ¶ from Nijrow. They have numbers of bee-hives; but honey is brought only from the hill-country on the west. The rawâsh ** of Kâbul is of

* Khitâ is Northern China, and its dependent provinces. Rûm is Turkey, particularly the provinces about Trebizond.

† Three or four hundred per cent.

‡ Chîn is all China.

§ Alubâla.

|| A berry like the karinda.

¶ The jelghûzek is the seed of a kind of pine, the cones of which are as big as a man's two fists.

** The rawâsh is described as a root something like

excellent quality; its quinces and damask plums are excellent, as well as its bâdrengs.* There is a species of grape which they call the water-grape that is very delicious; its wines are strong and intoxicating. That produced on the skirt of the mountain of Khwâjeh Khan-Saaîd is celebrated for its potency, though I describe it only from what I have heard:

'The drinker knows the flavour of the wine! how should the sober know it?'

"Kâbul is not fertile in grain; a return of four or five to one is reckoned favourable. The melons too are not good, but those raised from seed brought from Khorasân are tolerable. The climate is extremely delightful, and in this respect there is no such place in the known world. In the nights of summer you cannot sleep without a postîn (or lamb-skin cloak). Though the snow falls very deep in the winter, yet the cold is never excessively intense. Samarkand and Tabrîz are celebrated for their fine climate, but the winter cold there is extreme beyond measure."

"Opposite to the fort of Adînaphûr †, to the south, on a rising ground, I formed a charbagh (or great garden), in the year nine hundred and fourteen (1508). It is called Baghe Vafá (the Garden of Fidelity). It overlooks the river, which flows between the fort and the palace. In the year in which I defeated Behâr Khan and conquered Lahore and Dibâlpûr, I brought plantains and planted them here. They grew and thrived. The year before I had also planted the sugar-cane in it, which throve remarkably well. I sent some of them to Badakshân and Bokhâra. It is on an elevated site, enjoys running water, and the climate in the winter season is temperate. In the garden there is a small hillock, from which a stream of water, sufficient to drive a mill, incessantly flows into the garden below. The four-fold field-plot of this garden is situated on this eminence. On the south-west part of this garden is a reservoir of water ten gez square, which is wholly planted round with orange trees; there are likewise pomegranates. All around the piece of water the ground is quite covered with clover. This spot is the very eye of the beauty of the garden. At the time when the orange becomes yellow, the prospect is delightful. Indeed the garden is charmingly laid out. To the south of this garden lies the Koh-e-Sefîd (the White Mountain) of Nangenhâr, which separates Bengash from Nangenhâr. There is no road by which one can pass it on horseback. Nine streams descend from this mountain. The snow on its summit never diminishes, whence probably comes the name of Koh-e-Sefîd* (the White Mountain). No snow ever falls in the dales at its foot."

"The wine of Dereh-Nûr is famous all over Lamghanât. It is of two kinds, which they term *areh-tâshi* (the stone-saw), and *suhân-tâshi* (the stone-file). The stone-saw is of a yellowish colour; the stone-file, of a fine red. The stone-saw, however, is the better wine of the two, though neither of them equals their reputation. Higher up, at the head of the glens, in this mountain, there are some apes to be met with. Apes are found lower down towards Hindustân, but none higher up than this hill. The inhabitants used formerly to keep hogs†, but in my time they have renounced the practice."

His account of the productions of his paternal kingdom of Ferghana is still more minute — telling us even the number of apple-trees in a particular district, and making mention of an excellent way of drying apricots, with almonds put in instead of the stones; and of a wood with a fine red bark, of admirable use for making whip handles and birds' cages! The most remarkable piece of statistics, however, with which he has furnished us, is in his account of Hindustân, which he first entered as a conqueror in 1525. It here occupies twenty-five closely printed quarto pages; and contains, not only an exact account of its boundaries, population, resources, revenues, and divisions, but a full enumeration of all its useful fruits, trees, birds, beasts, and fishes; with such a minute description of their several habitudes and peculiarities, as would make no contemptible figure in a modern work of natural history — carefully distinguishing the facts which rest on his own observation from those which he gives only on the testimony of others, and making many suggestions as to the means of improving, or transferring them from one region to another. From the detailed botanical and zoological descriptions, we can afford of course to make no extracts. What follows is more general: —

"Hindustân is situated in the first, second, and third climates. No part of it is in the fourth. It is a remarkably fine country. It is quite a different world, compared with our countries. Its hills and rivers, its forests and plains, its animals and plants, its inhabitants and their languages, its winds and rains, are all

beet-root, but much larger—white and red in colour, with large leaves, that rise little from the ground. It has a pleasant mixture of sweet and acid. It may be the rhubarb, râweid.

* The bâdreng is a large green fruit, in shape somewhat like a citron. The name is also applied to a large sort of cucumber.

† The fort of Adînahpûr is to the south of the Kâbul river.

* The Koh-e-Sefîd is a remarkable position in the geography of Afghanistân. It is seen from Peshâwer.

† This practice Baber viewed with disgust, the hog being an impure animal in the Muhammedan law.

of a different nature. Although the Germsils (or hot districts) in the territory of Kâbul, bear, in many respects, some resemblance to Hindustân, while in other particulars they differ, yet you have no sooner passed the river Sind than the country, the trees, the stones, the wandering tribes*, the manners and customs of the people, are all entirely those of Hindustân. The northern range of hills has been mentioned. Immediately on crossing the river Sind, we come upon several countries in this range of mountains, connected with Kashmîr, such as Pekheli and Shemeng. Most of them, though now independent of Kashmîr, were formerly included in its territories. After leaving Kashmîr, these hills contain innumerable tribes and states, Pergannahs and countries, and extend all the way to Bengal and the shores of the Great Ocean. About these hills are other tribes of men."

"The country and towns of Hindustân are extremely ugly. All its towns and lands have an uniform look; its gardens have no walls; the greater part of it is a level plain. The banks of its rivers and streams, in consequence of the rushing of the torrents that descend during the rainy season, are worn deep into the channel, which makes it generally difficult and troublesome to cross them. In many places, the plain is covered by a thorny brush-wood, to such a degree that the people of the Pergannahs, relying on these forests, take shelter in them, and, trusting to their inaccessible situation, often continue in a state of revolt, refusing to pay their taxes. In Hindustân, if you except the rivers, there is little running water.† Now and then some standing water is to be met with. All these cities and countries derive their water from wells or tanks, in which it is collected during the rainy season. In Hindustân, the populousness and decay, or total destruction of villages, nay of cities, is almost instantaneous. Large cities that have been inhabited for a series of years, (if, on an alarm, the inhabitants take to flight,) in a single day, or a day and a half, are so completely abandoned, that you can scarcely discover a trace or mark of population."‡

The prejudices of the more active and energetic inhabitant of the hill country are still more visible in the following passage: —

"Hindustân is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it.* The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society, of frankly mixing together, or of familiar intercourse. They have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicraft works, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture; they have no good horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons†, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food or bread in their bazars, no baths or colleges, no candles, no torches, not a candlestick."

"The chief excellency of Hindustân is, that it is a large country, and has abundance of gold and silver. The climate during the rains is very pleasant. On some days it rains ten, fifteen, and even twenty times. During the rainy season, inundations come pouring down all at once, and form rivers, even in places where, at other times, there is no water. While the rains continue on the ground, the air is singularly delightful — insomuch that nothing can surpass its soft and agreeable temperature. Its defect is, that the air is rather moist and damp. During the rainy season, you cannot shoot, even with the bow of our country, and it becomes quite useless. Nor is it the bow alone that becomes useless; the coats of mail, books, clothes, and furniture, all feel the bad effects of the moisture. Their houses, too, suffer from not being substantially built. There is pleasant enough weather in the winter and summer, as well as in the rainy season; but then the north wind always blows, and there is an excessive quantity of earth and dust flying about. When the rains are at hand, this wind blows five or six times with excessive violence, and such a quantity of dust flies about that you cannot see one another. They call this an Andhi.‡ It gets warm during Taurus and Gemini, but not so warm as to become intolerable. The heat cannot be compared to the heats of Balkh and Kandahâr. It is not

* "The Ils and Ulûses."

† In Persia there are few rivers, but numbers of artificial canals or water-runs for irrigation, and for the supply of water to towns and villages. The same is the case in the valley of Soghd, and the richer parts of Mâweralnaher.

‡ "This is the *wulsa* or *walsa*, so well described by Colonel Wilks in his Historical Sketches, vol. i. p. 309. note: 'On the approach of an hostile army, the unfortunate inhabitants of India bury under ground their most cumbrous effects, and each individual, man, woman, and child above six years of age, (the infant children being carried by their mothers,) with a load of grain proportioned to their strength, issue from their beloved homes, and take the direction of a country (if such can be found) exempt from the miseries of war; sometimes of a strong fortress, but more generally of the most unfrequented hills and woods, where they prolong a miserable existence until the departure of the enemy; and if this should be protracted beyond the time for which they have provided food, a large portion necessarily dies of hunger.' See the note itself. The Historical Sketches should be read by every one who desires to have an accurate idea of the South of India. It is to be regretted that we do not possess the history of any other part of India, written with the same knowledge or research

* Baber's opinions regarding India are nearly the same with those of most Europeans of the upper class, even at the present day.

† Grapes and musk-melons, particularly the latter, are now common all over India.

‡ This is still the Hindustâni term for a storm, or tempest.

above half so warm as in these places. Another convenience of Hindustân is, that the workmen of every profession and trade are innumerable and without end. For any work, or any employment, there is always a set ready, to whom the same employment and trade have descended from father to son for ages. In the Zefer-Nâmeh of Mûlla Sherîf-ed-din Ali Yezdi, it is mentioned as a surprising fact, that when Taimur Beg was building the Sangîn (or stone) mosque, there were stone-cutters of Azerbaejan, Fârs, Hindustân, and other countries, to the number of two hundred, working every day on the mosque. In Agra alone, and of stone-cutters belonging to that place only, I every day employed on my palaces six hundred and eighty persons; and in Agra, Sîkri, Biâna, Dhulpûr, Guâliâr, and Koel, there were every day employed on my works one thousand four hundred and ninety-one stone-cutters. In the same way, men of every trade and occupation are numberless and without stint in Hindustân.

"The countries from Behreh to Behâr, which are now under my dominion, yield a revenue of fifty-two krors*, as will appear from the particular and detailed statement.† Of this amount, Pergannahs to the value of eight or nine krors‡ are in the possession of some Rais and Rajas, who from old times have been submissive, and have received these Pergannahs for the purpose of confirming them in their obedience."

These Memoirs contain many hundred characters and portraits of individuals; and it would not be fair not to give our readers one or two specimens of the royal author's minute style of execution on such subjects. We may begin with that of Omer-Sheikh Mirza, his grandfather, and immediate predecessor in the throne of Ferghâna: —

"Omer-Sheikh Mirza was of low stature, had a short bushy beard, brownish hair, and was very corpulent. He used to wear his tunic extremely tight; insomuch, that he was wont to contract his belly while he tied the strings, when he let himself out again the strings often burst. He was not curious in either his food or dress. He tied his turban in the fashion called *Destâr-pêch* (or plaited turban). At that time, all turbans were worn in the *char-pêch* (or four-plait) style. He wore his without folds, and allowed the end to hang down. During the heats, when out of the Divân, he generally wore the Moghul cap.

"He read elegantly: his general reading was the Khamsahs*, the Mesnevis†, and books of history; and he was in particular fond of reading the Shahnâmeh.‡ Though he had a turn for poetry, he did not cultivate it. He was so strictly just, that when the caravan from Khita§ had once reached the hill country to the east of Andejân, and the snow fell so deep as to bury it, so that of the whole only two persons escaped, he no sooner received information of the occurrence, than he despatched overseers to collect and take charge of all the property and effects of the people of the caravan; and, wherever the heirs were not at hand, though himself in great want, his resources being exhausted, he placed the property under sequestration, and preserved it untouched; till, in the course of one or two years, the heirs, coming from Khorasân and Samarkand, in consequence of the intimation which they received, he delivered back the goods safe and uninjured into their hands.‖ His generosity was large, and so was his whole soul; he was of an excellent temper, affable, eloquent, and sweet in his conversation; yet brave withal, and manly. On two occasions he advanced in front of the troops, and exhibited distinguished prowess; once, at the gates of Akhsi, and once at the gates of Shahrokhîa. He was a middling shot with the bow; he had uncommon force in his fists, and never hit a man whom he did not knock down. From his excessive ambition for conquest, he often exchanged peace for war, and friendship for hostility. In the earlier part of his life he was greatly addicted to drinking bûzeh and talar.¶ Latterly, once or twice in the week, he indulged in a drinking party. He was a pleasant companion, and in the course of conversation used often to cite, with great felicity, appropriate verses from the poets. In his latter days he was much addicted to the use of Maajûn**, while under the influ-

* About a million and a half sterling, or rather 1,300,000*l.*

† This statement unfortunately has not been preserved.

‡ About 225,000*l.* sterling.

* Several Persian poets wrote *Khamsahs*, or poems on five different given subjects. The most celebrated is Nezâmi.

† The most celebrated of these Mesnevis is the mystical poem of Moulavi Jilûleddin Muhammed. The Sufis consider it as equal to the Koran.

‡ The *Shahnâmeh*, or Book of Kings, is the famous poem of the great Persian poet Ferdausi, and contains the romantic history of ancient Persia.

§ North China; but often applied to the whole country from China to Terfân, and now even west to the Ala-tagh Mountains.

‖ This anecdote is erroneously related of Baber himself by Ferishta and others. — See *Dow's Hist. of Hindostan*, vol. ii. p. 218.

¶ Bûzeh is a sort of intoxicating liquor somewhat resembling beer, made from millet. *Talar* I do not know, but understand it to be a preparation from the poppy. There is, however, nothing about bûzeh or talar in the Persian, which only specifies *sherâb*, wine or strong drink.

** Any medical mixture is called a maajûn; but in common speech, the term is chiefly applied to in-

ence of which he was subject to a feverish irritability. He was a humane man. He played a great deal at backgammon, and sometimes at games of chance with the dice."

The following is the memorial of Hussain Mirza, king of Khorasân, who died in 1506:

"He had straight narrow eyes, his body was robust and firm; from the waist downwards he was of a slenderer make. Although he was advanced in years, and had a white beard, he dressed in gay-coloured red and green woollen clothes. He usually wore a cap of black lamb's skin, or a kilpak. Now and then, on festival days, he put on a small turban tied in three folds, broad and showy, and having placed a plume nodding over it, went in this style to prayers.

"On first mounting the throne, he took it into his head that he would cause the names of the twelve Imams to be recited in the Khûtbeh. Many used their endeavours to prevent him. Finally, however, he directed and arranged every thing according to the orthodox Sunni faith. From a disorder in his joints, he was unable to perform his prayers, nor could he observe the stated fasts. He was a lively, pleasant man. His temper was rather hasty, and his language took after his temper. In many instances he displayed a profound reverence for the faith; on one occasion, one of his sons having slain a man, he delivered him up to the avengers of blood to be carried before the judgment-seat of the Kasi. For about six or seven years after he first ascended the throne, he was very guarded in abstaining from such things as were forbidden by the law; afterwards he became addicted to drinking wine. During nearly forty years that he was King of Khorasân, not a day passed in which he did not drink after mid-day prayers; but he never drank wine in the morning. His sons, the whole of the soldiery, and the town's-people, followed his example in this respect, and seemed to vie with each other in debauchery and lasciviousness. He was a brave and valiant man. He often engaged sword in hand in fight, nay, frequently distinguished his prowess hand to hand several times in the course of the same fight. No person of the race of Taimur Beg ever equalled Sultan Hussain Mirza in the use of the scymitar. He had a turn for poetry, and composed a Diwân. He wrote in the Tûrki. His poetical name was Hussaini. Many of his verses are far from being bad, but the whole of the Mirza's Diwân is in the same measure. Although a prince of dignity, both as to years and extent of territory, he was as fond as a child of keeping butting rams, and of amusing himself with flying pigeons and cock-fighting."

One of the most striking passages in the work is the royal author's account of the magnificence of the court and city of Herat, when he visited it in 1506; and especially his imposing catalogue of the illustrious authors, artists, and men of genius, by whom it was then adorned.

"The age of Sultan Hussain Mirza was certainly a wonderful age; and Khorasân, particularly the city of Heri, abounded with eminent men of unrivalled acquirements, each of whom made it his aim and ambition to carry to the highest perfection the art to which he devoted himself. Among these was the Moulâna Abdal Rahman Jâmi*, to whom there was no person of that period who could be compared, whether in respect to profane or sacred science. His poems are well known. The merits of the Mûlla are of too exalted a nature to admit of being described by me; but I have been anxious to bring the mention of his name, and an allusion to his excellences, into these humble pages, for a good omen and a blessing!"

He then proceeds to enumerate the names of between thirty and forty distinguished persons; ranking first the sages and theologians, to the number of eight or nine; next the poets, about fifteen; then two or three painters; and five or six performers and composers of music; — of one of these he gives the following instructive anecdote:

"Another was Hussain Udi (the lutanist), who played with great taste on the lute, and composed elegantly. He could play, *using only one string* of his lute at a time. He *had the fault* of giving himself many airs when desired to play. On one occasion Sheibâni Khan desired him to play. After giving much trouble he played very ill, and besides, did not bring his own instrument, but one that was good for nothing. Sheibâni Khan, on learning how matters stood, directed that, at that very party, he should receive a *certain number of blows on the neck.* This was one good deed that Sheibâni Khan did in his day; and indeed the affectation of such people deserves even more severe animadversion."

In the seductions of this luxurious court, Baber's orthodox abhorrence to wine was first assailed with temptation: — and there is something very *naive*, we think, in his account of his reasonings and feelings on the occasion.

"As we were guests at Mozeffer Mirza's house, Mozeffer Mirza placed me above himself, and having

toxicating comfits, and especially those prepared with *bang.*

* "No moral poet ever had a higher reputation than Jâmi. His poems are written with great beauty of language and versification, in a captivating strain of religious and philosophic mysticism. He is not merely admired for his sublimity as a poet, but venerated as a saint."

filled up a glass of welcome, the cupbearers in waiting began to supply all who were of the party with pure wine, which they quaffed as if it had been the water of life. The party waxed warm, and the spirit mounted up to their heads. They took a fancy to make me drink too, and bring me into the same circle with themselves. Although, all that time, I had never been guilty of drinking wine, and from never having fallen into the practice was ignorant of the sensations it produced, yet I had a strong lurking inclination to wander in this desert, and my heart was much disposed to pass the stream. In my boyhood I had no wish for it, and did not know its pleasures or pains. When my father at any time asked me to drink wine, I excused myself, and abstained. After my father's death, by the guardian care of Khwâjeh Kazi, I remained pure and undefiled. I abstained even from forbidden foods; how then was I likely to indulge in wine? Afterwards, when, from the force of youthful imagination and constitutional impulse, I got a desire for wine, I had nobody about my person to invite me to gratify my wishes; nay, there was not one who even suspected my secret longing for it. Though I had the appetite, therefore, it was difficult for me, unsolicited as I was, to indulge such unlawful desires. It now came into into my head, that as they urged me so much, and as, besides, I had come into a refined city like Heri, in which every means of heightening pleasure and gaiety was possessed in perfection; in which all the incentives and apparatus of enjoyment were combined with an invitation to indulgence, if I did not seize the present moment, I never could expect such another. I therefore resolved to drink wine! But it struck me, that as Badîa-ez-zemân Mirza was the eldest brother, and as I had declined receiving it from his hand, and in his house, he might now take offence. I therefore mentioned this difficulty which had occurred to me. My excuse was approved of, and I was not pressed any more, at this party, to drink. It was settled, however, that the next time we met at Badîa-ez-zemân Mirza's, I should drink when pressed by the two Mirzas."

By some providential accident, however, the conscientious prince escaped from this meditated lapse; and it was not till some years after, that he gave way to the long-cherished and resisted propensity. At what particular occasion he first fell into the snare, unfortunately is not recorded — as there is a blank of several years in the Memoirs previous to 1519. In that year, however, we find him a confirmed toper; and nothing, indeed, can be more ludicrous than the accuracy and apparent truth with which he continues to chronicle all his subsequent and very frequent excesses. The Eastern votary of intoxication has a pleasant way of varying his enjoyments, which was never taken in the West. When the fluid elements of drunkenness begin to pall on him, he betakes him to what is learnedly called a *maajûn*, being a sort of electuary or confection, made up with pleasant spices, and rendered potent by a large admixture of opium, bang, and other narcotic ingredients; producing a solid intoxication of a very delightful and desirable description. One of the first drinking matches that is described makes honourable mention of this variety: —

"The maajûn-takers and spirit-drinkers, as they have different tastes, are very apt to take offence with each other. I said, 'Don't spoil the cordiality of the party; whoever wishes to drink spirits, let him drink spirits; and let him that prefers maajûn, take maajûn; and let not the one party give any idle or provoking language to the other. Some sat down to spirits, some to maajûn. The party went on for some time tolerably well. Bâba Jân Kabûzi had not been in the boat; we had sent for him when we reached the royal tents. He chose to drink spirits. Terdi Muhammed Kipchâk, too, was sent for, and joined the spirit-drinkers. As the spirit-drinkers and maajûn-takers never can agree in one party, the spirit-bibbing party began to indulge in foolish and idle conversation, and to make provoking remarks on maajûn and maajûn takers. Bâba Jân, too, getting drunk, talked very absurdly. The tipplers, filling up glass after glass for Terdi Muhammed, made him drink them off, so that in a very short time he was mad drunk. Whatever exertions I could make to preserve peace, were all unavailing; there was much uproar and wrangling. The party became quite burdensome and unpleasant, and soon broke up."

The second day after, we find the royal bacchanal still more grievously overtaken:

"We continued drinking spirits in the boat till bed-time prayers, when, being completely drunk, we mounted, and taking torches in our hands, came at full gallop back to the camp from the river-side, falling sometimes on one side of the horse, and sometimes on the other. I was miserably drunk, and next morning, when they told me of our having galloped into the camp with lighted torches in our hands, I had not the slightest recollection of the circumstance. After coming home, I vomited plentifully."

Even in the middle of a harassing and desultory campaign, there is no intermission of this excessive jollity, though it sometimes puts the parties into jeopardy, — for example: —

"We continued at this place drinking till the sun was on the decline, when we set out. Those who had been of the party were completely drunk. Syed Kâsim was so drunk, that two of his servants were

obliged to put him on horseback, and brought him to the camp with great difficulty. Dost Muhammed Bâkir was so far gone, that Amîn Muhammed Terkhân, Masti Chehreh, and those who were along with him, were unable, with all their exertions, to get him on horseback. They poured a great quantity of water over him, but all to no purpose. At this moment a body of Afghâns appeared in sight. Amîn Muhammed Terkhân, being very drunk, gravely gave it as his opinion, that rather than leave him, in the condition in which he was, to fall into the hands of the enemy, it was better at once to cut off his head, and carry it away. Making another exertion, however, with much difficulty, they contrived to throw him upon a horse, which they led along, and so brought him off."

On some occasions they contrive to be drunk four times in twenty-four hours. The gallant prince contents himself with a strong *maajûn* one day; but

"Next morning we had a drinking party in the same tent. We continued drinking till night. On the following morning we again had an early cup, and, getting intoxicated, went to sleep. About noonday prayers, we left Istâlif, and I took a maajûn on the road. It was about afternoon prayers before I reached Behzâdi. The crops were extremely good. While I was riding round the harvest-fields, such of my companions as were fond of wine began to contrive another drinking-bout. Although I had taken a maajûn, yet, *as the crops were uncommonly fine!* we sat down under some trees that had yielded a plentiful load of fruit, and began to drink. We kept up the party in the same place till bed-time prayers. Mûlla Mahmud Khalîfeh having arrived, we invited him to join us. Abdalla, who had got very drunk, made an observation which affected Khalîfeh. Without recollecting that Mûlla Mahmud was present, he repeated the verse,

(*Persian.*) Examine whom you will, you will find him suffering from the same wound.

Mûlla Mahmud, who did not drink, reproved Abdalla for repeating this verse with levity.* Abdalla, recovering his judgment, was in terrible perturbation, and conversed in a wonderfully smooth and sweet strain all the rest of the evening."

In a year or two after this, when he seems to be in a course of unusual indulgence, we meet with the following edifying remark: "As I intend, when forty years old, to abstain from wine; and as I now want somewhat less than one year of being forty, *I drink wine most copiously!*" When forty comes, however, we hear nothing of this sage resolution — but have a regular record of the wine and maajûn parties as before, up to the year 1527. In that year, however, he is seized with rather a sudden fit of penitence, and has the resolution to begin a course of rigorous reform. There is something rather picturesque in his very solemn and remarkable account of this great revolution in his habits:

"On Monday the 23d of the first Jemâdi, I had mounted to survey my posts, and in the course of my ride, was seriously struck with the reflection that I had always resolved, one time or another, to make an effectual repentance, and that some traces of a hankering after the renunciation of forbidden works had ever remained in my heart. Having sent for the gold and silver goblets and cups, with all the other utensils used for drinking parties, I directed them to be broken, and renounced the use of wine — purifying my mind! The fragments of the goblets, and other utensils of gold and silver, I directed to be divided among Derwishes and the poor. The first person who followed me in my repentance was Asas, who also accompanied me in my resolution of ceasing to cut the beard, and of allowing it to grow.* That night and the following, numbers of Amîrs and courtiers, soldiers and persons not in the service, to the number of nearly three hundred men, made vows of reformation. The wine which we had with us we poured on the ground! I ordered that the wine brought by Bâba Dost should have salt thrown into it, that it might be made into vinegar. On the spot where the wine had been poured out, I directed a wâin to be sunk and built of stone, and close by the wâin an alms-house to be erected."

He then issued a magnificent Firman, announcing his reformation, and recommending its example to all his subjects. But he still persists, we find, in the use of a mild maajûn. We are sorry to be obliged to add, that though he had the firmness to persevere to the last in his abstinence from wine, the sacrifice seems to have cost him very dear; and he continued to the very end of his life to hanker after his broken wine-cups, and to look back with fond regret to the delights he had abjured for ever. There is something absolutely pathetic, as well as amiable, in the following candid avowal in a letter written the very year before his death to one of his old drinking companions: —

* "This verse, I presume, is from a religious poem, and has a mystical meaning. The profane application of it is the ground of offence."

* "This vow was sometimes made by persons who set out on a war against the Infidels. They did not trim the beard till they returned victorious. Some vows of a similar nature may be found in Scripture."

"In a letter which I wrote to Abdalla, I mentioned that I had much difficulty in reconciling myself to the desert of penitence; but that I had resolution enough to persevere, —

(*Turkiverse.*) I am distressed since I renounced wine!
I am confounded and unfit for business,—
Regret leads me to penitence,
Penitence leads me to regret.

Indeed, last year, my desire and longing for wine and social parties were beyond measure excessive. It even came to such a length that I have found myself shedding tears from vexation and disappointment. In the present year, praise be to God, these troubles are over, and I ascribe them chiefly to the occupation afforded to my mind by a poetical translation, on which I have employed myself. Let me advise you, too, to adopt a life of abstinence. Social parties and wine are pleasant, in company with our jolly friends and old boon companions. But with whom can you enjoy the social cup? With whom can you indulge in the pleasures of wine? If you have only Shîr Ahmed and Haîder Kûlli, for the companions of your gay hours and jovial goblets, you can surely find no great difficulty in consenting to the sacrifice. I conclude with every good wish."

We have mentioned already that Baber appears to have been of a frank and generous character — and there are, throughout the Memoirs, various traits of clemency and tenderness of heart, scarcely to have been expected in an Eastern monarch and professional warrior. He weeps ten whole days for the loss of a friend who fell over a precipice after one of their drinking parties; and spares the lives, and even restores the domains of various chieftains, who had betrayed his confidence, and afterwards fallen into his power. Yet there are traces of Asiatic ferocity, and of a hard-hearted wastefulness of life, which remind us that we are beyond the pale of European gallantry and Christian compassion. In his wars in Afghân and India, the prisoners are commonly butchered in cold blood after the action — and pretty uniformly a triumphal pyramid is erected of their skulls. These horrible executions, too, are performed with much solemnity before the royal pavilion; and on one occasion, it is incidentally recorded, that such was the number of prisoners brought forward for this infamous butchery, that the sovereign's tent had three times to be removed to a different station — the ground before it being so drenched with blood and encumbered with quivering carcasses! On one occasion, and on one only, an attempt was made to poison him — the mother of one of the sovereigns whom he had dethroned having bribed his cooks and tasters to mix death in his repast. Upon the detection of the plot, the taster was cut to pieces, the cook flayed alive, and the scullions trampled to death by elephants. Such, however, was the respect paid to rank, or the indulgence to maternal resentment, that the prime mover of the whole conspiracy, the queen dowager, is merely put under restraint, and has a contribution levied on her private fortune. The following brief anecdote speaks volumes as to the difference of European and Asiatic manners and tempers: —

"Another of his wives was Katak Begum, who was the foster-sister of this same Terkhân Begum. Sultan Ahmed Mirza married her for love. He was prodigiously attached to her, and she governed him with absolute sway. She drank wine. During her life, the Sultan durst not venture to frequent any other of his ladies. At last, however, *he put her to death*, and delivered himself from this reproach."

In several of the passages we have cited, there are indications of this ambitious warrior's ardent love for fine flowers, beautiful gardens, and bright waters. But the work abounds with traits of this amiable, and, with reference to some of these anecdotes, apparently ill-sorted propensity. In one place he says —

"In the warm season they are covered with the *chekîn-taleh* grass in a very beautiful manner, and the Aimâks and Tûrks resort to them. In the skirts of these mountains the ground is richly diversified by various kinds of tulips. I once directed them to be counted, and they brought in thirty-two or thirty-three different sorts of tulips. There is one species which has a scent in some degree like the rose, and which I termed *laleh-gul-bûi* (the rose-scented tulip.) This species is found only in the Desht-e-Sheikh (the Sheikh's plain) in a small spot of ground, and nowhere else. In the skirts of the same hills below Perwân, is produced the *laleh-sed-berg* (or hundred leaved tulip), which is likewise found only in one narrow spot of ground, as we emerge from the straits of Ghûrbend."

And a little after —

"Few quarters possess a district that can rival Istâlif. A large river runs through it, and on either side of it are gardens, green, gay, and beautiful. Its water is so cold, that there is no need of icing it; and it is particularly pure. In this district is a garden, called Bagh-e-Kilân (or the Great Garden), which

Ulugh Beg Mirza seized upon. I paid the price of the garden to the proprietors, and received from them a grant of it. On the outside of the garden are large and beautiful spreading plane-trees, under the shade of which there are agreeable spots finely sheltered. A perennial stream, large enough to turn a mill, runs through the garden; and on its banks are planted planes and other trees. Formerly this stream flowed in a winding and crooked course, but I ordered its course to be altered according to a regular plan, which added greatly to the beauty of the place. Lower down than these villages, and about a koss or a koss and a half above the level plain, on the lower skirts of the hills, is a fountain, named *Khwâjeh-seh-yârân* (Kwâjeh three friends), around which there are three species of trees; above the fountain are many beautiful plane-trees, which yield a pleasant shade. On the two sides of the fountain, on small eminences at the bottom of the hills, there are a number of oak trees; except on these two spots, where there are groves of oak, there is not an oak to be met with on the hills to the west of Kâbul. In front of this fountain, towards the plain, there are many spots covered with the flowery Arghwân * tree, and besides these Arghwân plots, there are none else in the whole country."

We shall add but one other notice of this elegant taste — though on the occasion there mentioned, the flowers were aided by a less delicate sort of excitement.

"This day I ate a maajûn. While under its influence, I visited some beautiful gardens. In different beds, the ground was covered with purple and yellow Arghwân flowers. On one hand were beds of yellow flowers, in bloom; on the other hand, red flowers were in blossom. In many places they sprung up in the same bed, mingled together as if they had been flung and scattered abroad. I took my seat on a rising ground near the camp, to enjoy the view of all the flower-pots. On the six sides of this eminence they were formed as into regular beds. On one side were yellow flowers; on another the purple, laid out in triangular beds. On two other sides, there were fewer flowers; but, as far as the eye could reach, there were flower-gardens of a similar kind. In the neighbourhood of Pershâwer, during the spring, the flower-pots are exquisitely beautiful."

We have now enabled our readers, we think, to judge pretty fairly of the nature of this very curious volume; and shall only present them with a few passages from two letters written by the valiant author in the last year of his life. The first is addressed to his favourite son and successor Hûmâiûn, whom he had settled in the government of Samarcand, and who was at this time a sovereign of approved valour and prudence. There is a very diverting mixture of sound political counsel and minute criticism on writing and composition, in this paternal effusion. We can give but a small part of it.

"In many of your letters you complain of separation from your friends. It is wrong for a prince to indulge in such a complaint.

"There is certainly no greater bondage than that in which a king is placed; but it ill becomes him to complain of inevitable separation.

"In compliance with my wishes, you have indeed written me letters, but you certainly never read them over; for had you attempted to read them, you must have found it absolutely impossible, and would then undoubtedly have put them by. I contrived indeed to decipher and comprehend the meaning of your last letter, but with much difficulty. It is excessively confused and crabbed. Who ever saw a Moâmma (a riddle or a charade) in prose? Your spelling is not bad, yet not quite correct. You have written *iltafat* with a *toe* (instead of a *te*), and *kuling* with a *be* (instead of a *kaf*). Your letter may indeed be read; but in consequence of the far-fetched words you have employed, the meaning is by no means very intelligible. You certainly do not excel in letter-writing, and fail chiefly because you have too great a desire to show your acquirements. For the future, you should write unaffectedly, with clearness, using plain words, which would cost less trouble both to the writer and reader."

The other letter is to one of his old companions in arms; — and considering that it is written by an ardent and ambitious conqueror, from the capital of his new empire of Hindustan, it seems to us a very striking proof, not only of the nothingness of high fortune, but of the native simplicity and amiableness of this Eastern highlander.

"My solicitude to visit my western dominions is boundless, and great beyond expression. The affairs of Hindustan have at length, however, been reduced into a certain degree of order; and I trust in Almighty God that the time is near at hand, when, through the grace of the Most High, every thing will be completely settled in this country. As soon as matters are brought into that state, I shall, God willing, set out for your quarter, without losing a moment's time How is it possible that the delights of those lands should ever be erased from the heart? Above all, how is it possible for one like me, who have made a vow of abstinence from wine, and of purity of life, to forget the delicious melons and grapes of that pleasant

* "The name Arghwân is generally applied to the anemone; but in Afghanistân it is given to a beautiful flowering shrub, which grows nearly to the size of a tree."

region? They very recently brought me a single musk-melon. While cutting it up, I felt myself affected with *a strong feeling of loneliness, and a sense of my exile from my native country*; and I could not help shedding tears while I was eating it!"

On the whole, we cannot help having a liking for "the Tiger"—and the romantic, though somewhat apocryphal account that is given of his death, has no tendency to diminish our partiality. It is recorded by Abulfazi, and other native historians, that in the year after these Memoirs cease, Hûmâiûn, the beloved son of Baber, was brought to Agra in a state of the most miserable health:

"When all hopes from medicine were over, and while several men of skill were talking to the emperor of the melancholy situation of his son, Abul Baka, a personage highly venerated for his knowledge and piety, remarked to Baber, that in such a case the Almighty had sometimes vouchsafed to receive the most valuable thing possessed by one friend, as an offering in exchange for the life of another. Baber, exclaiming that, of all things, his life was dearest to Hûmâiûn, as Hûmâiûn's was to him, and that, next to the life of Hûmâiûn, his own was what he most valued, devoted his life to Heaven as a sacrifice for his son's! The noblemen around him entreated him to retract the rash vow, and, in place of his first offering, to give the diamond taken at Agra, and reckoned the most valuable on earth: that the ancient sages had said, that it was the dearest of our worldly possessions alone that was to be offered to Heaven. But he persisted in his resolution, declared that no stone, of whatever value, could be put in competition with his life. He three times walked round the dying prince, a solemnity similar to that used in sacrifices and heave-offerings, and, retiring, prayed earnestly to God. After some time he was heard to exclaim, 'I have borne it away! I have borne it away!' The Musulman historians assure us, that Hûmâiûn almost immediately began to recover, and that, in proportion as he recovered, the health and strength of Baber visibly decayed. Baber communicated his dying instructions to Khwâjeh Khalîfeh, Kamber Ali Beg, Terdi Beg, and Hindu Beg, who were then at court, commending Hûmâiûn to their protection. With that unvarying affection for his family which he showed in all the circumstances of his life, he strongly besought Hûmâiûn to be kind and forgiving to his brothers. Hûmâiûn promised—and, what in such circumstances is rare, kept his promise."

POETRY.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

(March, 1819.)

Specimens of the British Poets; with Biographical and Critical Notices, and an Essay on English Poetry. By Thomas Campbell. 7 vols. 8vo. London: 1819.

We would rather see Mr. Campbell as a poet than as a commentator on poetry: — because we would rather have a solid addition to the sum of our treasures, than the finest or most judicious account of their actual amount. But we are very glad to see him in any way: — and think the work which he has now given us very excellent and delightful. Still, however, we think there is some little room for complaint; and, feeling that we have not got all we were led to expect, are unreasonable enough to think that the learned author still owes us an arrear; which we hope he will handsomely pay up in the next edition.

When a great poet and a man of distinguished talents announces a large selection of English poetry, "with biographical and critical notices," we naturally expect such notices of all, or almost all the authors, of whose works he thinks it worth while to favour us with specimens. The biography sometimes may be unattainable — and it may still more frequently be uninteresting — but the criticism must always be valuable; and, indeed, is obviously that which must be looked to as constituting the chief value of any such publication. There is no author so obscure, if at all entitled to a place in this register, of whom it would not be desirable to know the opinion of such a man as Mr. Campbell — and none so mature and settled in fame, upon whose beauties and defects, and poetical character in general, the public would not have much to learn from such an authority. Now, there are many authors, and some of no mean note, of whom he has not condescended to say one word, either in the Essay, or in the notices prefixed to the citations. Of Jonathan Swift, for example, all that is here recorded is, "Born 1667 — died 1744;" and Otway is despatched in the same summary manner — "Born 1651 — died 1685." Marlowe is commemorated in a single page, and Butler in half of one.* All this is rather capricious: — but this is not all. Sometimes the notices are entirely biographical, and sometimes entirely critical. We humbly conceive they ought always to have been of *both* descriptions. At all events, we think we ought in every case to have had some criticism, — since this could always have been had, and could scarcely have failed to be valuable. Mr. C., we think, has been a little lazy.

If he were like most authors, or even like most critics, we could easily have pardoned this; for we very seldom find any work too short. It is the singular goodness of his criticisms that makes us regret their fewness; for nothing, we think, can be more fair, judicious, and discriminating, and at the same time more fine, delicate and original, than the greater part of the discussions with which he has here presented us. It is very rare to find so much sensibility to the beauties of poetry, united with so much toleration for its faults; and so exact a perception of the merits of every particular style, interfering so little with a just estimate of all. Poets, to be sure, are, on the whole, we think, very indulgent judges of poetry; and that not so much, we verily believe, from any partiality to their own vocation, or desire to exalt their fraternity, as from their being more constantly alive to those impulses which it is the business of poetry to excite, and more quick to catch and to follow out those associations on which its efficacy chiefly depends. If it be true, as we have formerly endeavoured to show, with reference to this very author, that poetry produces all its greater effects, and works its more me-

morable enchantments, not so much by the images it directly presents, as by those which it *suggests* to the fancy; and melts or inflames us less by the fires which it applies from without, than by those which it kindles within, and of which the fuel is in our own bosoms, — it will be readily understood how these effects should be most powerful in the sensitive breast of a poet; and how a spark, which would have been instantly quenched in the duller atmosphere of an ordinary brain, may create a blaze in his combustible imagination, to warm and enlighten the world. The greater poets, accordingly, have almost always been the warmest admirers, and the most liberal patrons of poetry. The smaller only — your Laureates and Ballad-mongers — are envious and irritable — jealous even of the dead, and less desirous of the praise of others than avaricious of their own.

But though a poet is thus likely to be a gentler critic of poetry than another, and, by having a finer sense of its beauties, to be better qualified for the most pleasing and important part of his office, there is another requisite in which we should be afraid he would generally be found wanting, especially in a work of the large and comprehensive nature of that now before us — we mean, in absolute fairness and impartiality towards the different schools or styles of poetry which he may have occasion to estimate and compare. Even the most common and miscellaneous reader has a peculiar taste in this way — and has generally erected for himself some obscure but exclusive standard of excellence, by which he measures the pretensions of all that come under his view. One man admires witty and satirical poetry, and sees no beauty in rural imagery or picturesque description; while another doats on Idyls and Pastorals, and will not allow the affairs of polite life to form a subject for verse. One is for simplicity and pathos; another for magnificence and splendour. One is devoted to the Muse of terror; another to that of love. Some are all for blood and battles, and some for music and moonlight — some for emphatic sentiments, and some for melodious verses. Even those, whose taste is the least exclusive, have a leaning to one class of composition rather than to another; and overrate the beauties which fall in with their own propensities and associations — while they are palpably unjust to those which wear a different complexion, or spring from a different race.

But, if it be difficult or almost impossible to meet with an impartial judge for the whole great family of genius, even among those quiet and studious readers who ought to find delight even in their variety, it is obvious that this bias and obliquity of judgment must be still more incident to one, who, by being himself a Poet, must not only prefer one school of poetry to all others, but must actually *belong* to it, and be disposed, as a pupil, or still more as a Master, to advance its pretensions above those of all its competitors. Like the votaries or leaders of other sects, successful poets have been but too apt to establish exclusive and arbitrary creeds; and to invent articles of faith, the slightest violation of which effaces the merit of all other virtues. Addicting themselves, as they are apt to do, to the exclusive cultivation of that style to which the bent of their own genius naturally inclines them, they look everywhere for those beauties of which it is peculiarly susceptible, and are disgusted if they cannot be found. Like discoverers in science, or improvers in art, they see nothing in the whole system but their own discoveries and improvements, and undervalue every thing that cannot be connected with their own studies and glory. As the Chinese map-makers allot all the lodgeable area of the earth to their own nation, and thrust the other countries of the world into little outskirts and by-corners — so poets are disposed to represent their own little field of exertion as occupying all the sunny part of Parnassus, and to exhibit the adjoining region under terrible shadows and most unmerciful foreshortenings.

With those impressions of the almost inevitable partiality of poetical judgments in general, we could not recollect that Mr. Campbell was himself a master in a distinct school of poetry, and distinguished by a very peculiar and fastidious style of composition, without being apprehensive that the effects of this bias would be apparent in his work; and that, with all his talent and discernment, he would now and then be guilty of great, though unintended injustice, to some of those whose manner was most opposite to his own. We are happy to say that those apprehensions

have proved entirely groundless; and that nothing in the volumes before us is more admirable, or to us more surprising, than the perfect candour and undeviating fairness with which the learned author passes judgment on all the different authors who come before him; — the quick and true perception he has of the most opposite and almost contradictory beauties — the good-natured and liberal allowance he makes for the disadvantages of each age and individual — and the temperance and brevity and firmness with which he reproves the excessive severity of critics less entitled to be severe. No one indeed, we will venture to affirm, ever placed himself in the seat of judgment with more of a judicial temper — though, to obviate invidious comparisons, we must beg leave just to add, that being called on to pass judgment only on *the dead*, whose faults were no longer corrigible, or had already been expiated by appropriate pains, his temper was less tried, and his severities less proved, than in the case of living offenders, — and that the very number and variety of the errors that called for animadversion, in the course of his wide survey, must have made each particular case appear comparatively insignificant, and mitigated the sentence of individual condemnation.

It is to this last circumstance, of the large and comprehensive range which he was obliged to take, and the great extent and variety of the society in which he was compelled to mingle, that we are inclined to ascribe, not only the general mildness and indulgence of his judgments, but his happy emancipation from those narrow and limitary maxims by which we have already said that poets are so peculiarly apt to be entangled. As a large and familiar intercourse with men of different habits and dispositions never fails, in characters of any force or generosity, to dispel the prejudices with which we at first regard them, and to lower our estimate of our own superior happiness and wisdom, so, a very ample and extensive course of reading in any department of letters, tends naturally to enlarge our narrow principles of judgment; and not only to cast down the idols before which we had formerly abased ourselves, but to disclose to us the might and the majesty of much that we had mistaken and contemned.

In this point of view, we think such a work as is now before us likely to be of great use to ordinary readers of poetry — not only as unlocking to them innumerable new springs of enjoyment and admiration, but as having a tendency to correct and liberate their judgments of their old favourites, and to strengthen and enliven all those faculties by which they derive pleasure from such studies. Nor would the benefit, if it once extended so far, by any means stop there. The character of our poetry depends not a little on the taste of our poetical readers; — and though some bards have always been before their age, and some behind it, the greater part must be pretty near on its level. Present popularity, whatever disappointed writers may say, is, after all, the only safe presage of future glory; — and it is really as unlikely that good poetry should be produced in any quantity where it is not relished, as that cloth should be manufactured and thrust into the market, of a pattern and fashion for which there was no demand. A shallow and uninstructed taste is indeed the most flexible and inconstant — and is tossed about by every breath of doctrine, and every wind of authority; so as neither to derive any permanent delight from the same works, nor to assure any permanent fame to their authors; — while a taste that is formed upon a wide and large survey of enduring models, not only affords a secure basis for all future judgments, but must compel, whenever it is general in any society, a salutary conformity to its great principles from all who depend on its suffrage. — To accomplish such an object, the general study of a work like this certainly is not enough: — but it would form an excellent preparation for more extensive reading — and would, of itself, do much to open the eyes of many self-satisfied persons, and startle them into a sense of their own ignorance, and the poverty and paltriness of many of their ephemeral favourites. Considered as a nation, we are yet but very imperfectly recovered from that strange and ungrateful forgetfulness of our older poets, which began with the Restoration, and continued almost unbroken till after the middle of the last century. — Nor can the works which have chiefly tended to dispel it among the instructed orders, be ranked in a higher class than this which is before us.

— Percy's Relics of Ancient Poetry produced, we believe, the first revulsion — and this was followed up by Wharton's History of Poetry. — Johnson's Lives of the Poets did something; — and the great effect has been produced by the modern commentators on Shakspeare. Those various works recommended the older writers, and reinstated them in some of their honours; — but still the works themselves were not placed before the eyes of ordinary readers. This was done in part, perhaps overdone, by the entire republication of some of our older dramatists, and with better effect by Mr. Ellis's Specimens. If the former, however, was rather too copious a supply for the returning appetite of the public, the latter was too scanty; and both were confined to too narrow a period of time to enable the reader to enjoy the variety, and to draw the comparisons, by which he might be most pleased and instructed. Southey's continuation of Ellis did harm rather than good; for though there is some cleverness in the introduction, the work itself is executed in a crude, petulant, and superficial manner, — and bears all the marks of being a mere bookseller's speculation. — As we have heard nothing of it from the time of its first publication, we suppose it has had the success it deserved.

There was great room therefore, — and, we will even say, great occasion, for such a work as this of Mr. Campbell's, in the present state of our literature; — and we are persuaded, that all who care about poetry, and are not already acquainted with the authors of whom it treats — and even all who are — cannot possibly do better than read it fairly through, from the first page to the last — without skipping the extracts which they know, or those which may not at first seem very attractive. There is no reader, we will venture to say, who will rise from the perusal even of these partial and scanty fragments, without a fresh and deep sense of the matchless richness, variety, and originality of English poetry: while the juxta-position and arrangement of the pieces not only gives room for endless comparisons and contrasts, — but displays, as it were in miniature, the whole of its wonderful progress; and sets before us, as in a great gallery of pictures, the whole course and history of the art, from its first rude and infant beginnings, to its maturity, and perhaps its decline. While it has all the grandeur and instruction that belongs to such a gallery, it is free from the perplexity and distraction which is generally complained of in such exhibitions; as each piece is necessarily considered separately and in succession, and the mind cannot wander, like the eye, through the splendid labyrinth in which it is enchanted. Nothing, we think, can be more delightful, than thus at our ease to trace, through all its periods, vicissitudes, and aspects, the progress of this highest and most intellectual of all the arts — coloured as it is in every age by the manners of the times which produce it, and embodying, besides those flights of fancy and touches of pathos that constitute its more immediate essence, much of the wisdom and much of the morality that was then current among the people; and thus presenting us, not merely with almost all that genius has ever created for delight, but with a brief chronicle and abstract of all that was once interesting to the generations which have gone by.

The steps of the progress of such an art, and the circumstances by which they have been effected, would form, of themselves, a large and interesting theme of speculation. Conversant as poetry necessarily is with all that touches human feelings, concerns, and occupations, its character must have been impressed by every change in the moral and political condition of society, and must even retain the lighter traces of their successive follies, amusements, and pursuits; while, in the course of ages, the very multiplication and increasing business of the people have forced it through a progress not wholly dissimilar to that which the same causes have produced on the agriculture and landscape of the country; — where at first we had rude and dreary wastes thinly sprinkled with sunny spots of simple cultivation — then vast forests and chases, stretching far around feudal castles and pinnacled abbeys — then woodland hamlets, and goodly mansions, and gorgeous gardens, and parks, rich with waste fertility, and lax habitations — and, finally, crowded cities, and roadside villas, and brick-walled gardens, and turnip fields, and canals, and artificial ruins, and ornamented farms, and cottages trellised over with exotic plants!

But, to escape from those metaphors and enigmas to the business before us, we must remark, that in order to give any tolerable idea of the poetry which was thus to be represented, it was necessary that the specimens to be exhibited should be of some compass and extent. We have heard their length complained of—but we think with very little justice. Considering the extent of the works from which they are taken, they are almost all but inconsiderable fragments; and where the original was an Epic of Tragic character, greater abridgment would have been mere mutilation, —and would have given only such a specimen of the whole, as a brick might do of a building. From the earlier and less familiar authors, we rather think the citations are too short; and, even from those that are more generally known, we do not well see how they could have been shorter, with any safety to the professed object, and only use, of the publication. That object, we conceive, was to give specimens of English poetry, from its earliest to its latest periods; and it would be a strange rule to have followed, in making such a selection, to leave out the best and most popular. The work certainly neither is, nor professes to be, a collection from obscure and forgotten authors — but specimens of all who have merit enough to deserve our remembrance; — and if some few have such redundant merit of good fortune, as to be in the hands and the minds of all the world, it was necessary, even then, to give some extracts from them, — that the series might be complete, and that there might be room for comparison with others, and for tracing the progress of the art in the strains of its best models and their various imitators.

In one instance, and one only, Mr. C. has declined doing this duty; and left the place of one great luminary to be filled up by recollections that he must have presumed would be universal. He has given but two pages to SHAKSPEARE — and not a line from any of his plays! Perhaps he has done rightly. A knowledge of Shakspeare may be safely presumed, we believe, in every reader; and, if he had begun to cite his Beauties, there is no saying where he would have ended. A little book, calling itself Beauties of Shakspeare, was published some years ago, and shown, as we have heard, to Mr. Sheridan. He turned over the leaves for some time with apparent satisfaction, and then said, "This is very well; but where are the other seven volumes?" There is no other author, however, whose fame is such as to justify a similar *ellipsis*, or whose works can be thus *elegantly understood*, in a collection of good poetry. Mr. C. has complied perhaps too far with the popular prejudice, in confining his citations from Milton to the Comus and the smaller pieces, and leaving the Paradise Lost to the memory of his readers. But though we do not think the extracts by any means too long on the whole, we are certainly of opinion that some are too long and others too short; and that many, especially in the latter case, are not very well selected. There is far too little of Marlowe for instance, and too much of Shirley, and even of Massinger. We should have liked more of Warner, Fairfax, Phineas Fletcher, and Henry More — all poets of no scanty dimensions — and could have spared several pages of Butler, Mason, Whitehead, Roberts, Meston, Amhurst, and Selden. We do not think the specimens from Burns very well selected; nor those from Prior — nor can we see any good reason for quoting the whole Castle of Indolence, *and nothing else*, for Thomson — and the whole Rape of the Lock, and nothing else, for Pope.

Next to the impression of the vast fertility, compass, and beauty of our English poetry, the reflection that recurs most frequently and forcibly to us, in accompanying Mr. C. through his wide survey, is that of the perishable nature of poetical fame, and the speedy oblivion that has overtaken so many of the promised heirs of immortality! Of near two hundred and fifty authors, whose works are cited in these volumes, by far the greater part of whom were celebrated in their generation, there are not thirty who now enjoy anything that can be called popularity—whose works are to be found in the hands of ordinary readers — in the shops of ordinary booksellers — or in the press for republication. About fifty more may be tolerably familiar to men of taste or literature: — the rest slumber on the shelves of collectors, and are partially known to a few antiquaries and scholars. Now, the fame of a Poet is popular, or nothing. He does not address himself, like the man of science, to the learned, or those who desire to learn, but to all mankind;

and his purpose being to delight and be praised, necessarily extends to all who can receive pleasure, or join in applause. It is strange, then, and somewhat humiliating, to see how great a proportion of those who had once fought their way successfully to distinction, and surmounted the rivalry of contemporary envy, have again sunk into neglect. We have great deference for public opinion; and readily admit, that nothing but what is good can be permanently popular. But though its *vivat* be generally oracular, its *pereat* appears to us to be often sufficiently capricious! and while we would foster all that it bids to live, we would willingly revive much that it leaves to die. The very multiplication of works of amusement, necessarily withdraws many from notice that deserve to be kept in remembrance; for we should soon find it labour, and not amusement, if we were obliged to make use of them all, or even to take all upon trial. As the materials of enjoyment and instruction accumulate around us, more and more, we fear, must thus be daily rejected, and left to waste: for while our tasks lengthen, our lives remain as short as ever; and the calls on our time multiply, while our time itself is flying swiftly away. This superfluity and abundance of our treasures, therefore, necessarily renders much of them worthless; and the veriest accidents may, in such a case, determine what part shall be preserved, and what thrown away and neglected. When an army is *decimated*, the very bravest may fall; and many poets, worthy of eternal remembrance, have probably been forgotten, merely because there was not room in our memories for all.

By such a work as the present, however, this injustice of fortune may be partly redressed — some small fragments of an immortal strain may still be rescued from oblivion — and a wreck of a name preserved, which time appeared to have swallowed up for ever. There is something pious we think, and endearing, in the office of thus gathering up the ashes of renown that has passed away; or rather, of calling back the departed life for a transitory glow, and enabling those great spirits which seemed to be *laid* for ever, still to draw a tear of pity, or a throb of admiration, from the hearts of a forgetful generation. The body of their poetry, probably, can never be revived; but some sparks of its spirit may yet be preserved, in a narrower and feebler flame.

When we look back upon the havoc which two hundred years have thus made in the ranks of our immortals — and, above all, when we refer their rapid disappearance to the quick succession of new competitors, and the accumulation of more good works than there is time to peruse, — we cannot help being dismayed at the prospect which lies before the writers of the present day. There never was an age so prolific of popular poetry as that in which we now live; — and as wealth, population, and education extend, the produce is likely to go on increasing. The last ten years have produced, we think, an annual supply of about ten thousand lines of good staple poetry — poetry from the very first hands that we can boast of — that runs quickly to three or four large editions — and is as likely to be permanent as present success can make it. Now, if this goes on for a hundred years longer, what a task will await the poetical readers of 1919! Our living poets will then be nearly as old as Pope and Swift are at present — but there will stand between them and that generation nearly ten times as much fresh and fashionable poetry as is now interposed between us and those writers: — and if Scott and Byron and Campbell have already cast Pope and Swift a good deal into the shade, in what form and dimensions are they themselves likely to be presented to the eyes of our great-grandchildren? The thought, we own, is a little appalling; — and we confess we see nothing better to imagine than that they may find a comfortable place in some new collection of specimens — the centenary of the present publication. There — if the future editor have any thing like the indulgence and veneration for antiquity of his predecessor — there shall posterity still hang with rapture on the half of Campbell — and the fourth part of Byron — and the sixth of Scott — and the scattered tythes of Crabbe — and the three *per cent.* of Southey, — while some good-natured critic shall sit in our mouldering chair, and more than half prefer them to those by whom they have been superseded! — It is an hyperbole of good nature, however, we fear, to ascribe to them even those dimensions at the end of a century. After a lapse of 250 years, we are afraid to

think of the space they may have shrunk into. We have no Shakspeare, alas! to shed a never-setting light on his contemporaries! — and if we continue to write and rhyme at the present rate for 200 years longer, there must be some new art of *short-hand reading* invented — or all reading will be given up in despair. We need not distress ourselves, however, with these afflictions of our posterity; — and it is quite time that the reader should know a little of the work before us.

The Essay on English Poetry is very cleverly, and, in many places, very finely written — but it is not equal, and it is not complete. There is a good deal of the poet's waywardness even in Mr. C.'s prose. His historical Muse is as disdainful of drudgery and plain work as any of her more tuneful sisters; — and so we have things begun and abandoned — passages of great eloquence and beauty followed up by others not a little careless and disorderly — a large outline rather meagerly filled up, but with some morsels of exquisite finishing scattered irregularly up and down its expanse — little fragments of detail and controversy — and abrupt and impatient conclusions. Altogether, however, the work is very spirited; and abounds with the indications of a powerful and fine understanding, and of a delicate and original taste. We cannot now afford to give any abstract of the information it contains — but shall make a few extracts, to show the tone and manner of the composition.

The following sketch of Chaucer, for instance, and of the long interregnum that succeeded his demise, is given with great grace and spirit.

"His first and long-continued predilection, was attracted by the new and allegorical style of romance, which had sprung up, in France, in the thirteenth century, under William de Lorris. We find him, accordingly, during a great part of his poetical career, engaged among the dreams, emblems, flower-worshippings, and amatory parliaments of that visionary school. This, we may say, was a gymnasium of rather too light and playful exercise for so strong a genius; and it must be owned, that his allegorical poetry is often puerile and prolix. Yet, even in this walk of fiction, we never entirely lose sight of that peculiar grace and gaiety, which distinguish the Muse of Chaucer; and no one who remembers his productions of the House of Fame, and the Flower and the Leaf, will regret that he sported, for a season, in the field of allegory. Even his pieces of this description, the most fantastic in design, and tedious in execution, are generally interspersed with fresh and joyous descriptions of external nature. In this new species of Romance, we perceive the youthful Muse of the language, in love with mystical meanings and forms of fancy, more remote, if possible, from reality, than those of the chivalrous fable itself; and we could, sometimes, wish her back from her emblematic castles, to the more solid ones of the elder fable; but still she moves in pursuit of those shadows with an impulse of novelty, and an exuberance of spirit, that is not wholly without its attraction and delight. Chaucer was, afterwards, happily drawn to the more natural style of Boccaccio; and from him he derived the hint of a subject, in which, besides his own original portraits of contemporary life, he could introduce stories of every description, from the most heroic to the most familiar." — Pp. 71—73.

"Wharton, with great beauty and justice, compares the appearance of Chaucer in our language, to a premature day in an English spring; after which the gloom of winter returns, and the buds and blossoms, which have been called forth by a transient sunshine, are nipped by frosts and scattered by storms. The causes of the relapse of our poetry, after Chaucer, seem but too apparent in the annals of English history; which, during five reigns of the fifteenth century, continue to display but a tissue of conspiracies, proscriptions, and bloodshed. Inferior even to France in literary progress, England displays in the fifteenth century a still more mortifying contrast with Italy. Italy, too, had her religious schisms and public distractions; but her arts and literature had always a sheltering place. They were even cherished by the rivalship of independent communities, and received encouragement from the opposite sources of commercial and ecclesiastical wealth. But *we* had no Nicholas the Fifth, nor House of Medicis. In England, the evils of civil war agitated society as one mass. There was no refuge from them — no enclosure to fence in the field of improvement — no mound to stem the torrent of public troubles. Before the death of Henry VI. it is said that one half of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom had perished in the field, or on the scaffold!"

The golden age of Elizabeth has often been extolled, and the genius of Spenser delineated, with feeling and eloquence. But all that has been written, leaves the following striking passages as original as they are eloquent.

"In the reign of Elizabeth, the English mind put forth its energies in every direction, exalted by a purer religion, and enlarged by new views of truth. This was an age of loyalty, adventure, and generous emulation. The chivalrous character was softened by intellectual pursuits, while the genius of chivalry itself still lingered, as if unwilling to depart; and paid his last homage to a Warlike and Female reign. A degree of romantic fancy remained too, in the manners and superstitions of the people; and Allegory might be

said to parade the streets in their public pageants and festivities. Quaint and pedantic as those allegorical exhibitions might often be, they were nevertheless more expressive of erudition, ingenuity, and moral meaning, than they had been in former times. The philosophy of the highest minds, on the other hand, still partook of a visionary character. A poetical spirit infused itself into the practical heroism of the age; and some of the worthies of that period seem less like ordinary men, than like beings called forth out of fiction, and arrayed in the brightness of her dreams. They had 'high thoughts seated in hearts of courtesy.' The life of Sir Philip Sydney was poetry put into action.

"The result of activity and curiosity in the public mind was to complete the revival of classical literature, to increase the importation of foreign books, and to multiply translations, from which poetry supplied herself with abundant subjects and materials, and in the use of which she showed a frank and fearless energy, that criticism and satire had not yet acquired power to overawe. Romance came back to us from the southern languages, clothed in new luxury by the warm imagination of the south. The growth of poetry under such circumstances might indeed be expected to be as irregular as it was profuse. The field was open to daring absurdity, as well as to genuine inspiration; and accordingly there is no period in which the extremes of good and bad writing are so abundant." — Pp. 120—122.

"The mistaken opinion that Ben Jonson censured the antiquity of the diction in the 'Fairy Queen,' has been corrected by Mr. Malone, who pronounces it to be exactly that of his contemporaries. His authority is weighty; still, however, without reviving the exploded error respecting Jonson's censure, one might imagine the difference of Spenser's style from that of Shakspeare's, whom he so shortly preceded, to indicate that his Gothic subject and story made him lean towards words of the elder time. At all events, much of his expression is now become antiquated; though it is beautiful in its antiquity, and, like the moss and ivy on some majestic building, covers the fabric of his language with romantic and venerable associations.

"His command of imagery is wide, easy, and luxuriant. He threw the soul of harmony into our verse, and made it more warmly, tenderly, and magnificently descriptive than it ever was before, or, with a few exceptions, than it has ever been since. It must certainly be owned, that in description he exhibits nothing of the brief strokes and robust power which characterize the very greatest poets: but we shall nowhere find more airy and expansive images of visionary things, a sweeter tone of sentiment, or a finer flush in the colours of language, than in this Rubens of English poetry. His fancy teems exuberantly in minuteness of circumstance; like a fertile soil sending bloom and verdure through the utmost extremities of the foliage which it nourishes. On a comprehensive view of the whole work, we certainly miss the charm of strength, symmetry, and rapid or interesting progress; for, though the plan which the poet designed is not completed, it is easy to see that no additional cantos could have rendered it less perplexed. But still there is a richness in his materials, even where their coherence is loose, and their disposition confused. The clouds of his allegory may seem to spread into shapeless forms, but they are still the clouds of a glowing atmosphere. Though his story grows desultory, the sweetness and grace of his manner still abide by him. We always rise from perusing him with melody in the mind's ear, and with pictures of romantic beauty impressed on the imagination." — Pp. 124—127.

In his account of the great dramatic writers of that and the succeeding reign, Mr. C.'s veneration for Shakspeare has made him rather unjust, we think, to the fame of some of his precursors.—We have already said that he passes Marlowe with a very slight notice, and a page of citation. — Greene, certainly a far inferior writer, is treated with the same scanty courtesy — and there is no account and no specimen of Kyd or Lodge, though both authors of very considerable genius and originality.—With the writings of Peele, we do not profess to be acquainted — but the quotations given from him in the Essay should have entitled him to a place in the body of the work.—We must pass over what he says of Shakspeare and Jonson, though full of beauty and feeling. — To the latter, indeed, he is rather more than just.—The account of Beaumont and Fletcher is lively and discriminating.

"The theatre of Beaumont and Fletcher contains all manner of good and evil. The respective shares of those dramatic partners, in the works collectively published with their names, have been stated in a different part of these volumes. Fletcher's share in them is by far the largest; and he is chargeable with the greatest number of faults, although at the same time his genius was more airy, prolific, and fanciful. There are such extremes of grossness and magnificence in their drama, so much sweetness and beauty interspersed with views of nature either falsely romantic, or vulgar beyond reality; there is so much to animate and amuse us, and yet so much that we would willingly overlook, that I cannot help comparing the contrasted impressions which they make, to those which we receive from visiting some great and ancient city, picturesquely but irregularly built, glittering with spires and surrounded with gardens, but exhibiting in many quarters the lanes and hovels of wretchedness. They have scenes of wealthy and high life, which remind us of courts and palaces frequented

by elegant females and high-spirited gallants, whilst their noble old martial characters, with Caractacus in the midst of them, may inspire us with the same sort of regard which we pay to the rough-hewn magnificence of an ancient fortress.

"Unhappily, the same simile, without being hunted down, will apply but too faithfully to the *nuisances* of their drama. Their language is often basely profligate. Shakspeare's and Jonson's indelicacies are but casual blots; whilst theirs are sometimes essential colours of their painting, and extend, in one or two instances, to entire and offensive scenes. This fault has deservedly injured their reputation; and, saving a very slight allowance for the fashion and taste of their age, admits of no sort of apology. Their drama, nevertheless, is a very wide one, and '*has ample room and verge enough*' to permit the attention to wander from these, and to fix on more inviting peculiarities — as on the great variety of their fables and personages, their spirited dialogue, their wit, pathos, and humour. Thickly sown as their blemishes are, their merits will bear great deductions, and still remain great. We never can forget such beautiful characters as their Cellide, their Aspatia and Bellario, or such humorous ones as their La Writ and Cacafogo. Awake they will always keep us, whether to quarrel or to be pleased with them. Their invention is fruitful; its beings are on the whole an active and sanguine generation; and their scenes are crowded to fulness with the warmth, agitation, and interest of actual life." — Pp. 210—213.

Some of the most splendid passages in the Essay are dedicated to the fame of Milton — and are offerings not unworthy of the shrine.

"In Milton," he says, "there may be traced obligations to several minor English poets: but his genius had too great a supremacy to belong to any school. Though he acknowledged a filial reverence for Spenser as a poet, he left no Gothic irregular tracery in the design of his own great work, but gave a classical harmony of parts to its stupendous pile. It thus resembles a dome, the vastness of which is at first sight concealed by its symmetry, but which expands more and more to the eye while it is contemplated. His early poetry seems to have neither disturbed nor corrected the bad taste of his age. — Comus came into the world unacknowledged by its author, and Lycidas appeared at first only with his initials. These, and other exquisite pieces, composed in the happiest years of his life, at his father's country-house at Horton, were collectively published, with his name affixed to them, in 1645; but that precious volume, which included L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, did not (I believe) come to a second edition, till it was republished by himself at the distance of eight-and-twenty years. Almost a century elapsed before his minor works obtained their proper fame.

"Even when Paradise Lost first appeared, though it was not neglected, it attracted no crowd of imitators, and made no visible change in the poetical practice of the age. He stood alone, and aloof above his times; the bard of immortal subjects, and, as far as there is perpetuity in language, of immortal fame. The very choice of those subjects bespoke a contempt for any species of excellence that was attainable by other men. There is something that overawes the mind in conceiving his long-deliberated selection of that theme — his attempting it after his eyes were shut upon the face of nature—his dependence, we might almost say, on supernatural inspiration, and in the calm air of strength with which he opens Paradise Lost, beginning a mighty performance without the appearance of an effort."

"The warlike part of Paradise Lost was inseparable from its subject. Whether it could have been differently managed, is a problem which our reverence for Milton will scarcely permit us to state. I feel that reverence too strongly to suggest even the possibility that Milton could have improved his poem, by having thrown his angelic warfare into more remote perspective: but it seems to me to be most sublime when it is least distinctly brought home to the imagination. What an awful effect has the dim and undefined conception of the conflict, which we gather from the retrospects in the first book! There the veil of mystery is left undrawn between us and a subject which the powers of description were inadequate to exhibit. The ministers of divine vengeance and pursuit had been recalled — the thunders had ceased

'To bellow through the vast and boundless deep,'

(in that line what an image of sound and space is conveyed!) — and our terrific conception of the past is deepened by its indistinctness. In optics there are some phenomena which are beautifully deceptive at a certain distance, but which lose their illusive charm on the slightest approach to them that changes the light and position in which they are viewed. Something like this takes place in the phenomena of fancy. The array of the fallen angels in hell — the unfurling of the standard of Satan—and the march of his troops

'In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders,' —

all this human pomp and circumstance of war is magic and overwhelming illusion. The imagination is taken by surprise. But the noblest efforts of language are tried with very unequal effect, to interest us in the immediate and close view of the battle itself in the sixth book; and the martial demons, who charmed us in the shades of hell, lose some portion of their sublimity, when their artillery is discharged in the daylight of heaven.

"If we call diction the garb of thought, Milton, in his style, may be said to wear the costume of sovereignty. The idioms even of foreign languages contributed to adorn it. He was the most learned of poets; yet his learning interferes not with his substantial English purity. His simplicity is unimpaired by glowing ornament, — like the bush in the sacred flame, which burnt but 'was not consumed.'

"In delineating the blessed spirits, Milton has exhausted all the conceivable variety that could be given to pictures of unshaded sanctity; but it is chiefly in those of the fallen angels that his excellence is conspicuous above every thing ancient or modern. Tasso had, indeed, portrayed an infernal council, and had given the hint to our poet of ascribing the origin of pagan worship to those reprobate spirits. But how poor and squalid in comparison of the Miltonic Pandæmonium are the Scyllas, the Cyclopses, and the Chimeras of the Infernal Council of the Jerusalem! Tasso's conclave of fiends is a den of ugly incongruous monsters. The powers of Milton's hell are godlike shapes and forms. Their appearance dwarfs every other poetical conception, when we turn our dilated eyes from contemplating them. It is not their external attributes alone which expand the imagination, but their souls, which are as colossal as their stature — their '*thoughts that wander through eternity*' — the pride that burns amidst the ruins of their divine natures, and their genius, that feels with the ardour, and debates with the eloquence of heaven."— Pp. 242—247.

We have already said, that we think Shirley over-praised — but he is praised with great eloquence. There is but little said of Dryden in the Essay — but it is said with force and with judgment. In speaking of Pope and his contemporaries, Mr. C. touches on debatable ground: and we shall close our quotations from this part of his work, with the passage in which he announces his own indulgent, and, perhaps, latitudinarian opinions.

"There are exclusionists in taste, who think that they cannot speak with sufficient disparagement of the English poets of the first part of the eighteenth [illegible] are armed with a noble provocative to English contempt, when they have it to say that those poets belong to a French school. Indeed Dryden himself is generally included in that school; though more genuine English is to be found in no man's pages. But in poetry 'there are many mansions.' I am free to confess, that I can pass from the elder writers, and still find a charm in the correct and equable sweetness of Parnell. Conscious that his diction has not the freedom and volubility of the better strains of the elder time, I cannot but remark his exemption from the quaintness and false metaphor which so often disfigure the style of the preceding age; nor deny my respect to the select choice of his expression, the clearness and keeping of his imagery, and the pensive dignity of his moral feeling.

"Pope gave our heroic couplet its strictest melody and tersest expression.

D'un mot mis en sa place il enseigne le pouvoir.

If his contemporaries forgot other poets in admiring him, let him not be robbed of his just fame on pretence that a part of it was superfluous. The public ear was long fatigued with repetitions of his manner; but if we place ourselves in the situation of those to whom his brilliancy, succinctness, and animation were wholly new, we cannot wonder at their being captivated to the fondest admiration. In order to do justice to Pope, we should forget his imitators, if that were possible; but it is easier to remember than to forget by an effort — to acquire associations than to shake them off. Every one may recollect how often the most beautiful air has palled upon his ear, and grown insipid, from being played or sung by vulgar musicians. It is the same thing with regard to Pope's versification. That his peculiar rhythm and manner are the very best in the whole range of our poetry need not be asserted. He has a gracefully peculiar manner, though it is not calculated to be an universal one; and where, indeed, shall we find the style of poetry that could be pronounced an exclusive model for every composer? His pauses have little variety, and his phrases are too much weighed in the balance of antithesis. But let us look to the spirit that points his antithesis, and to the rapid precision of his thoughts, and we shall forgive him for being too antithetic and sententious."— Pp. 259—262.

And to this is subjoined a long argument, to show that Mr. Bowles is mistaken in supposing that a poet should always draw his images from the works of nature, and not from those of art. We have no room at present for any discussion of the question; but we do not think it is quite fairly stated in the passage to which we have referred; and confess, that we are rather inclined, on the whole, to adhere to the creed of Mr. Bowles.

Of the Specimens, which compose the body of the work, we cannot pretend to give any account. They are themselves but tiny and slender fragments of the works from which they are taken; and to abridge them further would be to reduce them to mere dust and rubbish. Besides, we are not called upon to review the poets of England for the last four hundred years! — but only their present editor and critic. In the little we have yet to say, therefore, we shall treat only of the merits of Mr. Campbell. His account of Hall and Chamberlayn is what struck us most in his first volumes — probably because neither of the writers whom he so judiciously praises were formerly familiar to us. Hall, who was the founder of our satirical poetry, wrote his satires about the year 1597, when only twenty-three years old; and whether we consider the age of the man or of the world, they appear to

us equally wonderful. In this extraordinary work,

"He discovered," says Mr. C., "not only the early vigour of his own genius, but the power and pliability of his native tongue: for in the point and volubility and vigour of Hall's numbers, we might frequently imagine ourselves perusing Dryden. This may be exemplified in the harmony and picturesqueness of the following description of a magnificent rural mansion, which the traveller approaches in the hopes of reaching the seat of ancient hospitality, but finds it deserted by its selfish owner:

Beat the broad gates, a goodly hollow sound,
With double echoes, doth again rebound;
But not a dog doth bark to welcome thee,
Nor churlish porter canst thou chafing see.
All dumb and silent, like the dead of night,
Or dwelling of some sleepy Sybarite;
The marble pavement hid with desert weed,
With house-leek, thistle, dock, and hemlock seed,
* * * * * * * * *
Look to the tow'red chimneys, which should be
The wind-pipes of good hospitality,
Through which it breatheth to the open air,
Betokening life and liberal welfare,
Lo, there th' unthankful swallow takes her rest,
And fills the tunnel with her circled nest.

"His satires are neither cramped by personal hostility, nor spun out to vague declamations on vice; but give us the form and pressure of the times, exhibited in the faults of coeval literature, and in the foppery or sordid traits of prevailing manners. The age was undoubtedly fertile in eccentricity." — Vol. ii. pp. 257, 258.

What he says of Chamberlayn, and the extracts he has made from his Pharonnida, has made us quite impatient for an opportunity of perusing the whole poem.

The poetical merits of Ben Jonson are chiefly discussed in the Essay; and the Notice is principally biographical. It is very pleasingly written, though with an affectionate leaning towards his hero. The following short passage affords a fair specimen of the good sense and good temper of all Mr. Campbell's apologies.

"The poet's journey to Scotland (1617) awakens many pleasing recollections, when we conceive him anticipating his welcome among a people who might be proud of a share in his ancestry, and setting out, with manly strength, on a journey of 400 miles, on foot. We are assured, by one who saw him in Scotland, that he was treated with respect and affection among the nobility and gentry; nor was the romantic scenery of the country lost upon his fancy. From the poem which he meditated on Loch-Lomond, it is seen that he looked on it with a poet's eye. But, unhappily, the meagre anecdotes of Drummond have made this event of his life too prominent, by the over-importance which has been attached to them. Drummond, a smooth and sober gentleman, seems to have disliked Jonson's indulgence in that conviviality which Ben had shared with his Fletcher and Shakspeare at the Mermaid. In consequence of those anecdotes, Jonson's memory has been damned for brutality, and Drummond's for perfidy. Jonson drank freely at Hawthornden, and talked big — things neither incredible nor unpardonable. Drummond's perfidy amounted to writing a letter, beginning, Sir, with one very kind sentence in it, to the man whom he had described unfavourably in a private memorandum, which he never meant for publication. As to Drummond's decoying Jonson under his roof with any premeditated design on his reputation, no one can seriously believe it." — Vol. iii. pp. 150, 151.

The notice of Cotton may be quoted as a perfect model for such slight memorials of writers of the middle order.

"There is a careless and happy humour in this poet's Voyage to Ireland, which seems to anticipate the manner of Anstey, in the Bath Guide. The tasteless indelicacy of his parody of the Æneid has found but too many admirers. His imitations of Lucian betray the grossest misconception of humorous effect, when he attempts to burlesque that which is ludicrous already. He was acquainted with French and Italian; and among several works from the former language, translated the Horace of Corneille, and Montaigne's Essays.

"The father of Cotton is described by Lord Clarendon as an accomplished and honourable man, who was driven by domestic afflictions to habits which rendered his age less reverenced than his youth, and made his best friends wish that he had not lived so long. From him our poet inherited an encumbered estate, with a disposition to extravagance little calculated to improve it. After having studied at Cambridge, and returned from his travels abroad, he married the daughter of Sir Thomas Owthorp, in Nottinghamshire. He went to Ireland as a captain in the army; but of his military progress nothing is recorded. Having embraced the soldier's life merely as a shift in distress, he was not likely to pursue it with much ambition. It was probably in Ireland that he met with his second wife, Mary, Countess Dowager of Ardglass, the widow of Lord Cornwall. She had a jointure of 1500*l.* a year, secured from his imprudent management. He died insolvent at Westminster. One of his favourite recreations was angling; and his house, which was situated on the Dove, a fine trout stream which divides the counties of Derby and Stafford, was the frequent resort of his friend Isaac Walton. There he built a fishing house, 'Piscatoribus sacrum,' with the initials of honest Isaac's name and his own united in ciphers over the door. The walls were painted with fishing-scenes, and the portraits of Cotton and Walton were upon the beaufet." — Pp. 293, 294.

There is a very beautiful and affectionate account of Parnell.—But there is more power of writing, and more depth and delicacy of feeling, in the following masterly account and estimate of Lillo.

"George Lillo was the son of a Dutch jeweller, who married an Englishwoman and settled in London. Our poet was born near Moorfields, was bred to his father's business, and followed it for many years. The story of his dying in distress was a fiction of Hammond, the poet; for he bequeathed a considerable property to his nephew, whom he made his heir. It has been said, that his bequest was in consequence of his finding the young man disposed to lend him a sum of money at a time when he thought proper to feign pecuniary distress, in order that he might discover the sincerity of those calling themselves his friends. Thomas Davies, his biographer and editor, professes to have got this anecdote from a surviving partner of Lillo. It bears, however, an intrinsic air of improbability. It is not usual for sensible tradesmen to affect being on the verge of bankruptcy; and Lillo's character was that of an uncommonly sensible man. Fielding, his intimate friend, ascribes to him a manly simplicity of mind, that is extremely unlike such a stratagem.

"Lillo is the tragic poet of middling and familiar life. Instead of heroes from romance and history, he gives the merchant and his apprentice; and the Macbeth of his '*Fatal Curiosity*,' is a private gentleman, who has been reduced by his poverty to dispose of his copy of Seneca for a morsel of bread. The mind will be apt, after reading his works, to suggest to itself the question, how far the graver drama would gain or lose by a more general adoption of this plebeian principle. The cares, it may be said, that are most familiar to our existence, and the distresses of those nearest to ourselves in situation, ought to lay the strongest hold upon our sympathies; and the general mass of society ought to furnish a more express image of man than any detached or elevated portion of the species. But, notwithstanding the power of Lillo's works, we entirely miss in them that romantic attraction which invites to repeated perusal of them. They give us life in a close and dreadful semblance of reality, but not arrayed in the magic illusion of poetry. His strength lies in conception of situations, not in beauty of dialogue, or in the eloquence of the passions. Yet the effect of his plain and homely subjects was so strikingly superior to that of the vapid and heroic productions of the day, as to induce some of his contemporary admirers to pronounce that he had reached the acme of dramatic excellence, and struck into the best and most genuine path of tragedy. George Barnwell, it was observed, drew more tears than the rants of Alexander. This might be true; but it did not bring the comparison of humble and heroic subjects to a fair test; for the tragedy of Alexander is bad, not from its subject, but from the incapacity of the poet who composed it. It does not prove that heroes, drawn from history or romance, are not at least as susceptible of high and poetical effect, as a wicked apprentice, or a distressed gentleman pawning his movables. It is a different question whether Lillo has given to his subjects from private life, the degree of beauty of which they are susceptible. He is a master of terrific, but not of tender impressions. We feel a harshness and gloom in his genius, even while we are compelled to admire its force and originality.

"The peculiar choice of his subjects was, at all events, happy and commendable, as far as it regarded himself; for his talents never succeeded so well when he ventured out of them. But it is another question, whether the familiar cast of those subjects was fitted to constitute a more genuine, or only a subordinate walk in tragedy. Undoubtedly the genuine delineation of the human heart will please us, from whatever station or circumstances of life it is derived: and, in the simple pathos of tragedy, probably very little difference will be felt from the choice of characters being pitched above or below the line of mediocrity in station. But something more than pathos is required in tragedy; and the very pain that attends our sympathy, would seem to require agreeable and romantic associations of the fancy to be blended with its poignancy. Whatever attaches ideas of importance, publicity, and elevation to the object of pity, forms a brightening and alluring medium to the imagination. Athens herself, with all her simplicity and democracy, delighted on the stage to

'Let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by.'

"Even situations far depressed beneath the familiar mediocrity of life, are more picturesque and poetical than its ordinary level. It is certainly on the virtues of the middling rank of life, that the strength and comforts of society chiefly depend, in the same way as we look for the harvest, not on cliffs and precipices, but on the easy slope and the uniform plain. But the painter does not in general fix on level countries for the subjects of his noblest landscapes. There is an analogy, I conceive, to this in the moral painting of tragedy. Disparities of station give it boldness of outline. The commanding situations of life are its mountain scenery—the region where its storm and sunshine may be portrayed in their strongest contrast and colouring."—Vol. v. pp. 58—62.

Nothing, we think, can be more exquisite than this criticism,—though we are far from being entire converts to its doctrines; and are moreover of opinion that the merits of Lillo, as a poet at least, are considerably overrated. There is a flatness and a weakness in his diction, that we think must have struck Mr. C. more than he has acknowledged,—and a tone, occasionally, both of vulgarity and of paltry affectation, that counteracts the pathetic

effect of his conceptions, and does injustice to the experiment of domestic tragedy.

The critique on Thomson is distinguished by the same fine tact, candour, and conciseness.

"Habits of early admiration teach us all to look back upon this poet as the favourite companion of our solitary walks, and as the author who has first or chiefly reflected back to our minds a heightened and refined sensation of the delight which rural scenery affords us. The judgment of cooler years may somewhat abate our estimation of him, though it will still leave us the essential features of his poetical character to abide the test of reflection. The unvaried pomp of his diction suggests a most unfavourable comparison with the manly and idiomatic simplicity of Cowper: at the same time, the pervading spirit and feeling of his poetry is in general more bland and delightful than that of his great rival in rural description. Thomson seems to contemplate the creation with an eye of unqualified pleasure and ecstasy, and to love its inhabitants with a lofty and hallowed feeling of religious happiness; Cowper has also his philanthropy, but it is dashed with religious terrors, and with themes of satire, regret, and reprehension. Cowper's image of nature is more curiously distinct and familiar. Thomson carries our associations through a wider circuit of speculation and sympathy. His touches cannot be more faithful than Cowper's, but they are more soft and select, and less disturbed by the intrusion of homely objects. It is but justice to say, that amidst the feeling and fancy of the Seasons, we meet with interruptions of declamation, heavy narrative, and unhappy digression — with a parhelion eloquence that throws a counterfeit glow of expression on common-place ideas — as when he treats us to the solemnly ridiculous bathing of Musidora; or draws from the classics instead of nature; or, after invoking Inspiration from her hermit seat, makes his dedicatory bow to a patronizing countess, or Speaker of the House of Commons. As long as he dwells in the pure contemplation of nature, and appeals to the universal poetry of the human breast, his redundant style comes to us as something venial and adventitious — it is the flowing vesture of the druid; and perhaps to the general experience is rather imposing: but when he returns to the familiar narrations or courtesies of life, the same diction ceases to seem the mantle of inspiration, and only strikes us by its unwieldy difference from the common costume of expression." — Pp. 215—218.

There is the same delicacy of taste, and beauty of writing, in the following remarks on Collins — though we think the Specimens afterwards given from this exquisite poet are rather niggardly.

"Collins published his Oriental Eclogues while at college, and his lyrical poetry at the age of twenty-six. Those works will abide comparison with whatever Milton wrote under the age of thirty. If they have rather less exuberant wealth of genius, they exhibit more exquisite touches of pathos. Like Milton, he leads us into the haunted ground of imagination; like him, he has the rich economy of expression haloed with thought, which by single or few words often hints entire pictures to the imagination. In what short and simple terms, for instance, does he open a wide and majestic landscape to the mind, such as we might view from Ben-Lomond or Snowdon — when he speaks of the hut

'That from some mountain's side
Views wilds and swelling floods.'

And in the line, 'Where faint and sickly winds for ever howl around,' he does not seem merely to describe the sultry desert, but brings it home to the senses.

"A cloud of obscurity sometimes rests on his highest conceptions, arising from the fineness of his associations, and the daring sweep of his allusions; but the shadow is transitory, and interferes very little with the light of his imagery, or the warmth of his feelings. The absence of even this speck of mysticism from his Ode on the Passions is perhaps the happy circumstance that secured its unbounded popularity. Nothing, however, is commonplace in Collins. The pastoral eclogue, which is insipid in all other English hands, assumes in his a touching interest, and a picturesque air of novelty. It seems that he himself ultimately undervalued those eclogues, as deficient in characteristic manners; but surely no just reader of them cares any more about this circumstance than about the authenticity of the tale of Troy.

"In his Ode to Fear he hints at his dramatic ambition; and he planned several tragedies. Had he lived to enjoy and adorn existence, it is not easy to conceive his sensitive spirit and harmonious ear descending to mediocrity in any path of poetry; yet it may be doubted if his mind had not a passion for the visionary and remote forms of imagination, too strong and exclusive for the general purposes of the drama. His genius loved to breathe rather in the preternatural and ideal element of poetry, than in the atmosphere of imitation, which lies closest to real life; and his notions of poetical excellence, whatever vows he might address to 'the manners,' were still tending to the vast, the undefinable, and the abstract. Certainly, however, he carried sensibility and tenderness into the highest regions of abstracted thought: his enthusiasm spreads a glow even amongst 'the shadowy tribes of mind,' and his allegory is as sensible to the heart as it is visible to the fancy." — Pp. 310—312.

Though we are afraid our extracts are becoming unreasonable, we cannot resist indulging our own nationality, by producing this specimen of Mr. Campbell's.

"The admirers of the Gentle Shepherd must perhaps be contented to share some suspicion of national partiality, while they do justice to their own feeling of its merit. Yet as this drama is a picture of rustic Scotland, it would perhaps be saying little for its fidelity, if it yielded no more agreeableness to the breast of a native than he could expound to a stranger by the strict letter of criticism. We should think the painter had finished the likeness of a mother very indifferently, if it did not bring home to her children traits of undefinable expression which had escaped every eye but that of familiar affection. Ramsay had not the force of Burns; but neither, in just proportion to his merits, is *he* likely to be felt by an English reader. The fire of Burns's wit and passion glows through an obscure dialect by its confinement to short and concentrated bursts. The interest which Ramsay excites is spread over a long poem, delineating manners more than passions, and the mind must be at home both in the language and manners, to appreciate the skill and comic archness with which he has heightened the display of rustic character without giving it vulgarity, and refined the view of peasant life by situations of sweetness and tenderness, without departing in the least degree from its simplicity. The Gentle Shepherd stands quite apart from the general pastoral poetry of modern Europe. It has no satyrs, nor featureless simpletons, nor drowsy and still landscapes of nature, but distinct characters and amusing incidents. The principal shepherd never speaks out of consistency with the habits of a peasant; but he moves in that sphere with such a manly spirit, with so much cheerful sensibility to its humble joys, with maxims of life so rational and independent, and with an ascendency over his fellow swains so well maintained by his force of character, that if we could suppose the pacific scenes of the drama to be suddenly changed into situations of trouble and danger, we should, in exact consistency with our former idea of him, expect him to become the leader of the peasants, and the Tell of his native hamlet. Nor is the character of his mistress less beautifully conceived. She is represented, like himself, as elevated by a fortunate discovery, from obscure to opulent life, yet as equally capable of being the ornament of either. A Richardson or a D'Arblay, had they continued her history, might have heightened the portrait, but they would not have altered its outline. Like the poetry of Tasso and Ariosto, that of the Gentle Shepherd is engraven on the memory, and has sunk into the heart, of its native country. Its verses have passed into proverbs, and it continues to be the delight and solace of the peasantry whom it describes."—Pp. 344—346.

We think the merits of Akenside underrated, and those of Churchhill exaggerated: but we have found no passage in which the amiable but equitable and reasonable indulgence of Mr. Campbell's mind is so conspicuous, as in his account of Chatterton—and it is no slight thing for a poet to have kept himself cool and temperate, on a theme which has hurried so many inferior spirits into passion and extravagance.

"When we conceive," says Mr. C., "the inspired boy transporting himself in imagination back to the days of his fictitious Rowley, embodying his ideal character, and giving to airy nothing a 'local habitation and a name,' we may forget the impostor in the enthusiast, and forgive the falsehood of his reverie for its beauty and ingenuity. One of his companions has described the air of rapture and inspiration with which he used to repeat his passages from Rowley, and the delight which he took to contemplate the church of St. Mary, Redcliffe, while it awoke the associations of antiquity in his romantic mind. There was one spot in particular, full in view of the church, where he would often lay himself down, and fix his eyes, as it were, in a trance. On Sundays, as long as daylight lasted, he would walk alone in the country around Bristol, taking drawings of churches, or other objects that struck his imagination.

"During the few months of his existence in London, his letters to his mother and sister, which were always accompanied with presents, expressed the most joyous anticipations. But suddenly all the flush of his gay hopes and busy projects terminated in despair. The particular causes which led to his catastrophe have not been distinctly traced. His own descriptions of his prospects are but little to be trusted; for while apparently exchanging his shadowy visions of Rowley for the real adventures of life, he was still moving under the spell of an imagination that saw every thing in exaggerated colours. Out of this dream he was at length awakened, when he found that he had miscalculated the chances of patronage and the profits of literary labour.

"The heart which can peruse the fate of Chatterton without being moved, is little to be envied for its tranquillity; but the intellects of those men must be as deficient as their hearts are uncharitable, who, confounding all shades of moral distinction, have ranked his literary fiction of Rowley in the same class of crimes with pecuniary forgery; and have calculated that if he had not died by his own hand, he would have probably ended his days upon a gallows! This disgusting sentence has been pronounced upon a youth who was exemplary for severe study, temperance, and natural affection. His Rowleian forgery must indeed be pronounced improper by the general law which condemns all serious and deliberate falsifications; but it deprived no man of his fame; it had no sacrilegious interference with the memory of departed genius; it had not, like Lauder's imposture, any malignant motive to rob a party, or a country, of a name which was its pride and ornament."

Setting aside the opinion of those uncharitable biographers, whose imaginations have conducted him to the gibbet, it may be owned that his unformed cha-

racter exhibited strong and conflicting elements of good and evil. Even the momentary project of the infidel boy to become a Methodist preacher, betrays an obliquity of design and a contempt of human credulity that is not very amiable. But had he been spared, his pride and ambition would probably have come to flow in their proper channels. His understanding would have taught him the practical value of truth and the dignity of virtue, and he would have despised artifice, when he had felt the strength and security of wisdom. In estimating the promises of his genius, I would rather lean to the utmost enthusiasm of his admirers, than to the cold opinion of those who are afraid of being blinded to the defects of the poems attributed to Rowley, by the veil of obsolete phraseology which is thrown over them.

"The inequality of Chatterton's various productions may be compared to the disproportions of the ungrown giant. His works had nothing of the definite neatness of that precocious talent which stops short in early maturity. His thirst for knowledge was that of a being taught by instinct to lay up materials for the exercise of great and undeveloped powers. Even in his favourite maxim, pushed it might be to hyperbole, that a man by abstinence and perseverance might accomplish whatever he pleased, may be traced the indications of a genius which nature had meant to achieve works of immortality. Tasso alone can be compared to him as a juvenile prodigy. No English poet ever equalled him at the same age."—Vol. vi. pp. 156—162.

The account of Gray is excellent, and that of Goldsmith delightful. We can afford to give but an inconsiderable part of it.

"Goldsmith's poetry enjoys a calm and steady popularity. It inspires us, indeed, with no admiration of daring design, or of fertile invention; but it presents, within its narrow limits, a distinct and unbroken view of poetical delightfulness. His descriptions and sentiments have the pure zest of nature. He is refined without false delicacy, and correct without insipidity. Perhaps there is an intellectual composure in his manner, which may, in some passages, be said to approach to the reserved and prosaic; but he unbends from this graver strain of reflection, to tenderness, and even to playfulness, with an ease and grace almost exclusively his own: and connects extensive views of the happiness and interests of society, with pictures of life, that touch the heart by their familiarity. His language is certainly simple, though it is not cast in a rugged or careless mould. He is no disciple of the gaunt and famished school of simplicity. Deliberately as he wrote, he cannot be accused of wanting natural and idiomatic expression; but still it is select and refined expression. He uses the ornaments which must always distinguish true poetry from prose; and when he adopts colloquial plainness, it is with the utmost care and skill, to avoid a vulgar humility. There is more of this elegant simplicity, of this chaste economy and choice of words, in Goldsmith, than in any modern poet, or perhaps than would be attainable or desirable as a standard for every writer of rhyme. In extensive narrative poems such a style would be too difficult. There is a noble propriety even in the careless strength of great poems as in the roughness of castle walls; and, generally speaking, where there is a long course of story, or observation of life to be pursued, such exquisite touches as those of Goldsmith would be too costly materials for sustaining it. The tendency towards abstracted observation in his poetry agrees peculiarly with the compendious form of expression which he studied; whilst the homefelt joys, on which his fancy loved to repose, required at once the chastest and sweetest colours of language, to make them harmonize with the dignity of a philosophical poem. His whole manner has a still depth of feeling and reflection, which gives back the image of nature unruffled and minutely. He has no redundant thoughts, or false transports; but seems on every occasion to have weighed the impulse to which he surrendered himself. Whatever ardour or casual felicities he may have thus sacrificed, he gained a high degree of purity and self-possession. His chaste pathos makes him an insinuating moralist; and throws a charm of Claude-like softness over his descriptions of homely objects, that would seem only fit to be the subjects of Dutch painting. But his quiet enthusiasm leads the affections to humble things without a vulgar association: and he inspires us with a fondness to trace the simplest recollections of Auburn, till we count the furniture of its alehouse, and listen to the 'varnished clock that clicked behind the door.'"—Pp. 261—263.

There is too much of William Whitehead, and almost too much of Richard Glover,—and a great deal too much of Amhurst, Selden, Bramston, and Meston. Indeed the *ne quid nimis* seems to have been more forgotten by the learned editor in the last, than in any of the other volumes. Yet there is by no means too much of Burns, or Cowper, or even of the Wartons. The abstract of Burns's life is beautiful; and we are most willing to acknowledge that the defence of the poet, against some of the severities of this Journal, is substantially successful. No one who reads *all* that we have written of Burns, will doubt of the sincerity of our admiration for his genius, or of the depth of our veneration and sympathy for his lofty character and his untimely fate. We still think he had a vulgar taste in letter-writing; and too frequently patronized the belief of a connexion between licentious indulgences and generosity of character. But, on looking back on what we have said on these subjects, we are

sensible that we have expressed ourselves with too much bitterness, and made the words of our censure far more comprehensive than our meaning. A certain tone of exaggeration is incident, we fear, to the sort of writing in which we are engaged. Reckoning a little too much, perhaps, on the dulness of our readers, we are often led, unconsciously, to overstate our sentiments, in order to make them understood; and, where a little controversial warmth is added to a little love of effect, an excess of colouring is apt to steal over the canvass which ultimately offends no eye so much as our own. We gladly make this expiation to the shade of our illustrious countryman.

In his observations on Joseph Warton, Mr. C. resumes the controversy about the poetical character of Pope, upon which he had entered at the close of his Essay; and as to which we hope to have some other opportunity of giving our opinions. At present, however, we must hasten to a conclusion; and shall make our last extracts from the notice of Cowper, which is drawn up on somewhat of a larger scale than any other in the work. The abstract of his life is given with great tenderness and beauty, and with considerable fullness of detail. But the remarks on his poetry are the most precious, — and are all that we have now room to borrow.

"The nature of Cowper's works makes us peculiarly identify the poet and the man in perusing them. As an individual, he was retired and weaned from the vanities of the world; and, as an original writer, he left the ambitious and luxuriant subjects of fiction and passion, for those of real life and simple nature, and for the development of his own earnest feelings, in behalf of moral and religious truth. His language has such a masculine idiomatic strength, and his manner, whether he rises into grace or falls into negligence, has so much plain and familiar freedom, that we read no poetry with a deeper conviction of its sentiments having come from the author's heart; and of the enthusiasm, in whatever he describes, having been unfeigned and unexaggerated. He impresses us with the idea of a being, whose fine spirit had been long enough in the mixed society of the world to be polished by its intercourse, and yet withdrawn so soon as to retain an unworldly degree of purity and simplicity. He was advanced in years before he became an author; but his compositions display a tenderness of feeling so youthfully preserved, and even a vein of humour so far from being extinguished by his ascetic habits, that we can scarcely regret his not having written them at an earlier period of life. For he blends the determination of age with an exquisite and ingenuous sensibility; and though he sports very much with his subjects, yet, when he is in earnest, there is a gravity of long-felt conviction in his sentiments, which gives an uncommon ripeness of character to his poetry.

"It is due to Cowper to fix our regard on this unaffectedness and authenticity of his works, considered as representations of himself, because he forms a striking instance of genius writing the history of its own secluded feelings, reflections, and enjoyments, in a shape so interesting as to engage the imagination like a work of fiction. He has invented no character in fable, nor in the drama; but he has left a record of his own character, which forms not only an object of deep sympathy, but a subject for the study of human nature. His verse, it is true, considered as such a record, abounds with opposite traits of severity and gentleness, of playfulness and superstition, of solemnity and mirth, which appear almost anomalous; and there is, undoubtedly, sometimes an air of moody versatility in the extreme contrasts of his feelings. But looking to his poetry as an entire structure, it has a massive air of sincerity. It is founded in steadfast principles of belief; and, if we may prolong the architectural metaphor, though its arches may be sometimes gloomy, its tracery sportive, and its lights and shadows grotesquely crossed, yet altogether it still forms a vast, various, and interesting monument of the builder's mind. Young's works are as devout, as satirical, sometimes as merry, as those of Cowper; and, undoubtedly, more witty. But the melancholy and wit of Young do not make up to us the idea of a conceivable or natural being. He has sketched in his pages the ingenious, but incongruous form of a fictitious mind — Cowper's soul speaks from his volumes."

"Considering the tenor and circumstances of his life, it is not much to be wondered at, that some asperities and peculiarities should have adhered to the strong stem of his genius, like the moss and fungus that cling to some noble oak of the forest, amidst the damps of its unsunned retirement. It is more surprising that he preserved, in such seclusion, so much genuine power of comic observation. There is much of the full distinctness of Theophrastus, and of the nervous and concise spirit of La Bruyère, in his piece entitled 'Conversation,' with a cast of humour superadded, which is peculiarly English, and not to be found out of England." — Vol. vii. pp. 357, 358.

Of his greatest work, The Task, he afterwards observes,

"His whimsical outset in a work, where he promises so little and performs so much, may be advantageously contrasted with those magnificent commencements of poems, which pledge both the reader and the writer, in good earnest, to a task. Cowper's poem, on the contrary, is like a river, which rises

from a playful little fountain, and gathers beauty and magnitude as it proceeds. He leads us abroad into his daily walks; he exhibits the landscapes which he was accustomed to contemplate, and the trains of thought in which he habitually indulged. No attempt is made to interest us in legendary fictions, or historical recollections connected with the ground over which he expatiates; all is plainness and reality: but we instantly recognize the true poet, in the clearness, sweetness, and fidelity of his scenic draughts; in his power of giving novelty to what is common; and in the high relish, the exquisite enjoyment of rural sights and sounds, which he communicates to the spirit. 'His eyes drink the rivers with delight.' He excites an idea, that almost amounts to sensation, of the freshness and delight of a rural walk, even when he leads us to the wasteful common, which

—— 'Overgrown with fern and rough
With prickly gorse, that, shapeless and deform'd,
And dang'rous to the touch, has yet its bloom,
And decks itself with ornaments of gold,
Yields no unpleasing ramble. There the turf
Smells fresh, and, rich in odorif'rous herbs
And fungous fruits of earth, regales the sense
With luxuries of unexpected sweets.'

"His rural prospects have far less variety and compass than those of Thomson; but his graphic touches are more close and minute: not that Thomson was either deficient or undelightful in circumstantial traits of the beauty of nature, but he looked to her as a whole more than Cowper. His genius was more excursive and philosophical. The poet of Olney, on the contrary, regarded human philosophy with something of theological contempt. To his eye, the great and little things of this world were levelled into an equality, by his recollection of the power and purposes of Him who made them. They are, in his view, only as toys spread on the lap and carpet of nature, for this childhood of our immortal being. This religious indifference to the world is far, indeed, from blunting his sensibility to the genuine and simple beauties of creation; but it gives his taste a contentment and fellowship with humble things. It makes him careless of selecting and refining his views of nature beyond their actual appearances. He contemplated the face of plain rural English life, in moments of leisure and sensibility, till its minutest features were impressed upon his fancy; and he sought not to embellish what he loved. Hence his landscapes have less of the ideally beautiful than Thomson's; but they have an unrivalled charm of truth and reality.

"He is one of the few poets, who have indulged neither in descriptions nor acknowledgments of the passion of love; but there is no poet who has given us a finer conception of the amenity of female influence. Of all the verses that have been ever devoted to the subject of domestic happiness, those in his winter evening, at the opening of the fourth book of The Task, are perhaps the most beautiful. In perusing that scene of 'intimate delights,' 'fireside enjoyments,' and 'home-born happiness,' we seem to recover a part of the forgotten value of existence; when we recognize the means of its blessedness so widely dispensed, and so cheaply attainable, and find them susceptible of description at once so enchanting and so faithful.

"Though the scenes of The Task are laid in retirement, the poem affords an amusing perspective of human affairs. Remote as the poet was from the stir of the great Babel, from the '*confusæ sonus Urbis, et illætabile murmur*,' he glances at most of the subjects of public interest which engaged the attention of his contemporaries. On those subjects, it is but faint praise to say that he espoused the side of justice and humanity. Abundance of mediocrity of talent is to be found on the same side, rather injuring than promoting the cause, by its officious declamation. But nothing can be further from the stale commonplace and cuckooism of sentiment, than the philanthropic eloquence of Cowper—he speaks 'like one having authority.' Society is his debtor. Poetical expositions of the horrors of slavery may, indeed, seem very unlikely agents in contributing to destroy it; and it is possible that the most refined planter in the West Indies, may look with neither shame nor compunction on his own image in the pages of Cowper. But such appeals to the heart of the community are not lost! They fix themselves silently in the popular memory; and they become, at last, a part of that public opinion, which must, sooner or later, wrench the lash from the hand of the oppressor."—Pp. 359—364.

But we must now break away at once from this delightful occupation; and take our final farewell of a work, in which what is original is scarcely less valuable than what is republished, and in which the genius of a living Poet has shed a fresh grace over the fading glories of so many of his departed brothers. We wish somebody would continue the work, by furnishing us with Specimens of our Living Poets. It would be more difficult, to be sure, and more dangerous; but, in some respects, it would also be more useful. The beauties of the unequal and voluminous writers would be more conspicuous in a selection; and the different styles and schools of poetry would be brought into fairer and nearer terms of comparison, by the mere juxta-position of their best productions; while a better and clearer view would be obtained, both of the general progress and apparent tendencies of the art, than can easily be gathered from the separate study of each important production. The mind of the critic, too, would be at once enlightened and tranquillized by the very great-

ness of the horizon thus subjected to this survey; and he would probably regard, both with less enthusiasm and less offence, those contrasted and compensating beauties and defects, when presented together, and as it were in combination, than he can ever do when they come upon him in distinct masses, and without the relief and softening of so varied an assemblage. On the other hand, it cannot be dissembled, that such a work would be very trying to the unhappy editor's prophetic reputation, as well as to his impartiality and temper; and would, at all events, subject him to the most serious imputations of unfairness and malignity. In point of courage and candour, we do not know anybody who would do it much better than ourselves! And if Mr. Campbell could only impart to us a fair share of his elegance, his fine perceptions, and his conciseness, we should like nothing better than to suspend, for a while, these periodical lucubrations, and furnish out a gallery of Living Bards, to match this exhibition of the Departed.

JOHN FORD.

(August, 1811.)

The Dramatic Works of John Ford: *with an Introduction and Explanatory Notes.* By Henry Weber, Esq. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 950. Edinburgh and London: 1811.

All true lovers of English poetry have been long in love with the dramatists of the time of Elizabeth and James; and must have been sensibly comforted by their late restoration to some degree of favour and notoriety. If there was any good reason, indeed, to believe that the notice which they have recently attracted proceeded from any thing but that indiscriminate rage for editing and annotating by which the present times are so happily distinguished, we should be disposed to hail it as the most unequivocal symptom of improvement in public taste that has yet occurred to reward and animate our labours. At all events, however, it gives us a chance for such an improvement; by placing in the hands of many, who would not otherwise have heard of them, some of those beautiful performances which we have always regarded as among the most pleasing and characteristic productions of our native genius.

Ford certainly is not the best of those neglected writers,—nor Mr. Weber by any means the best of their recent editors: but we cannot resist the opportunity which this publication seems to afford, of saying a word or two of a class of writers, whom we have long worshipped in secret with a sort of idolatrous veneration, and now find once more brought forward as candidates for public applause. The æra to which they belong, indeed, has always appeared to us by far the brightest in the history of English literature,—or indeed of human intellect and capacity. There never was, any where, any thing like the sixty or seventy years that elapsed from the middle of Elizabeth's reign to the period of the Restoration. In point of real force and originality of genius, neither the age of Pericles, nor the age of Augustus, nor the times of Leo X., nor of Louis XIV., can come at all into comparison: for, in that short period, we shall find the names of almost all the very great men that this nation has ever produced,—the names of Shakspeare, and Bacon, and Spenser, and Sydney,—and Hooker, and Taylor, and Barrow, and Raleigh,—and Napier, and Milton, and Cudworth, and Hobbes, and many others;—men, all of them, not merely of great talents and accomplishments but of vast compass and reach of understanding, and of minds truly creative and original;—not perfecting art by the delicacy of their taste, or digesting knowledge by the justness of their reasonings; but making vast and substantial additions to the materials upon which taste and reason must hereafter be employed,—and enlarging, to an incredible and unparalleled extent, both the stores and the resources of the human faculties.

Whether the brisk concussion which was given to men's minds by the force of the Reformation had much effect in producing this sudden development of British genius, we cannot undertake to determine. For our own part, we should be rather inclined to hold, that the Reformation itself was but one symptom or effect of that great spirit of progression and improvement which had been set in operation by deeper and more general causes; and which

afterwards blossomed out into this splendid harvest of authorship. But whatever may have been the causes that determined the appearance of those great works, the fact is certain, not only that they appeared together in great numbers, but that they possessed a common character, which, in spite of the great diversity of their subjects and designs, would have made them be classed together as the works of the same order or description of men, even if they had appeared at the most distant intervals of time. They are the works of Giants, in short—and of Giants of one nation and family; — and their characteristics are, great force, boldness, and originality; together with a certain raciness of English peculiarity, which distinguishes them from all those performances that have since been produced among ourselves, upon a more vague and general idea of European excellence. Their sudden appearance, indeed, in all this splendour of native luxuriance, can only be compared to what happens on the breaking up of a virgin soil,—where all indigenous plants spring up at once with a rank and irrepressible fertility, and display whatever is peculiar or excellent in their nature, on a scale the most conspicuous and magnificent. The crops are not indeed so clean, as where a more exhausted mould has been stimulated by systematic cultivation; nor so profitable, as where their quality has been varied by a judicious admixture of exotics, and accommodated to the demands of the universe by the combinations of an unlimited trade. But to those whose chief object of admiration is the living power and energy of vegetation, and who take delight in contemplating the various forms of her unforced and natural perfection, no spectacle can be more rich, splendid, or attractive.

In the times of which we are speaking, classical learning, though it had made great progress, had by no means become an exclusive study; and the ancients had not yet been permitted to subdue men's minds to a sense of hopeless inferiority, or to condemn the moderns to the lot of humble imitators. They were resorted to, rather to furnish materials and occasional ornaments, than as models for the general style of composition; and, while they enriched the imagination, and insensibly improved the taste of their successors, they did not at all restrain their freedom, or impair their originality. No common standard had yet been erected, to which all the works of European genius were required to conform; and no general authority was acknowledged, by which all private or local ideas of excellence must submit to be corrected. Both readers and authors were comparatively few in number. The former were infinitely less critical and difficult than they have since become; and the latter, if they were not less solicitous about fame, were at least much less jealous and timid as to the hazards which attended its pursuit. Men, indeed, seldom took to writing in those days, unless they had a great deal of matter to communicate; and neither imagined that they could make a reputation by delivering commonplaces in an elegant manner, or that the substantial value of their sentiments would be disregarded for a little rudeness or negligence in the finishing. They were habituated, therefore, both to depend upon their own resources, and to draw upon them without fear or anxiety; and followed the dictates of their own taste and judgment, without standing much in awe of the ancients, of their readers, or of each other.

The achievements of Bacon, and those who set free our understandings from the shackles of Papal and of tyrannical imposition, afford sufficient evidence of the benefit which resulted to the reasoning faculties from this happy independence of the first great writers of this nation. But its advantages were, if possible, still more conspicuous in the mere literary character of their productions. The quantity of bright thoughts, of original images, and splendid expressions, which they poured forth upon every occasion, and by which they illuminated and adorned the darkest and most rugged topics to which they had happened to turn themselves, is such as has never been equalled in any other age or country; and places them at least as high, in point of fancy and imagination, as of force of reason, or comprehensiveness of understanding. In this highest and most comprehensive sense of the word, a great proportion of the writers we have alluded to were *Poets:* and, without going to those who composed in metre, and chiefly for purposes of delight, we will venture to assert, that there is in any one of the prose folios of

Jeremy Taylor more fine fancy and original imagery—more brilliant conceptions and glowing expressions—more new figures, and new application of old figures—more, in short, of the body and the soul of poetry, than in all the odes and the epics that have since been produced in Europe. There are large portions of Barrow, and of Hooker and Bacon, of which we may say nearly as much: nor can any one have a tolerably adequate idea of the riches of our language and our native genius, who has not made himself acquainted with the prose writers, as well as the poets, of this memorable period.

The civil wars and the fanaticism by which they were fostered, checked all this fine bloom of the imagination, and gave a different and less attractive character to the energies which they could not extinguish. Yet, those were the times that matured and drew forth the dark, but powerful genius of such men as Cromwell, and Harrison, and Fleetwood, &c. —the milder and more generous enthusiasm of Blake, and Hutchinson, and Hampden—and the stirring and indefatigable spirit of Pym, and Hollis, and Vane—and the chivalrous and accomplished loyalty of Strafford and Falkland; at the same time that they stimulated and repaid the severer studies of Coke, and Selden, and Milton. The Drama, however, was entirely destroyed, and has never since regained its honours; and Poetry, in general, lost its ease, and its majesty and force, along with its copiousness and originality.

The Restoration made things still worse: for it broke down the barriers of our literary independence, and reduced us to a province of the great republic of Europe. The genius and fancy which lingered through the usurpation, though soured and blighted by the severities of that inclement season, were still genuine English genius and fancy; and owned no allegiance to any foreign authorities. But the Restoration brought in a French taste upon us, and what was called a classical and a polite taste; and the wings of our English Muses were clipped and trimmed, and their flights regulated at the expense of all that was peculiar, and much of what was brightest in their beauty. The King and his courtiers, during their long exile, had of course imbibed the taste of their protectors; and, coming from the gay court of France, with something of that additional profligacy that belonged to their outcast and adventurer character, were likely enough to be revolted by the peculiarities, and by the very excellencies, of our native literature. The grand and sublime tone of our greater poets, appeared to them dull, morose, and gloomy; and the fine play of their rich and unrestrained fancy, mere childishness and folly; while their frequent lapses and perpetual irregularity were set down as clear indications of barbarity and ignorance. Such sentiments, too, were natural, we must admit, for a few dissipated and witty men, accustomed all their days to the regulated splendour of a court—to the gay and heartless gallantry of French manners—and to the imposing pomp and brilliant regularity of French poetry. But it may appear somewhat more unaccountable that they should have been able to impose their sentiments upon the great body of the nation. A court, indeed, never has so much influence as at the moment of a restoration; but the influence of an English court has been but rarely discernible in the literature of the country; and had it not been for the peculiar circumstances in which the nation was then placed, we believe it would have resisted this attempt to naturalize foreign notions, as sturdily as it was done on almost every other occasion.

At this particular moment, however, the native literature of the country had been sunk into a very low and feeble state by the rigours of the usurpation,—the best of its recent models laboured under the reproach of republicanism,—and the courtiers were not only disposed to see all its peculiarities with an eye of scorn and aversion, but had even a good deal to say in favour of that very opposite style to which they had been habituated. It was a witty, and a grand, and a splendid style. It showed more scholarship and art, than the luxuriant negligence of the old English school; and was not only free from many of its hazards and some of its faults, but possessed merits of its own, of a character more likely to please those who had then the power of conferring celebrity, or condemning to derision. Then it was a style which it was peculiarly easy to justify by argument; and in support of which great authorities, as well as imposing reasons, were always ready to be produced. It came

upon us with the air and the pretension of being the style of cultivated Europe, and a true copy of the style of polished antiquity. England, on the other hand, had had but little intercourse with the rest of the world for a considerable period of time: her language was not at all studied on the Continent, and her native authors had not been taken into account in forming those ideal standards of excellence which had been recently constructed in France and Italy upon the authority of the Roman classics, and of their own most celebrated writers. When the comparison came to be made, therefore, it is easy to imagine that it should generally be thought to be very much to our disadvantage, and to understand how the great multitude, even among ourselves, should be dazzled with the pretensions of the fashionable style of writing, and actually feel ashamed of their own richer and more varied productions.

It would greatly exceed our limits to describe accurately the particulars in which this new Continental style differed from our old insular one: but, for our present purpose, it may be enough perhaps to say, that it was more worldly, and more townish, — holding more of reason, and ridicule, and authority — more elaborate and more unassuming — addressed more to the judgment than to the feelings, and somewhat ostentatiously accommodated to the habits, or supposed habits, of persons in fashionable life. Instead of tenderness and fancy, we had satire and sophistry — artificial declamation, in place of the spontaneous animations of genius — and for the universal language of Shakspeare, the personalities, the party politics, and the brutal obscenities of Dryden. Nothing, indeed, can better characterize the change which had taken place in our national taste, than the alterations and additions which this eminent person presumed — and thought it necessary — to make on the productions of Shakspeare and Milton. The heaviness, the coarseness, and the bombast of that abominable travestie, in which he has exhibited the Paradise Lost in the form of an opera, and the atrocious indelicacy and compassionable stupidity of the new characters with which he has polluted the enchanted solitude of Miranda and Prospero in the Tempest, are such instances of degeneracy as we would be apt to impute rather to some transient hallucination in the author himself, than to the general prevalence of any systematic bad taste in the public, did we not know that Wycherley and his coadjutors were in the habit of converting the neglected dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher into popular plays, merely by leaving out all the romantic sweetness of their characters — turning their melodious blank verse into vulgar prose — and aggravating the indelicacy of their lower characters, by lending a more disgusting indecency to the whole *dramatis personæ*.

Dryden was, beyond all comparison, the greatest poet of his own day; and, endued as he was with a vigorous and discursive imagination, and possessing a mastery over his language which no later writer has attained, if he had known nothing of foreign literature, and been left to form himself on the models of Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton; or if he had lived in the country, at a distance from the pollutions of courts, factions, and playhouses, there is reason to think that he would have built up the pure and original school of English poetry so firmly, as to have made it impossible for fashion, or caprice, or prejudice of any sort, ever to have rendered any other popular among our own inhabitants As it is, he has not written one line that is pathetic, and very few that can be considered as sublime.

Addison, however, was the consummation of this Continental style; and if it had not been redeemed about the same time by the fine talents of Pope, would probably have so far discredited it, as to have brought us back to our original faith half a century ago. The extreme caution, timidity, and flatness of this author in his poetical compositions — the narrowness of his range in poetical sentiment and diction, and the utter want either of passion or of brilliancy, render it difficult to believe that he was born under the same sun with Shakspeare, and wrote but a century after him. His fame, at this day, stands solely upon the delicacy, the modest gaiety, and ingenious purity of his prose style; — for the occasional elegance and small ingenuity of his poems can never redeem the poverty of their diction, and the tameness of their conception. Pope has incomparably more spirit and taste

and animation: but Pope is a satirist, and a moralist, and a wit, and a critic, and a fine writer, much more than he is a poet. He has all the delicacies and proprieties and felicities of diction — but he has not a great deal of fancy, and scarcely ever touches any of the greater passions. He is much the best, we think, of the classical Continental school; but he is not to be compared with the masters — nor with the pupils — of that Old English one from which there had been so lamentable an apostacy. There are no pictures of nature or of simple emotion in all his writings. He is the poet of town life, and of high life, and of literary life; and seems so much afraid of incurring ridicule by the display of natural feeling or unregulated fancy, that it is difficult not to imagine that he would have thought such ridicule very well directed.

The best of what we copied from the Continental poets, on this desertion of our own great originals, is to be found, perhaps, in the lighter pieces of Prior. That tone of polite raillery — that airy, rapid, picturesque narrative, mixed up with wit and *naïveté* — that style, in short, of good conversation concentrated into flowing and polished verses, was not within the vein of our native poets; and probably never would have been known among us, if we had been left to our own resources. It is lamentable that this, which alone was worth borrowing, is the only thing which has not been retained. The tales and little apologues of Prior are still the only examples of this style in our language.

With the wits of Queen Anne this foreign school attained the summit of its reputation; and has ever since, we think, been declining, though by slow and almost imperceptible gradations. Thomson was the first writer of any eminence who seceded from it, and made some steps back to the force and animation of our original poetry. Thomson, however, was educated in Scotland, where the new style, we believe, had not yet become familiar; and lived, for a long time, a retired and unambitious life, with very little intercourse with those who gave the tone in literature at the period of his first appearance. Thomson, accordingly, has always been popular with a much wider circle of readers, than either Pope or Addison; and in spite of considerable vulgarity and signal cumbrousness of diction, has drawn, even from the fastidious, a much deeper and more heartfelt admiration.

Young exhibits, we think, a curious combination, or contrast rather, of the two styles of which we have been speaking. Though incapable either of tenderness or passion, he had a richness and activity of fancy that belonged rather to the days of James and Elizabeth, than to those of George and Anne: — but then, instead of indulging it, as the old writers would have done, in easy and playful inventions, in splendid descriptions, or glowing illustrations, he was led, by the restraints and established taste of his age, to work it up into strained and fantastical epigrams, or into cold and revolting hyperboles. Instead of letting it flow gracefully on, in an easy and sparkling current, he perpetually forces it out in jets, or makes it stagnate in formal canals; — and thinking it necessary to write like Pope, when the bent of his genius led him rather to copy what was best in Cowley and most fantastic in Shakspeare, he has produced something which excites wonder instead of admiration, and is felt by every one to be at once ingenious, incongruous, and unnatural.

After Young, there was a plentiful lack of poetical talent, down to a period comparatively recent. Akenside and Gray, indeed, in the interval discovered a new way of imitating the ancients; — and Collins and Goldsmith produced some small specimens of exquisite and original poetry. At last, Cowper threw off the whole trammels of French criticism and artificial refinement; and, setting at defiance all the imaginary requisites of poetical diction and classical imagery — dignity of style, and politeness of phraseology — ventured to write again with the force and the freedom which had characterized the old school of English literature, and been so unhappily sacrificed, upwards of a century before. Cowper had many faults, and some radical deficiencies; — but this atoned for all. There was something so delightfully refreshing, in seeing natural phrases and natural images again displaying their unforced graces, and waving their unpruned heads in the enchanted gardens of poetry, that no one complained of the taste displayed in the selection; — and Cowper is, and is likely to continue, the most popular of all who have

written for the present or the last generation.

Of the poets who have come after him, we cannot, indeed, say that they have attached themselves to the school of Pope and Addison; or that they have even failed to show a much stronger predilection for the native beauties of their great predecessors. Southey, and Wordsworth, and Coleridge, and Miss Baillie, have all of them copied the manner of our old poets; and, along with this indication of good taste, have given great proofs of original genius. The misfortune is, that their copies of those great originals are liable to the charge of extreme affectation. They do not write as those great poets would have written: they merely mimic their manner, and ape their peculiarities; — and consequently, though they profess to imitate the freest and most careless of all versifiers, their style is more remarkably and offensively artificial than that of any other class of writers. They have mixed in, too, so much of the mawkish tone of pastoral innocence and babyish simplicity, with a sort of pedantic emphasis and ostentatious glitter, that it is difficult not to be disgusted with their perversity, and with the solemn self-complacency, and keen and vindictive jealousy, with which they have put in their claims on public admiration. But we have said enough elsewhere of the faults of those authors; and shall only add, at present, that, notwithstanding all these faults, there is a fertility and a force, a warmth of feeling and an exaltation of imagination about them, which classes them, in our estimation, with a much higher order of poets than the followers of Dryden and Addison; and justifies an anxiety for their fame, in all the admirers of Milton and Shakspeare.

Of Scott, or of Campbell, we need scarcely say any thing, with reference to our present object, after the very copious accounts we have given of them on former occasions. The former professes to copy something a good deal older than what we consider as the golden age of English poetry, — and, in reality, has copied every style, and borrowed from every manner that has prevailed, from the times of Chaucer to his own; — illuminating and uniting, if not harmonizing them all, by a force of colouring, and a rapidity of succession, which is not to be met with in any of his many models. The latter, we think, can scarcely be said to have copied his pathos, or his energy, from any models whatever, either recent or early. The exquisite harmony of his versification is elaborated, perhaps, from the Castle of Indolence of Thomson, and the serious pieces of Goldsmith; — and it seems to be his misfortune, not to be able to reconcile himself to any thing which he cannot reduce within the limits of this elaborate harmony. This extreme fastidiousness, and the limitation of his efforts to themes of unbroken tenderness or sublimity, distinguish him from the careless, prolific, and miscellaneous authors of our primitive poetry; — while the enchanting softness of his pathetic passages, and the power and originality of his more sublime conceptions, place him at a still greater distance from the wits, as they truly called themselves, of Charles II. and Queen Anne.

We do not know what other apology to offer for this hasty, and, we fear, tedious sketch of the history of our poetry, but that it appeared to us to be necessary, in order to explain the peculiar merit of that class of writers to which the author before us belongs; and that it will very greatly shorten what we have still to say on the characteristics of our older dramatists. An opinion prevails very generally on the Continent, and with foreign-bred scholars among ourselves, that our national taste has been corrupted chiefly by our idolatry of Shakspeare; — and that it is our patriotic and traditional admiration of that singular writer, that reconciles us to the monstrous compound of faults and beauties that occur in his performances, and must to all impartial judges appear quite absurd and unnatural. Before entering upon the character of a contemporary dramatist, it was of some importance, therefore, to show that there was a distinct, original, and independent school of literature in England in the time of Shakspeare; to the general tone of whose productions his works were sufficiently conformable; and that it was owing to circumstances in a great measure accidental, that this native school was superseded about the time of the Restoration, and a foreign standard of excellence intruded on us, not in the drama only, but in every other department of poetry. This new style of composition, however, though adorned and recommended by the splendid

talents of many of its followers, was never perfectly naturalized, we think, in this country; and has ceased, in a great measure, to be cultivated by those who have lately aimed with the greatest success at the higher honours of poetry. Our love of Shakspeare, therefore, is not a *monomania* or solitary and unaccountable infatuation; but is merely the natural love which all men bear to those forms of excellence that are accommodated to their peculiar character, temperament, and situation; and which will always return, and assert its power over their affections, long after authority has lost its reverence, fashions been antiquated, and artificial tastes passed away. In endeavouring, therefore, to bespeak some share of favour for such of his contemporaries as had fallen out of notice, during the prevalence of an imported literature, we conceive that we are only enlarging that foundation of native genius on which alone any lasting superstructure can be raised, and invigorating that deep-rooted stock upon which all the perennial blossoms of our literature must still be engrafted.

The notoriety of Shakspeare may seem to make it superfluous to speak of the peculiarities of those old dramatists, of whom he will be admitted to be so worthy a representative. Nor shall we venture to say any thing of the confusion of their plots, the disorders of their chronology, their contempt of the unities, or their imperfect discrimination between the provinces of Tragedy and Comedy. Yet there are characteristics which the lovers of literature may not be displeased to find enumerated, and which may constitute no dishonourable distinction for the whole fraternity, independent of the splendid talents and incommunicable graces of their great chieftain.

Of the old English dramatists, then, including under this name (besides Shakspeare) Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Jonson, Ford, Shirley, Webster, Dekkar, Field, and Rowley, it may be said, in general, that they are more poetical, and more original in their diction, than the dramatists of any other age or country. Their scenes abound more in varied images, and gratuitous excursions of fancy. Their illustrations, and figures of speech, are more borrowed from rural life, and from the simple occupations or universal feelings of mankind. They are not confined to a certain range of dignified expressions, nor restricted to a particular assortment of imagery, beyond which it is not lawful to look for embellishments. Let any one compare the prodigious variety, and wide-ranging freedom of Shakspeare, with the narrow round of flames, tempests, treasons, victims, and tyrants, that scantily adorn the sententious pomp of the French drama, and he will not fail to recognize the vast superiority of the former, in the excitement of the imagination, and all the diversities of poetical delight. That very mixture of styles, of which the French critics have so fastidiously complained, forms, when not carried to any height of extravagance, one of the greatest charms of our ancient dramatists. It is equally sweet and natural for personages toiling on the barren heights of life, to be occasionally recalled to some vision of pastoral innocence and tranquillity, as for the victims or votaries of ambition to cast a glance of envy and agony on the joys of humble content.

Those charming old writers, however, have a still more striking peculiarity in their conduct of the dialogue. On the modern stage, every scene is *visibly* studied and digested beforehand,—and every thing from beginning to end, whether it be description, or argument, or vituperation, is very obviously and ostentatiously set forth in the most advantageous light, and with all the decorations of the most elaborate rhetoric. Now, for mere rhetoric, and fine composition, this is very right;—but, for an imitation of nature, it is not quite so well: and however we may admire the skill of the artist, we are not very likely to be moved with any very lively sympathy in the emotions of those very rhetorical interlocutors. When we come to any important part of the play, on the Continental or modern stage, we are sure to have a most complete, formal, and exhausting discussion of it, in long flourishing orations;—argument after argument propounded and answered with infinite ingenuity, and topic after topic brought forward in well-digested method, without any deviation that the most industrious and practised pleader would not approve of,—till nothing more remains to be said, and a new scene introduces us to a new set of gladiators, as expert and persevering as the former. It is exactly the same when a story is to be

told,—a tyrant to be bullied,—or a princess to be wooed. On the old English stage, however, the proceedings were by no means so regular. There the discussions always appear to be casual, and the argument quite artless and disorderly. The persons of the drama, in short, are made to. speak like men and women who meet without preparation, in real life. Their reasonings are perpetually broken by passion, or left imperfect for want of skill. They constantly wander from the point in hand, in the most unbusiness-like manner in the world;—and after hitting upon a topic that would afford a judicious playwright room for a magnificent seesaw of pompous declamation, they have generally the awkwardness to let it slip, as if perfectly unconscious of its value; and uniformly leave the scene without exhausting the controversy, or stating half the plausible things for themselves that any ordinary advisers might have suggested—after a few weeks' reflection. As specimens of eloquent argumentation, we must admit the signal inferiority of our native favourites; but as true copies of nature,—as vehicles of passion, and representations of character, we confess we are tempted to give them the preference. When a dramatist brings his chief characters on the stage, we readily admit that he must give them something to say,—and that this something must be interesting and characteristic;—but he should recollect also, that they are supposed to come there without having anticipated all they were to hear, or meditated on all they were to deliver; and that it cannot be characteristic, therefore, because it must be glaringly unnatural, that they should proceed regularly through every possible view of the subject, and exhaust, in set order, the whole magazine of reflections that can be brought to bear upon their situation.

It would not be fair, however, to leave this view of the matter, without observing, that this unsteadiness and irregularity of dialogue, which gives such an air of nature to our older plays, and keeps the curiosity and attention so perpetually awake, is frequently carried to a most blameable excess; and that, independent of their passion for verbal quibbles, there is an inequality and a capricious uncertainty in the taste and judgment of these good old writers, which excites at once our amazement and our compassion. If it be true, that no other man has ever written so finely as Shakspeare has done in his happier passages, it is no less true that there is not a scribbler now alive who could possibly write worse than he has sometimes written,—who could, on occasion, devise more contemptible ideas, or misplace them so abominably, by the side of such incomparable excellence. That there were no critics, and no critical readers in those days, appears to us but an imperfect solution of the difficulty. He who could write so admirably must have been a critic to himself. *Children*, indeed, may play with the most precious gems, and the most worthless pebbles, without being aware of any difference in their value; but the very powers which are necessary to the production of intellectual excellence, must enable the possessor to recognize it as excellence; and he who knows when he succeeds, can scarcely be unconscious of his failures. Unaccountable, however, as it is, the fact is certain, that almost all the dramatic writers of this age appear to be alternately inspired, and bereft of understanding; and pass, apparently without being conscious of the change, from the most beautiful displays of genius to the most melancholy exemplifications of stupidity.

There is only one other peculiarity which we shall notice in those ancient dramas; and that is, the singular, though very beautiful style, in which the greater part of them are composed,—a style which we think must be felt as peculiar by all who peruse them, though it is by no means easy to describe in what its peculiarity consists. It is not, for the most part, a lofty or sonorous style,—nor can it be said generally to be finical or affected,—or strained, quaint, or pedantic:—but it is, at the same time, a style full of turn and contrivance,—with some little degree of constraint and involution,—very often characterized by a studied briefness and simplicity of diction, yet relieved by a certain indirect and figurative cast of expression,—and almost always coloured with a modest tinge of ingenuity, and fashioned, rather too visibly, upon a particular model of elegance and purity. In scenes of powerful passion, this sort of artificial prettiness is commonly shaken off; and, in Shakspeare, it disappears under all

his forms of animation: but it sticks closer to most of his contemporaries. In Massinger (who has no passion), it is almost always discernible; and, in the author before us, it gives a peculiar tone to almost all the estimable parts of his productions.—It is now time, however, and more than time, that we should turn to this author.

His biography will not detain us long; for very little is known about him. He was born in Devonshire, in 1586; and entered as a student in the Middle Temple; where he began to publish poetry, and probably to write plays, soon after his twenty-first year. He did not publish any of his dramatic works, however, till 1629; and though he is supposed to have written fourteen or fifteen pieces for the theatres, only nine appear to have been printed, or to have found their way down to the present times. He is known to have written in conjunction with Rowley and Dekkar, and is supposed to have died about 1640;—and this is the whole that the industry of Mr. Weber, assisted by the researches of Steevens and Malone, has been able to discover of his author.

It would be useless, and worse than useless, to give our readers an abstract of the fable and management of each of the nine plays contained in the volumes before us. A very few brief remarks upon their general character, will form a sufficient introduction to the extracts, by which we propose to let our readers judge for themselves of the merits of their execution. The comic parts are all utterly bad. With none of the richness of Shakspeare's humour, the extravagant merriment of Beaumont and Fletcher, or the strong colouring of Ben Jonson, they are as heavy and as indecent as those of Massinger, and not more witty, though a little more varied, than the buffooneries of Wycherley or Dryden. Fortunately, however, the author's merry vein is not displayed in very many parts of his performances. His plots are not very cunningly digested; nor developed, for the most part, by a train of probable incidents. His characters are drawn rather with occasional felicity, than with general sagacity and judgment. Like those of Massinger, they are very apt to startle the reader with sudden and unexpected transformations, and to turn out, in the latter half of the play, very differently from what they promised to do in the beginning. This kind of surprise has been represented by some as a master-stroke of art in the author, and a great merit in the performance. We have no doubt at all, however, that it is to be ascribed merely to the writer's carelessness, or change of purpose; and have never failed to feel it a great blemish in every serious piece where it occurs.

The author has not much of the oratorical stateliness and imposing flow of Massinger; nor a great deal of the smooth and flexible diction, the wandering fancy, and romantic sweetness of Beaumont and Fletcher; and yet he comes nearer to these qualities than to any of the distinguishing characteristics of Jonson or Shakspeare. He excels most in representing the pride and gallantry, and high-toned honour of youth, and the enchanting softness, or the mild and graceful magnanimity of female character. There is a certain melancholy air about his most striking representations; and, in the tender and afflicting pathetic, he appears to us occasionally to be second only to him who has never yet had an equal. The greater part of every play, however, is bad; and there is not one which does not contain faults sufficient to justify the derision even of those who are incapable of comprehending its contrasted beauties.

The diction we think for the most part beautiful, and worthy of the inspired age which produced it. That we may not be suspected of misleading our readers by partial and selected quotations, we shall lay before them the very first sentence of the play which stands first in this collection. The subject is somewhat revolting; though managed with great spirit, and, in the more dangerous parts, with considerable dignity. A brother and sister fall mutually in love with each other; and abandon themselves, with a sort of splendid and perverted devotedness, to their incestuous passion. The sister is afterwards married, and their criminal intercourse detected by her husband,—when the brother, perceiving their destruction inevitable, first kills her, and then throws himself upon the sword of her injured husband. The play opens with his attempting to justify his passion to a holy friar, his tutor—who thus addresses him,

"*Friar.* Dispute no more in this; for know, young man,
These are no school points; Nice philosophy
May tolerate unlikely arguments,
But heaven admits no jest. Wits that presum'd
On wit too much, by striving how to prove
There was no God, with foolish grounds of art,
Discover'd first the nearest way to hell,
And fill'd the world with dev'lish atheism,
Such questions, youth, are fond: for better 'tis
To bless the sun, than reason why it shines;
Yet he thou talk'st of is above the sun.
No more! I may not hear it.
Gio. Gentle father,
To you I have unclasp'd my burden'd soul,
Emptied the storehouse of my thoughts and heart,
Made myself poor of secrets; have not left
Another word untold, which hath not spoke
All what I ever durst, or think, or know;
And yet is here the comfort I shall have?
Must I not do what all men else may,—love?
No, father! In your eyes I see the change
Of pity and compassion; from your age,
As from a sacred oracle, distils
The life of counsel. Tell me, holy man,
What cures shall give me ease in these extremes?
Friar. Repentance, son, and sorrow for this sin:
For thou hast mov'd a majesty above
With thy unranged, almost, blasphemy.
Gio. O do not speak of that, dear confessor.
Friar. Then I have done, and in thy wilful flames
Already see thy ruin; Heaven is just:
Yet hear my counsel!
Gio. As a voice of life.
Friar. Hie to thy father's house; there lock thee fast
Alone within thy chamber; then fall down
On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground;
Cry to thy heart; wash every word thou utter'st
In tears (and if 't be possible) of blood:
Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of love
That rots thy soul; weep, sigh, pray
Three times a day, and three times every night:
For seven days' space do this; then if thou find'st
No change in thy desires, return to me;
I'll think on remedy. Pray for thyself
At home whilst I pray for thee here. Away!
My blessing with thee! We have need to pray."—
Vol. i. pp. 9—12.

In a subsequent scene with the sister, the same holy person maintains the dignity of his style.

"*Friar.* I am glad to see this penance; for, believe me,
You have unripp'd a soul so foul and guilty,
As I must tell you true, I marvel how
The earth hath borne you up; but weep, weep on,
These tears may do you good; weep faster yet,
Whilst I do read a lecture.
Ann. Wretched creature!
Friar. Ay, you are wretched, miserably wretched,
Almost condemn'd alive. There is a place,
(List, daughter) in a black and hollow vault,
Where day is never seen; there shines no sun,
But flaming horror of consuming fires;
A lightless sulphur, chok'd with smoky fogs
Of an infected darkness; in this place
Dwell many thousand thousand sundry sorts
Of never-dying deaths. There damned souls
Roar without pity; there are gluttons fed
With toads and adders; there is burning oil
Pour'd down the drunkard's throat; the usurer
Is forc'd to sup whole draughts of molten gold;
There is the murderer for ever stabb'd,
Yet can he never die; there lies the wanton
On racks of burning steel, whilst in his soul
He feels the torment of his raging lust.
Ann. Mercy! oh mercy!
Friar. There stand these wretched things,
Who have dream'd out whole years in lawless sheets
And secret incests, cursing one another," &c.
Vol. i. pp. 63, 64.

The most striking scene of the play, however, is that which contains the catastrophe of the lady's fate. Her husband, after shutting her up for some time in gloomy privacy, invites her brother, and all his family, to a solemn banquet; and even introduces him, before it is served up, into her private chamber, where he finds her, sitting on her marriage-bed, in splendid attire, but filled with boding terrors and agonising anxiety. He, though equally aware of the fate that was prepared for them, addresses her at first with a kind of wild and desperate gaiety, to which she tries for a while to answer with sober and earnest warnings, — and at last exclaims impatiently,

"*Ann.* O let's not waste
These precious hours in vain and useless speech.
Alas, these gay attires were not put on
But to some end; this sudden solemn feast
Was not ordain'd to riot in expense;
I that have now been chamber'd here alone,
Barr'd of my guardian, or of any else,
Am not for nothing at an instant freed
To fresh access. Be not deceiv'd, my brother;
This banquet is an harbinger of Death
To you and me! resolve yourself it is,
And be prepar'd to welcome it.
Gio. Look up, look here: what see you in my face?
Ann. Distraction and a troubled countenance.
Gio. Death, and a swift repining wrath! —— Yet look
What see you in mine eyes?
Ann. Methinks you weep.

Gio. I do indeed. These are the funeral tears
Shed on your grave! These furrow'd up my cheeks
When first I lov'd and knew not how to woo.
Fair Annabella! should I here repeat
The story of my life, we might lose time!
Be record, all the spirits of the air,
And all things else that are, that day and night,
Early and late, the tribute which my heart
Hath paid to Annabella's sacred love
Hath been these tears,—which are her mourners now!
Never till now did nature do her best
To show a matchless beauty to the world,
Which in an instant, ere it scarce was seen,
The jealous destinies require again.
Pray, Annabella, pray! since we must part,
Go thou, white in thy soul, to fill a throne
Of innocence and sanctity in heaven.
Pray, pray, my sister.
Ann. Then I see your drift;
Ye blessed angels, guard me!
Gio. So say I.
Kiss me! If ever after-times should hear
Of our fast-knit affections, though perhaps
The laws of conscience and of civil use
May justly blame us, yet when they but know
Our loves, that love will wipe away that rigour,
Which would in other incests be abhorr'd.
Give me your hand. How sweetly life doth run
In these well-colour'd veins! how constantly
These palms do promise health! but I could chide
With nature for this cunning flattery.—
Kiss me again;—forgive me!
Ann. With my heart.
Gio. Farewell.
Ann. Will you be gone?
Gio. Be dark, bright sun,
And make this mid-day night, that thy gilt rays
May not behold a deed will turn their splendour
Moore sooty than the poets feign their Styx!
One other kiss, my sister!
Ann. What means this?
Gio. To save thy fame, and kill thee in a kiss!
[*Stabs her.*
Thus die! and die by me, and by my hand!
Ann. Oh brother, by your hand!
Gio. When thou art dead
I'll give my reasons for 't; for to dispute
With thee, even in thy death, most lovely beauty,
Would make me stagger to perform this act
Which I most glory in.
Ann. Forgive him, Heaven—and me my sins!
Farewell.
Brother unkind, unkind,—mercy, great Heaven,—
oh—oh. [*Dies.*
Gio. She's dead, alas, good soul! This marriage-bed,
In all her best, bore her alive and dead.
Soranzo, thou hast miss'd thy aim in this;
I have prevented now thy reaching plots,
And kill'd a love, for whose each drop of blood
I would have pawn'd my heart. Fair Annabella,
How over-glorious art thou in thy wounds,
Triumphing over infamy and hate!
Shrink not, courageous hand; stand up, my heart,
And boldly act my last, and greater part!
[*Exit with the Body.*"
Vol. i. pp. 98—101.

There are few things finer than this in Shakspeare. It bears an obvious resemblance indeed to the death of Desdemona; and, taking it as a detached scene, we think it rather the more beautiful of the two. The sweetness of the diction—the natural tone of tenderness and passion—the strange perversion of kind and magnanimous natures, and the horrid catastrophe by which their guilt is at once consummated and avenged, have not often been rivalled, in the pages either of the modern or the ancient drama.

The play entitled "The Broken Heart," is in our author's best manner; and would supply more beautiful quotations than we have left room for inserting. The story is a little complicated; but the following slight sketch of it will make our extracts sufficiently intelligible. Penthea, a noble lady of Sparta, was betrothed, with her father's approbation and her own full consent, to Orgilus; but being solicited, at the same time, by Bassanes, a person of more splendid fortune, was, after her father's death, in a manner compelled by her brother Ithocles to violate her first engagement, and yield him her hand. In this ill-assorted alliance, though living a life of unimpeachable purity, she was harassed and degraded by the perpetual jealousies of her unworthy husband; and pined away, like her deserted lover, in sad and bitter recollections of the happy promise of their youth. Ithocles, in the meantime, had pursued the course of ambition with a bold and commanding spirit, and had obtained the highest honours of his country; but too much occupied in the pursuit to think of the misery to which he had condemned the sister who was left to his protection: at last, however, in the midst of his proud career, he is seized with a sudden passion for Calantha, the heiress of the sovereign; and, after many struggles, is reduced to ask the intercession and advice of his unhappy sister, who was much in favour with the princess. The following is the scene in which he makes this request;—and to those who have learned, from the preceding passages, the

lofty and unbending temper of the suppliant, and the rooted and bitter anguish of her whom he addresses, it cannot fail to appear one of the most striking in the whole compass of dramatic composition.*

"*Ith.* Sit nearer, sister, to me! nearer yet!
We had one father: in one womb took life;
Were brought up twins together; — Yet have liv'd
At distance, like two strangers! I could wish
That the first pillow, whereon I was cradled,
Had proved to me a grave!
Pen. You had been happy!
Then had you never known that sin of life
Which blots all following glories with a vengeance,
For forfeiting the last will of the dead,
From whom you had your being.
Ith. Sad Penthea!
Thou canst not be too cruel; my rash spleen
Hath with a violent hand pluck'd from thy bosom
A love-blest heart, to grind it into dust —
For which mine's now a-breaking.
Pen. Not yet, heaven,
I do beseech thee! first, let some wild fires
Scorch, not consume it! may the heat be cherish'd
With desires infinite, but hopes impossible
Ith. Wrong'd soul, thy prayers are heard.
Pen. Here, lo, I breathe,
A miserable creature, led to ruin
By an unnatural brother!
Ith. I consume
In languishing affections of that trespass;
Yet cannot die.
Pen. The handmaid to the wages,
The untroubled but of country toil, drinks streams
With leaping kids and with the bleating lambs,
And so allays her thirst secure; whilst I
Quench my hot sighs with fleetings of my tears.
Ith. The labourer doth eat his coarsest bread,
Earn'd with his sweat, and lies him down to sleep;
Whilst every bit I touch turns in digestion
To gall, as bitter as Penthea's curse.
Put me to my penance for my tyranny,
And I will call thee merciful.
Pen. Pray kill me!
Rid me from living with a jealous husband,
Then we will join in friendship, be again
Brother and sister.—Kill me, pray! nay, will ye?
Ith. Thou shalt stand
A deity, my sister, and be worshipp'd
For thy resolved martyrdom: wrong'd maids
And married wives shall to thy hallow'd shrine
Offer their orisons, and sacrifice
Pure turtles, crown'd with myrtle, if thy pity
Unto a yielding brother's pressure, lend
One finger but, to ease it.
Pen. Who is the saint you serve?
Ith. Calantha 'tis! — the princess! the king's daughter!
Sole heir of Sparta. — Me, most miserable! —
Do I now love thee? For my injuries
Revenge thyself with bravery, and gossip
My treasons to the king's ears! Do! — Calantha
Knows it not yet; nor Prophilus, my nearest.
Pen. We are reconcil'd! —
Alas, sir, being children, but two branches
Of one stock, 'tis not fit we should divide:
Have comfort; you may find it.
Ith. Yes, in thee;
Only in thee, Penthea mine!
Pen. If sorrows
Have not too much dull'd my infected brain,
I 'll cheer invention for an active strain.
Ith. Mad man! why have I wrong'd a maid so excellent?" — Vol. i. pp. 273—277.

We cannot resist the temptation of adding a part of the scene in which this sad ambassadress acquits herself of the task she had undertaken. There is a tone of heart-struck sorrow and female gentleness and purity about it that is singularly engaging, and contrasts strangely with the atrocious indecencies with which the author has polluted his paper, in other parts of the same play. — The princess says,

"*Cal.* Being alone, Penthea, you now have granted
The opportunity you sought; and might
At all times have commanded.
Pen. 'Tis a benefit
Which I shall owe your goodness even in death for:
My glass of life, sweet princess, hath few minutes
Remaining to run down; the sands are spent;
For by an inward messenger I feel
The summons of departure short and certain.
Cal. You feed too much your melancholy.
Pen. Glories
Of human greatness are but pleasing dreams,
And shadows soon decaying. On the stage
Of my mortality, my youth hath acted
Some scenes of vanity, drawn out at length
By varied pleasures, sweeten'd in the mixture,
But tragical in issue. Beauty, pomp,
With every sensuality our giddiness
Doth frame an idol, are unconstant friends,
When any troubled passion makes us halt
On the unguarded castle of the mind.
Cal. To what end
Reach all these moral texts?
Pen. To place before ye
A perfect mirror, wherein you may see
How weary I am of a lingering life;
Who count the best a misery.

* I have often fancied what a splendid effect Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble would have given to the opening of this scene, in actual representation! — with the deep throb of their low voices, their pathetic pauses, and majestic attitudes and movements!

Cal. Indeed
You have no little cause; yet none so great
As to distrust a remedy.
Pen. That remedy
Must be a winding-sheet! a fold of lead,
And some untrod-on corner of the earth.—
Not to detain your expectation, princess,
I have an humble suit.
Cal. Speak; and enjoy it.
Pen. Vouchsafe, then, to be my executrix,
And take that trouble on you to dispose
Such legacies as I bequeath, impartially;
I have not much to give; the pains are easy,
Heav'n will reward your piety, and thank it
When I am dead; for sure I must not live:
I hope I cannot."

After leaving her fame, her youth, &c. in some very pretty but fantastical verses, she proceeds —

"*Pen.* 'Tis long agone, since first I lost my heart;
Long have I liv'd without it; else for certain
I should have given that too; but instead
Of it, to great Calantha, Sparta's heir,
By service bound, and by affection vow'd,
I do bequeath in holiest rites of love
Mine only brother, Ithocles.
Cal. What say'st thou?
Pen. I must leave the world
To revel in Elysium: and 'tis just
To wish my brother some advantage here;
Yet by my best hopes, Ithocles is ignorant
Of this pursuit.
Cal. You have forgot, Penthea,
How still I have a father.
Pen. But remember
I am a sister, though to me this brother
Hath been, you know, unkind: oh, most unkind!"
Vol. i. pp. 291—293.

There are passages of equal power and beauty in the plays called "Love's Sacrifice," "The Lover's Melancholy," and in "Fancies Chaste and Noble." In "Perkin Warbeck," there is a more uniform and sustained elevation of style. But we pass all those over, to give our readers a word or two from "The Witch of Edmonton," a drama founded upon the recent execution of a miserable old woman for that fashionable offence; and in which the devil, in the shape of a black dog, is a principal performer! The greater part of the play, in which Ford was assisted by Dekkar and Rowley, is of course utterly absurd and contemptible — though not without its value as a memorial of the strange superstition of the age; but it contains some scenes of great interest and beauty, though written in a lower and more familiar tone than most of those we have already exhibited. As a specimen of the range of the author's talents, we shall present our readers with one of these. Frank Thorney had privately married a woman of inferior rank; and is afterwards strongly urged by his father, and his own inclination, to take a second wife, in the person of a rich yeoman's daughter whose affections were fixed upon him. After taking this unjustifiable step, he is naturally troubled with certain inward compunctions, which manifest themselves in his exterior, and excite the apprehensions of his innocent bride. It is her dialogue with him that we are now to extract; and we think the picture that it affords of unassuming innocence and singleness of heart, is drawn with great truth, and even elegance. She begins with asking him why he changes countenance so suddenly. He answers —

"Who, I? For nothing.
Sus. Dear, say not so: a spirit of your constancy
Cannot endure this change for nothing. I've observ'd
Strange variations in you.
Frank. In me?
Sus. In you, sir.
Awake you seem to dream, and in your sleep
You utter sudden and distracted accents,
Like one at enmity with peace. Dear loving husband,
If I may dare to challenge any interest
In you, give me thee fully! you may trust
My breast as safely as your own.
Frank. With what?
You half amaze me; pr'ythee—
Sus. Come, you shall not,
Indeed you shall not shut me from partaking
The least dislike that grieves you. I'm all yours.
Frank. And I all thine.
Sus. You are not; if you keep
The least grief from me: but I know the cause;
It grows from me.
Frank. From you?
Sus. From some distaste
In me or my behaviour: you're not kind
In the concealment. 'Las, sir, I am young,
Silly and plain; more strange to those contents
A wife should offer. Say but in what I fail,
I'll study satisfaction.
Frank. Come: in nothing.
Sus. I know I do; knew I as well in what,
You should not long be sullen. Pr'ythee, love,
If I have been immodest or too bold,
Speak't in a frown; if peevishly too nice,
Shew't in a smile. Thy liking is a glass
By which I'll habit my behaviour.
Frank. Wherefore
Dost weep now?

Sus. You, sweet, have the power
To make me passionate as an April day.
Now smile, then weep; now pale, then crimson red.
You are the powerful moon of my blood's sea,
To make it ebb or flow into my face,
As your looks change.
Frank. Change thy conceit, I pr'ythee:
Thou'rt all perfection: Diana herself
Swells in thy thoughts and moderates thy beauty.
Within thy clear eye amorous Cupid sits
Feathering love-shafts, whose golden heads he dips
In thy chaste breast.
Sus. Come, come: these golden strings of flattery
Shall not tie up my speech, sir: I must know
The ground of your disturbance.
Frank. Then look *here;*
For here, here is the fen in which this hydra
Of discontent grows rank.
Sus. Heaven shield it! Where?
Frank. In mine own bosom! here the cause has root;
The poison'd leeches twist about my heart,
And will, I hope, confound me.
Sus. You speak riddles."
Vol. ii. pp. 437—410.

The unfortunate bigamist afterwards resolves to desert this innocent creature: but, in the act of their parting, is moved by the devil, who rubs against him in the shape of a dog! to murder her. We are tempted to give the greater part of this scene, just to show how much beauty of diction and natural expression of character may be combined with the most revolting and degrading absurdities. The unhappy bridegroom says—

"Why would you delay? we have no other business
Now, but to part.
Sus. And will not that, sweet-heart, ask a long time?
Methinks it is the hardest piece of work
That e'er I took in hand.
Frank. Fie, fie! why look,
I'll make it plain and easy to you. Farewell.
[*Kisses her.*
Sus. Ah, 'las! I'm not half perfect in it yet.
I must have it thus read a hundred times.
Pray you take some pains, I confess my dulness.
Frank Come! again and again, farewell. [*Kisses her.*] Yet wilt return?
All questions of my journey, my stay, employment,
And revisitation, fully I have answer'd all.
There's nothing now behind but—
Sus. But this request—
Frank. What is't?
Sus. That I may bring you thro' one pasture more,
Up to yon knot of trees: amongst those shadows
I'll vanish from you; they shall teach me how.
Frank. Why, 'tis granted: come, walk then.
Sus. Nay, not too fast:
They say, slow things have best perfection;
The gentle show'r wets to fertility,
The churlish storm makes mischief with his bounty.
Frank. Now, your request
Is out: yet will you leave me?
Sus. What? so churlishly?
You'll make me stay for ever,
Rather than part with such a sound from you.
Frank. Why you almost anger me.—Pray you begone.
You have no company, and 'tis very early;
Some hurt may betide you homewards.
Sus. Tush! I fear none:
To leave you is the greatest I can suffer.
Frank. So! I shall have more trouble."

Here the dog rubs against him; and, after some more talk, he stabs her!

"*Sus.* Why then I thank you;
You have done lovingly, leaving yourself,
That you would thus bestow me on another.
Thou art my husband, Death! I embrace thee
With all the love I have. Forget the stain
Of my unwitting sin: and then I come
A crystal virgin to thee. My soul's purity
Shall, with bold wings, ascend the doors of mercy;
For innocence is ever her companion.
Frank. Not yet mortal? I would not linger you,
Or leave you a tongue to blab. [*Stabs her again.*
Sus. Now heaven reward you ne'er the worse for me!
I did not think that death had been so sweet,
Nor I so apt to love him. I could ne'er die better,
Had I stay'd forty years for preparation:
For I'm in charity with all the world.
Let me for once be thine example, heaven;
Do to this man as I; forgive him freely,
And may he better die, and sweeter live. [*Dies.*"
Vol. ii. pp. 452—455.

We cannot afford any more space for Mr. Ford; and what we have said, and what we have shown of him, will probably be thought enough, both by those who are disposed to scoff, and those who are inclined to admire. It is but fair, however, to intimate, that a thorough perusal of his works will afford more exercise to the former disposition than to the latter. His faults are glaring and abundant; but we have not thought it necessary to produce any specimens of them, because they are exactly the sort of faults which every one acquainted with the drama of that age reckons upon finding. Nobody doubts of the existence of such faults: but there are many who doubt of the existence of any counterbalancing beauties; and therefore it seemed worth while to

say a word or two in their explanation. There is a great treasure of poetry, we think, still to be brought to light in the neglected writers of the age to which this author belongs; and poetry of a kind which, if purified and improved, as the happier specimens show that it is capable of being, would be far more delightful to the generality of English readers than any other species of poetry. We shall readily be excused for our tediousness by those who are of this opinion; and should not have been forgiven, even if we had not been tedious, by those who look upon it as a heresy.

SHAKSPEARE.

(AUGUST, 1817.)

Characters of Shakspeare's Plays. By WILLIAM HAZLITT. 8vo. pp. 352. London: 1817.*

THIS is not a book of black-letter learning, or historical elucidation: — neither is it a metaphysical dissertation, full of wise perplexities and elaborate reconcilements. It is, in truth, rather an encomium on Shakspeare, than a commentary or critique on him — and is written, more to show extraordinary love, than extraordinary knowledge, of his productions. Nevertheless, it is a very pleasing book — and, we do not hesitate to say, a book of very considerable originality and genius. The author is not merely an admirer of our great dramatist, but an Idolater of him; and openly professes his idolatry. We have ourselves too great a leaning to the same superstition, to blame him very much for his error: and though we think, of course, that our own admiration is, on the whole, more discriminating and judicious, there are not many points on which, especially after reading his eloquent exposition of them, we should be much inclined to disagree with him.

The book, as we have already intimated, is written less to tell the reader what Mr. H. *knows* about Shakspeare or his writings, than to explain to them what he *feels* about them — and *why* he feels so — and thinks that all who profess to love poetry should feel so likewise. What we chiefly look for in such a work, accordingly, is a fine sense of the beauties of the author, and an eloquent exposition of them; and all this, and more, we think, may be found in the volume before us. There is nothing niggardly in Mr. H.'s praises, and nothing affected in his raptures. He seems animated throughout with a full and hearty sympathy with the delight which his author should inspire, and pours himself gladly out in explanation of it, with a fluency and ardour, obviously much more akin to enthusiasm than affectation. He seems pretty generally, indeed, in a state of happy intoxication — and has borrowed from his great original, not indeed the force or brilliancy of his fancy, but something of its playfulness, and a large share of his apparent joyousness and self-indulgence in its exercise. It is evidently a great pleasure to him to be fully possessed with the beauties of his author, and to follow the impulse of his unrestrained eagerness to impress them upon his readers.

When we have said that his observations are generally right, we have said, in substance, that they are not generally original; for the beauties of Shakspeare are not of so dim or equivocal a nature as to be visible only to learned eyes — and undoubtedly his finest passages are those which please all classes of readers, and are admired for the same qualities by judges from every school of criticism. Even with regard to those passages, however, a skilful commentator will find something worth hearing to tell. Many persons are very sensible of the effect of fine poetry on their feelings, who do not well know how to refer these feelings to their causes; and it is always a delightful thing to be made to see clearly the sources from which our delight has proceeded — and to trace back the mingled stream that has flowed upon our hearts, to the remoter fountains from which it has been gathered. And when this is done with warmth as well as precision, and embodied in an eloquent description of the beauty which is

* It may be thought that enough had been said of our early dramatists, in the immediately preceding article; and it probably is so. But I could not resist the temptation of thus renewing, in my own name, that vow of allegiance, which I had so often taken anonymously, to the only true and lawful King of our English Poetry! and now venture, therefore, fondly to replace this slight and perishable wreath on his august and undecaying shrine: with no farther apology than that it presumes to direct attention but to one, and that, as I think, a comparatively neglected, aspect of his universal genius.

explained, it forms one of the most attractive, and not the least instructive, of literary exercises. In all works of merit, however, and especially in all works of original genius, there are a thousand retiring and less obtrusive graces, which escape hasty and superficial observers, and only give out their beauties to fond and patient contemplation; — a thousand slight and harmonizing touches, the merit and the effect of which are equally imperceptible to vulgar eyes; and a thousand indications of the continual presence of that poetical spirit, which can only be recognized by those who are in some measure under its influence, or have prepared themselves to receive it, by worshipping meekly at the shrines which it inhabits.

In the exposition of these, there is room enough for originality, — and more room than Mr. H. has yet filled. In many points, however, he has acquitted himself excellently; — partly in the development of the principal characters with which Shakspeare has peopled the fancies of all English readers — but principally, we think, in the delicate sensibility with which he has traced, and the natural eloquence with which he has pointed out that fond familiarity with beautiful forms and images — that eternal recurrence to what is sweet or majestic in the simple aspects of nature — that indestructible love of flowers and odours, and dews and clear waters, and soft airs and sounds, and bright skies, and woodland solitudes, and moonlight bowers, which are the Material elements of Poetry — and that fine sense of their undefinable relation to mental emotion, which is its essence and vivifying Soul — and which, in the midst of Shakspeare's most busy and atrocious scenes, falls like gleams of sunshine on rocks and ruins — contrasting with all that is rugged and repulsive, and reminding us of the existence of purer and brighter elements! — which HE ALONE has poured out from the richness of his own mind, without effort or restraint: and contrived to intermingle with the play of all the passions, and the vulgar course of this world's affairs, without deserting for an instant the proper business of the scene, or appearing to pause or digress, from love of ornament or need of repose! — HE ALONE who, when the object requires it, is always keen and worldly and practical — and who yet, without changing his hand, or stopping his course, scatters around him, as he goes, all sounds and shapes of sweetness — and conjures up landscapes of immortal fragrance and freshness, and peoples them with Spirits of glorious aspect and attractive grace — and is a thousand times more full of fancy and imagery, and splendour, than those who, in pursuit of such enchantments, have shrunk back from the delineation of character or passion, and declined the discussion of human duties and cares. More full of wisdom and ridicule and sagacity, than all the moralists and satirists that ever existed — he is more wild, airy, and inventive, and more pathetic and fantastic, than all the poets of all regions and ages of the world: — and has all those elements so happily mixed up in him, and bears his high faculties so temperately, that the most severe reader cannot complain of him for want of strength or of reason — nor the most sensitive for defect of ornament or ingenuity. Every thing in him is in unmeasured abundance, and unequalled perfection — but every thing so balanced and kept in subordination, as not to jostle or disturb or take the place of another. The most exquisite poetical conceptions, images, and descriptions, are given with such brevity, and introduced with such skill, as merely to adorn, without loading the sense they accompany. Although his sails are purple and perfumed, and his prow of beaten gold, they waft him on his voyage, not less, but more rapidly and directly than if they had been composed of baser materials. All his excellences, like those of Nature herself, are thrown out together; and instead of interfering with, support and recommend each other. His flowers are not tied up in garlands, nor his fruits crushed into baskets — but spring living from the soil, in all the dew and freshness of youth; while the graceful foliage in which they lurk, and the ample branches, the rough and vigorous stem, and the wide-spreading roots on which they depend, are present along with them, and share, in their places, the equal care of their Creator.

What other poet has put all the charm of a Moonlight landscape into a single line? — and that by an image so true to nature, and so simple, as to seem obvious to the most common observation? —

"See how the Moonlight SLEEPS on yonder bank!" —

Who else has expressed, in three lines, all that is picturesque and lovely in a summer's Dawn? — first setting before our eyes, with magical precision, the visible appearances of the infant light, and then by one graceful and glorious image, pouring on our souls all the freshness, cheerfulness, and sublimity of returning morning? —

——— "See, love! what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder East!
Night's candles* are burnt out, — and jocund Day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops!"

Where shall we find sweet sounds and odours so luxuriously blended and illustrated, as in these few words of sweetness and melody, where the author says of soft music —

"O it came o'er my ear like the sweet South
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour!"

This is still finer, we think, than the noble speech on Music in the Merchant of Venice, and only to be compared with the enchantments of Prospero's island; where all the effects of sweet sounds are expressed in miraculous numbers, and traced in their operation on all the gradations of being, from the delicate Ariel to the brutish Caliban, who, savage as he is, is still touched with those supernatural harmonies; and thus exhorts his less poetical associates —

"Be not afraid, the isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twanging instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices,
That if I then had waked after long sleep,
Would make me sleep again."

* If the advocates for the grand style object to this expression, we shall not stop to defend it: but, to us, it seems equally beautiful, as it is obvious and natural, to a person coming out of a lighted chamber into the pale dawn. The word candle, we admit, is rather homely in modern language, while lamp is sufficiently dignified for poetry. The moon hangs her silver lamp on high, in every schoolboy's copy of verses; and she could not be called the candle of heaven without manifest absurdity. Such are the caprices of usage. Yet we like the passage before us much better as it is, than if the candles were changed into lamps. If we should read, "The lamps of heaven are quenched," or "wax dim," it appears to us that the whole charm of the expression would be lost: as our fancies would no longer be recalled to the privacy of that dim-lighted chamber which the lovers were so reluctantly leaving.

Observe, too, that this and the other poetical speeches of this incarnate demon, are not mere ornaments of the poet's fancy, but explain his character and describe his situation more briefly and effectually, than any other words could have done. In this play, indeed, and in the Midsummer-Night's Dream, all Eden is unlocked before us, and the whole treasury of natural and supernatural beauty poured out profusely, to the delight of all our faculties. We dare not trust ourselves with quotations; but we refer to those plays generally — to the forest scenes in As You Like It — the rustic parts of the Winter's Tale — several entire scenes in Cymbeline, and in Romeo and Juliet — and many passages in all the other plays — as illustrating this love of nature and natural beauty of which we have been speaking — the power it had over the poet, and the power it imparted to him. Who else would have thought, on the very threshold of treason and midnight murder, of bringing in so sweet and rural an image as this, at the portal of that blood-stained castle of Macbeth?

"This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his loved masonry that heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutting frieze,
Buttress, nor coigne of vantage, but this bird
Has made his pendent bed, and procreant cradle."

Nor is this brought in for the sake of an elaborate contrast between the peaceful innocence of this exterior, and the guilt and horrors that are to be enacted within. There is no hint of any such suggestion — but it is set down from the pure love of nature and reality — because the kindled mind of the poet brought the whole scene before his eyes, and he painted all that he saw in his vision. The same taste predominates in that emphatic exhortation to evil, where Lady Macbeth says,

——— "Look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under it."

And in that proud boast of the bloody Richard —

"But I was *born* so high:
Our aery buildeth in the cedar's top,
And dallies with the wind, and scorns the sun!"

The same splendour of natural imagery, brought simply and directly to bear upon stern and repulsive passions, is to be found in the cynic rebukes of Apemantus to Timon.

"Will these moist trees
That have out-liv'd the eagle, page thy heels,
And skip when thou point'st out? will the cold brook,
Candied with ice, caudle thy morning taste
To cure thine o'er-night's surfeit?"

No one but Shakspeare would have thought of putting this noble picture into the taunting address of a snappish misanthrope — any more than the following into the mouth of a mercenary murderer.

"Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
And *in their summer beauty* kiss'd each other!"

Or this delicious description of concealed love, into that of a regretful and moralizing parent.

"But he, his own affections' Counsellor,
Is to himself so secret and so close,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun."

And yet all these are so far from being unnatural, that they are no sooner put where they are, than we feel at once their beauty and their effect; and acknowledge our obligations to that exuberant genius which alone could thus throw out graces and attractions where there seemed to be neither room nor call for them. In the same spirit of prodigality he puts this rapturous and passionate exaltation of the beauty of Imogen, into the mouth of one who is not even a lover.

— "It is her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus! the flame o' th' taper
Bows towards her! and would under-peep her lids
To see th' enclosed lights, now canopied
Under the windows, white and azure, laced
With blue of Heaven's own tint! — on her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' the bottom of a cowslip!"

But we must break at once away from these manifold enchantments — and recollect that our business is with Mr. Hazlitt, and not with the great and gifted author on whom he is employed: and, to avoid the danger of any further preface, we shall now let him speak a little for himself. In his remarks on Cymbeline, which is the first play in his arrangement, he takes occasion to make the following observations on the female characters of his author.

"It is the peculiar characteristic of Shakspeare's heroines, that they seem to exist only in their attachment to others. They are pure abstractions of the affections. We think as little of their persons as they do themselves; because we are let into the secrets of their hearts, which are more important. We are too much interested in their affairs to stop to look at their faces, except by stealth and at intervals. No one ever hit the true perfection of the female character, the sense of weakness leaning on the strength of its affections for support, so well as Shakspeare — no one ever so well painted natural tenderness free from affectation and disguise — no one else ever so well showed how delicacy and timidity, when driven to extremity, grow romantic and extravagant: for the romance of his heroines (in which they abound) is only an excess of the habitual prejudices of their sex; scrupulous of being false to their vows or truant to their affections, and taught by the force of feeling when to forego the forms of propriety for the essence of it. His women were in this respect exquisite logicians; for there is nothing so logical as passion. Cibber, in speaking of the early English stage, accounts for the want of prominence and theatrical display in Shakspeare's female characters, from the circumstance, that women in those days were not allowed to play the parts of women, which made it necessary to keep them a good deal in the background. Does not this state of manners itself, which prevented their exhibiting themselves in public, and confined them to the relations and charities of domestic life, afford a truer explanation of the matter? His women are certainly very unlike stage-heroines." —Pp. 3, 4.

His remarks on Macbeth are of a higher and bolder character. After noticing the wavering and perplexity of Macbeth's resolution, "driven on, as it were, by the violence of his Fate, and staggering under the weight of his own purposes," he strikingly observes,

"This part of his character is admirably set off by being brought in connection with that of Lady Macbeth, whose obdurate strength of will and masculine firmness give her the ascendancy over her husband's faltering virtue. She at once seizes on the opportunity that offers for the accomplishment of their wished-for greatness; and never flinches from her object till all is over. The magnitude of her resolution almost covers the magnitude of her guilt. She is a great bad woman, whom we hate, but whom we fear more than we hate. She does not excite our loathing and abhorrence like Regan and Goneril. She is only wicked to gain a great end; and is perhaps more distinguished by her commanding presence of mind, and inexorable self-will, which do not suffer her to be diverted from a bad purpose, when once formed, by weak and womanly regrets, than by the hardness of her heart or want of natural affections."— Pp. 18, 19.

But the best part perhaps of this critique, is the comparison of the Macbeth with the Richard of the same author.

"The leading features in the character of Macbeth are striking enough, and they form what may be thought at first only a bold, rude, Gothic outline. By comparing it with other characters of the same author we shall perceive the absolute truth and identity which is observed in the midst of the giddy whirl and rapid career of events. Thus he is as distinct a being from Richard III. as it is possible to imagine, though these two characters in common hands, and indeed in the hands of any other poet, would have been a repetition of the same general idea, more or less exaggerated. For both are tyrants, usurpers, murderers, — both aspiring and ambitious, both courageous, cruel, treacherous. But Richard is cruel from nature and constitution. Macbeth becomes so from accidental circumstances. Richard is from his birth deformed in body and mind, and naturally incapable of good. Macbeth is full of 'the milk of human kindness,' is frank, sociable, generous. He is tempted to the commission of guilt by golden opportunities, by the instigations of his wife, and by prophetic warnings. 'Fate and metaphysical aid' conspire against his virtue and his loyalty. Richard on the contrary needs no prompter; but wades through a series of crimes to the height of his ambition, from the ungovernable violence of his temper and a reckless love of mischief. He is never gay but in the prospect or in the success of his villanies: Macbeth is full of horror at the thoughts of the murder of Duncan, which he is with difficulty prevailed on to commit; and of remorse after its perpetration. Richard has no mixture of common humanity in his composition, no regard to kindred or posterity — he owns no fellowship with others; he is 'himself alone.' Macbeth is not destitute of feelings of sympathy, is accessible to pity, is even made in some measure the dupe of his uxoriousness; ranks the loss of friends, of the cordial love of his followers, and of his good name, among the causes which have made him weary of life; and regrets that he has ever seized the Crown by unjust means, since he cannot transmit it to his posterity. There are other decisive differences inherent in the two characters. Richard may be regarded as a man of the world, a plotting hardened knave, wholly regardless of everything but his own ends, and the means to secure them — Not so Macbeth. The superstitions of the age, the rude state of society, the local scenery and customs, all give a wildness and imaginary grandeur to his character. From the strangeness of the events that surround him, he is full of amazement and fear; and stands in doubt between the world of reality and the world of fancy. He sees sights not shown to mortal eye, and hears unearthly music. All is tumult and disorder within and without his mind; his purposes recoil upon himself, are broken and disjointed; he is the double thrall of his passions and his destiny. Richard is not a character either of imagination or pathos, but of pure self-will. There is no conflict of opposite feelings in his breast. In the busy turbulence of his projects he never loses his self-possession, and makes use of every circumstance that happens as an instrument of his long-reaching designs. In his last extremity we regard him but as a wild beast taken in the toils: but we never entirely lose our concern for Macbeth; and he calls back all our sympathy by that fine close of thoughtful melancholy.

"My way of life
Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have! But in their stead,
Curses not loud but deep; mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dares
not!" — Pp. 26—30.

In treating of the Julius Cæsar, Mr. H. extracts the following short scene, and praises it so highly, and, in our opinion, so justly, that we cannot resist the temptation of extracting it too — together with his brief commentary.

"*Brutus.* The games are done, and Cæsar is returning.
Cassius. As they pass by, pluck Casca by the sleeve,
And he will, after his sour fashion, tell you
What has proceeded worthy note to-day.
Brutus. I will do so; but look you, Cassius —
The angry spot doth glow on Cæsar's brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train.
Calphurnia's cheek is pale; and Cicero
Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes,
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being crossed in conference by some senator.
Cassius. Casca will tell us what the matter is.
Cæsar. Antonius ——
Antony. Cæsar?
Cæsar. Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-nights:
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look,
He thinks too much; such men are dangerous.
Antony. Fear him not, Cæsar, he is not dangerous:
He is a noble Roman, and well given.
Cæsar. Would he were fatter! But I fear him not:
Yet if my name were liable to fear,
I do not know the man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much;
He is a great observer; and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men. He loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music:
Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort,
As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit,
That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.
Such men as he be never at heart's ease,
Whilst they behold a greater than themselves;
And therefore are they very dangerous.
I rather tell thee what is to be fear'd
Than what I fear; for always I am Cæsar.
Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,
And tell me truly what thou think'st of him."

"We know hardly any passage more expressive of the genius of Shakspeare than this. It is as if he had been actually present, had known the different characters and what they thought of one another, and had taken down what he heard and saw, their looks, words, and gestures, just as they happened."—Pp. 36, 37.

We may add the following as a specimen of the moral and political reflections which this author has intermixed with his criticisms.

"Shakspeare has in this play and elsewhere shown the same penetration into political character and the springs of public events as into those of every-day life. For instance, the whole design to liberate their country fails from the generous temper and overweening confidence of Brutus in the goodness of their cause and the assistance of others. Thus it has always been. Those who mean well themselves think well of others, and fall a prey to their security. The friends of liberty trust to the professions of others, because they are themselves sincere, and endeavour to secure the public good with the least possible hurt to its enemies, who have no regard to any thing but their own unprincipled ends, and stick at nothing to accomplish them. Cassius was better cut out for a conspirator. His heart prompted his head. His habitual jealousy made him fear the worst that might happen, and his irritability of temper added to his inveteracy of purpose, and sharpened his patriotism. The mixed nature of his motives made him fitter to contend with bad men. The vices are never so well employed as in combating one another. Tyranny and servility are to be dealt with after their own fashion: otherwise, they will triumph over those who spare them, and finally pronounce their funeral panegyric, as Antony did that of Brutus.

"All the conspirators, save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar:
He only in a general honest thought
Of common good to all, made one of them."
Pp. 38, 39.

The same strain is resumed in his remarks on Coriolanus.

"Shakspeare seems to have had a leaning to the arbitrary side of the question; perhaps from some feeling of contempt for his own origin; and to have spared no occasion of baiting the rabble. What he says of them is very true: what he says of their betters is also very true; but he dwells less upon it.—The cause of the people is indeed but little calculated as a subject for poetry: it admits of rhetoric, which goes into argument and explanation, but it presents no immediate or distinct images to the mind. The imagination is an exaggerating and exclusive faculty. The understanding is a dividing and measuring faculty. The one is an aristocratical, the other a republican faculty. The principle of poetry is a very anti-levelling principle. It aims at effect, and exists by contrast. It is every thing by excess. It puts the individual for the species, the one above the infinite many, might before right. A lion hunting a flock of sheep is a more poetical object than they; and we even take part with the lordly beast, because our vanity or some other feeling makes us disposed to place ourselves in the situation of the strongest party. There is nothing heroical in a multitude of miserable rogues not wishing to be starved, or complaining that they are likely to be so: but when a single man comes forward to brave their cries and to make them submit to the last indignities, from mere pride and self-will, our admiration of his prowess is immediately converted into contempt for their pusillanimity. We had rather, in short, be the oppressor than the oppressed. The love of power in ourselves and the admiration of it in others are both natural to man. but the one makes him a tyrant, the other a slave."—Pp. 69—72.

There are many excellent remarks, and several fine quotations, in the discussions on Troilus and Cressida. As this is no longer an acted play, we venture to give one extract, with Mr. H.'s short observations, which perfectly express our opinion of its merits.

"It cannot be said of Shakspeare, as was said of some one, that he was 'without o'erflowing full.' He was full even to o'erflowing. He gave heaped measure, running over. This was his greatest fault. He was only in danger of 'losing distinction in his thoughts' (to borrow his own expression)

"As doth a battle when they charge on heaps
The enemy flying."

"There is another passage, the speech of Ulysses to Achilles, showing him the thankless nature of popularity, which has a still greater depth of moral observation and richness of illustration than the former.

"*Ulysses.* Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for Oblivion;
A great-sized monster of ingratitudes;
Those scraps are good deeds past;
Which are devour'd as fast as they are made,
Forgot as soon as done: Persev'rance, dear my lord,
Keeps Honour bright: *to have done*, is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;
For Honour travels in a strait so narrow,
That one but goes abreast; keep then the path,
For Emulation hath a thousand sons,
That one by one pursue; if you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forth-right,
Like to an enter'd tide they all rush by,
And leave you hindmost;——
Or, like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,
O'er-run and trampled on: then what do they in
present,
Tho' less than yours in past, must o'ertop yours:

For Time is like a fashionable host,
That slightly shakes his parting guest by th' hand,
And with his arms outstretch'd as he would fly,
Grasps in the comer: thus Welcome ever smiles,
And Farewell goes out sighing. O, let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was; for beauty, wit,
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time:
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.
That all, with one consent, praise new-born gauds,
Though they are made and moulded of things past."

"The throng of images in the above lines is prodigious; and though they sometimes jostle against one another, they everywhere raise and carry on the feeling, which is metaphysically true and profound."—Pp. 85—87.

This Chapter ends with an ingenious parallel between the genius of Chaucer and that of Shakspeare, which we have not room to insert.

The following observations on Hamlet are very characteristic of Mr. H.'s manner of writing in the work now before us; in which he continually appears acute, desultory, and capricious — with great occasional felicity of conception and expression — frequent rashness and carelessness — constant warmth of admiration for his author — and some fits of extravagance and folly, into which he seems to be hurried, either by the hasty kindling of his zeal as he proceeds, or by a selfwilled determination not to be balked or baffled in any thing he has taken it into his head he should say.

"Hamlet is a name: his speeches and sayings but the idle coinage of the poet's brain. But are they not real? They are as real as our own thoughts. Their reality is in the reader's mind. It is *we* who are Hamlet. This play has a prophetic truth, which is above that of history. Whoever has become thoughtful and melancholy through his own mishaps or those of others: whoever has borne about with him the clouded brow of reflection, and thought himself 'too much i' th' sun;' whoever has seen the golden lamp of day dimmed by envious mists rising in his own breast, and could find in the world before him only a dull blank, with nothing left remarkable in it; whoever has known 'the pangs of despised love, the insolence of office, or the spurns which patient merit of the unworthy takes;' he who has felt his mind sink within him, and sadness cling to his heart like a malady; who has had his hopes blighted and his youth staggered by the apparitions of strange things; who cannot be well at ease, while he sees evil hovering near him like a spectre: whose powers of action have been eaten up by thought; he to whom the universe seems infinite, and himself nothing; whose bitterness of soul makes him careless of consequences, and who goes to a play, as his best resource to shove off, to a second remove, the evils of life, by a mock-representation of them —— This is the true Hamlet.

"We have been so used to this tragedy, that we hardly know how to criticise it, any more than we should know how to describe our own faces. But we must make such observations as we can. It is the one of Shakspeare's plays that we think of oftenest because it abounds most in striking reflections on human life, and because the distresses of Hamlet are transferred, by the turn of his mind, to the general account of humanity. Whatever happens to him, we apply to ourselves; because he applies it so himself as a means of general reasoning. He is a great moralizer, and what makes him worth attending to is, that he moralizes on his own feelings and experience. He is not a common-place pedant. If *Lear* shows the greatest depth of passion, HAMLET is the most remarkable for the ingenuity, originality, and unstudied development of character. There is no attempt to force an interest: every thing is left for time and circumstances to unfold. The attention is excited without effort; the incidents succeed each other as matters of course: the characters think, and speak, and act, just as they might do if left entirely to themselves. There is no set purpose, no straining at a point. The observations are suggested by the passing scene—the gusts of passion come and go like sounds of music borne on the wind. The whole play is an exact transcript of what might be supposed to have taken place at the court of Denmark, at the remote period of time fixed upon, before the modern refinements in morals and manners were heard of. It would have been interesting enough to have been admitted as a bystander in such a scene, at such a time, to have heard and seen something of what was going on. But here we are more than spectators. We have not only 'the outward pageants and the signs of grief,' but 'we have that within which passes show.' We read the thoughts of the heart, we catch the passions living as they rise. Other dramatic writers give us very fine versions and paraphrases of nature; but Shakspeare, together with his own comment, gives us the original text, that we may judge for ourselves. This is a great advantage.

"The character of Hamlet is itself a pure effusion of genius. It is not a character marked by strength of will, or even of passion, but by refinement of thought and sentiment. Hamlet is as little of the hero as a man can well be: but he is a young and princely novice, full of high enthusiasm and quick sensibility,—the sport of circumstances, questioning with fortune, and refining on his own feelings; and forced from the natural bias of his disposition by the strangeness of his situation."—Pp. 104—107.

His account of the Tempest is all pleasingly written, especially his remarks on Caliban; but

we rather give our readers his speculations on Bottom and his associates.

"Bottom the Weaver is a character that has not had justice done him. He is the most romantic of mechanics: he follows a sedentary trade, and he is accordingly represented as conceited, serious, and fantastical. He is ready to undertake any thing and every thing, as if it was as much a matter of course as the motion of his loom and shuttle. He is for playing the tyrant, the lover, the lady, the lion. 'He will roar that it shall do any man's heart good to hear him:' and this being objected to as improper, he still has a resource in his good opinion of himself, and 'will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.' Snug the Joiner is the moral man of the piece, who proceeds by measurement and discretion in all things. You see him with his rule and compasses in his hand. 'Have you the lion's part written? Pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.'—'You may do it extempore,' says Quince, 'for it is nothing but roaring.' Starveling the Tailor keeps the peace, and objects to the lion and the drawn sword. 'I believe we must leave the killing out when all's done.' Starveling, however, does not start the objections himself, but seconds them when made by others, as if he had not spirit to express his fears without encouragement. It is too much to suppose all this intentional: but it very luckily falls out so."—Pp. 126, 127.

Mr. H. admires Romeo and Juliet rather too much—though his encomium on it is about the most eloquent part of his performance: but we really cannot sympathize with all the conceits and puerilities that occur in this play; for instance, this exhortation to Night, which Mr. H. has extracted for praise!—

"Give me my Romeo—and when he shall die,
Take him, and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with Night," &c.

We agree, however, with less reservation, in his rapturous encomium on Lear—but can afford no extracts. The following speculation on the character of Falstaff is a striking, and, on the whole, a favourable specimen of our author's manner.

"Wit is often a meagre substitute for pleasurable sensation; an effusion of spleen and petty spite at the comforts of others, from feeling none in itself. Falstaff's wit is an emanation of a fine constitution; an exuberance of good-humour and good-nature; an overflowing of his love of laughter and good-fellowship; a giving vent to his heart's ease and over-contentment with himself and others. He would not be in character if he were not so fat as he is; for there is the greatest keeping in the boundless luxury of his imagination and the pampered self-indulgence of his physical appetites. He manures and nourishes his mind with jests, as he does his body with sack and sugar. He carves out his jokes, as he would a capon, or a haunch of venison, where there is *cut and come again;* and lavishly pours out upon them the oil of gladness. His tongue drops fatness, and in the chambers of his brain 'it snows of meat and drink.' He keeps up perpetual holiday and open house, and we live with him in a round of invitations to a rump and dozen.—Yet we are not left to suppose that he was a mere sensualist. All this is as much in imagination as in reality. His sensuality does not engross and stupify his other faculties, but 'ascends me into the brain, clears away all the dull, crude vapours that environ it, and makes it full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes.' His imagination keeps up the ball long after his senses have done with it. He seems to have even a greater enjoyment of the freedom from restraint, of good cheer, of his ease, of his vanity, in the ideal and exaggerated descriptions which he gives of them, than in fact. He never fails to enrich his discourse with allusions to eating and drinking; but we never see him at table. He carries his own larder about with him, and he is himself 'a tun of a man.' His pulling out the bottle in the field of battle is a joke to show his contempt for glory accompanied with danger, his systematic adherence to his Epicurean philosophy in the most trying circumstances. Again, such is his deliberate exaggeration of his own vices, that it does not seem quite certain whether the account of his hostess's bill, found in his pocket, with such an out-of-the-way charge for capons and sack with only one half-penny worth of bread, was not put there by himself, as a trick to humour the jest upon his favourite propensities, and as a conscious caricature of himself.

"The secret of Falstaff's wit is for the most part a masterly presence of mind, an absolute self-possession, which nothing can disturb. His repartees are involuntary suggestions of his self-love; instinctive evasions of every thing that threatens to interrupt the career of his triumphant jollity and self-complacency. His very size floats him out of all his difficulties in a sea of rich conceits; and he turns round on the pivot of his convenience, with every occasion and at a moment's warning. His natural repugnance to every unpleasant thought or circumstance, of itself makes light of objections, and provokes the most extravagant and licentious answers in his own justification. His indifference to truth puts no check upon his invention; the more improbable and unexpected his contrivances are, the more happily does he seem to be delivered of them, the anticipation of their effect acting as a stimulus to the gaiety of his fancy. The success of one adventurous sally gives him spirits to undertake another; he deals always in round numbers, and his exaggerations and excuses are 'open palpable, monstrous as the father that begets them.'"—Pp. 189—192.

It is time, however, to make an end of this. We are not in the humour to discuss points of

learning with this author; and our readers now see well enough what sort of book he has written. We shall conclude with his remarks on Shakspeare's style of Comedy, introduced in the account of the Twelfth Night.

"This is justly considered as one of the most delightful of Shakspeare's comedies. It is full of sweetness and pleasantry. It is perhaps too good-natured for comedy. It has little satire, and no spleen. It aims at the ludicrous rather than the ridiculous. It makes us laugh at the follies of mankind; not despise them, and still less bear any ill-will towards them. Shakspeare's comic genius resembles the bee rather in its power of extracting sweets from weeds or poisons, than in leaving a sting behind it. He gives the most amusing exaggeration of the prevailing foibles of his characters, but in a way that they themselves, instead of being offended at, would almost join in to humour; he rather contrives opportunities for them to show themselves off in the happiest lights, than renders them contemptible in the perverse construction of the wit or malice of others.

"There is a certain stage of society, in which people, become conscious of their peculiarities and absurdities, affect to disguise what they are, and set up pretensions to what they are not. This gives rise to a corresponding style of comedy, the object of which is to detect the disguises of self-love, and to make reprisals on these preposterous assumptions of vanity, by marking the contrast between the real and the affected character as severely as possible, and denying to those, who would impose on us for what they are not, even the merit which they have. This is the comedy of artificial life, of wit and satire, such as we see it in Congreve, Wycherley, Vanbrugh, &c. But there is a period in the progress of manners anterior to this, in which the foibles and follies of individuals are of nature's planting, not the growth of art or study; in which they are therefore unconscious of them themselves, or care not who knows them, if they can but have their whim out: and in which, as there is no attempt at imposition, the spectators rather receive pleasure from humouring the inclinations of the persons they laugh at, than wish to give them pain by exposing their absurdity. This may be called the comedy of nature; and it is the comedy which we generally find in Shakspeare. — Whether the analysis here given be just or not, the spirit of his comedies is evidently quite distinct from that of the authors above mentioned; as it is in its essence the same with that of Cervantes, and also very frequently of Molière, though he was more systematic in his extravagance than Shakspeare. Shakspeare's comedy is of a pastoral and poetical cast. Folly is indigenous to the soil, and shoots out with native, happy, unchecked luxuriance. Absurdity has every encouragement afforded it; and nonsense has room to flourish in. Nothing is stunted by the churlish, icy hand of indifference or severity. The poet runs riot in a conceit, and idolizes a quibble. His whole object is to turn the meanest or rudest object to a pleasurable account. And yet the relish which he has of a pun or of the quaint humour of a low character, does not interfere with the delight with which he describes a beautiful image or the most refined love. The clown's forced jests do not spoil the sweetness of the character of Viola. The same house is big enough to hold Malvolio, the Countess Maria, Sir Toby, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek. For instance, nothing can fall much lower than this last character in intellect or morals: yet how are his weaknesses nursed and dandled by Sir Toby into something 'high fantastical;' when on Sir Andrew's commendation of himself for dancing and fencing, Sir Toby answers, — 'Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before them? Are they like to take dust, like Mrs. Moll's picture? Why dost thou not go to church in a galliard, and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig! I would not so much as make water but in a cinque-pace. What dost thou mean? Is this a world to hide virtues in? I did think by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was framed under the star of a galliard!' — How Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and the Clown afterwards *chirp over their cups!* how they 'rouse the night-owl in a catch, able to draw three souls out of one weaver!' What can be better than Sir Toby's unanswerable answer to Malvolio, 'Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?' — In a word, the best turn is given to everything, instead of the worst. There is a constant infusion of the romantic and enthusiastic, in proportion as the characters are natural and sincere: whereas, in the more artificial style of comedy, every thing gives way to ridicule and indifference; there being nothing left but affectation on one side, and incredulity on the other." — Pp. 255—259.

LORD BYRON.

(February, 1822.)

Sardanapalus, a Tragedy. The Two Foscari, a Tragedy. Cain, a Mystery. By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 440. Murray. London: 1822.*

It must be a more difficult thing to write a good play — or even a good dramatic poem — than we had imagined. Not that we should, *à priori*, have imagined it to be very easy: but it is impossible not to be struck with the fact, that, in comparatively rude times, when the re-

* I have thought it best to put all my *Dramatical* criticisms in one series; and, therefore, I take the tragedies of Lord Byron in this place — and apart from his other poetry.

sources of the art had been less carefully considered, and Poetry certainly had not collected all her materials, success seems to have been more frequently, and far more easily obtained. From the middle of Elizabeth's reign till the end of James's, the drama formed by far the most brilliant and beautiful part of our poetry, — and indeed of our literature in general. From that period to the Revolution, it lost a part of its splendour and originality; but still continued to occupy the most conspicuous and considerable place in our literary annals. For the last century it has been quite otherwise. Our poetry has ceased almost entirely to be dramatic; and, though men of great name and great talent have occasionally adventured into this once fertile field, they have reaped no laurels, and left no trophies behind them. The genius of Dryden appears nowhere to so little advantage as in his tragedies; and the contrast is truly humiliating when, in a presumptuous attempt to heighten the colouring, or enrich the simplicity of Shakspeare, he bedaubs with obscenity, or deforms with rant, the genuine passion and profligacy of Antony and Cleopatra — or intrudes on the enchanted solitude of Prospero and his daughter, with the tones of worldly gallantry, or the caricatures of affected simplicity. Otway, with the sweet and mellow diction of the former age, had none of its force, variety, or invention. Its decaying fires burst forth in some strong and irregular flashes, in the disorderly scenes of Lee; and sunk at last in the ashes, and scarcely glowing embers, of Rowe.

Since his time — till very lately — the school of our ancient dramatists has been deserted: and we can scarcely say that any new one has been established. Instead of the irregular and comprehensive plot — the rich discursive dialogue — the ramblings of fancy — the magic creations of poetry — the rapid succession of incidents and characters — the soft, flexible, and ever-varying diction — and the flowing, continuous, and easy versification, which characterized those masters of the golden time, we have had tame, formal, elaborate, and stately compositions — meagre stories — few personages — characters decorous and consistent, but without nature or spirit — a guarded, timid, classical diction — ingenious and methodical disquisitions — turgid or sententious declamations — and a solemn and monotonous strain of versification. Nor can this be ascribed, even plausibly, to any decay of genius among us; for the most remarkable failures have fallen on the highest talents. We have already hinted at the miscarriages of Dryden. The exquisite taste and fine observation of Addison, produced only the solemn mawkishness of Cato. The beautiful fancy, the gorgeous diction, and generous affections of Thomson, were chilled and withered as soon as he touched the verge of the Drama; where his name is associated with a mass of verbose puerility, which it is difficult to conceive could ever have proceeded from the author of the Seasons and the Castle of Indolence. Even the mighty intellect, the eloquent morality, and lofty style of Johnson, which gave too tragic and magnificent a tone to his ordinary writing, failed altogether to support him in his attempt to write actual tragedy; and Irene is not only unworthy of the imitator of Juvenal and the author of Rasselas and the Lives of the Poets, but is absolutely, and in itself, nothing better than a tissue of wearisome and unimpassioned declamations. We have named the most celebrated names in our literature, since the decline of the drama, almost to our own days; and if *they* have neither lent any new honours to the stage, nor borrowed any from it, it is needless to say, that those who adventured with weaker powers had no better fortune. The Mourning Bride of Congreve, the Revenge of Young, and the Douglas of Home [we cannot add the Mysterious Mother of Walpole — even to please Lord Byron], are almost the only tragedies of the last age that are familiar to the present; and they are evidently the works of a feebler and more effeminate generation — indicating, as much by their exaggerations as by their timidity, their own consciousness of inferiority to their great predecessors — whom they affected, however, not to imitate, but to supplant.

But the native taste of our people was not thus to be seduced and perverted; and when the wits of Queen Anne's time had lost the authority of living authors, it asserted itself by a fond recurrence to its original standards, and a resolute neglect of the more regular and elaborate dramas by which they had been succeeded. Shakspeare, whom it had long been

the fashion to decry and even ridicule, as the poet of a rude and barbarous age*, was reinstated in his whole supremacy: and when his legitimate progeny could no longer be found at home, his spurious issue were hailed with rapture from foreign countries, and invited and welcomed with the most eager enthusiasm on their arrival. The German imitations of Schiller and Kotzebue, caricatured and distorted as they were by the aberrations of a vulgar and vitiated taste, had still so much of the raciness and vigour of the old English drama, from which they were avowedly derived, that they instantly became more popular in England than any thing that her own artists had recently produced; and served still more effectually to recal our affections to their native and legitimate rulers. Then followed republications of Massinger, and Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ford, and their contemporaries — and a host of new tragedies, all written in avowed and elaborate imitation of the ancient models. Miss Baillie, we rather think, had the merit of leading the way in this return to our old allegiance — and then came a volume of plays by Mr. Chenevix, and a succession of single plays, all of considerable merit, from Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Maturin, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Barry Cornwall, and Mr. Milman. The first and the last of these names are the most likely to be remembered; but none of them, we fear, will ever be ranked with the older worthies; nor is it conceivable that any age should ever class them together.

We do not mean, however, altogether to deny, that there may be some illusion, in our habitual feelings, as to the merits of the great originals — consecrated as they are, in our imaginations, by early admiration, and associated, as all their peculiarities, and the mere accidents and oddities of their diction now are, with the recollection of their intrinsic excellences. It is owing to this, we suppose, that we can scarcely venture to ask ourselves, steadily, and without an inward startling and feeling of alarm, what reception one of Shakspeare's irregular plays — the Tempest for example, or the Midsummer Night's Dream — would be likely to meet with, if it were *now* to appear for the first time, without name, notice, or preparation? Nor can we pursue the hazardous supposition through all the possibilities to which it invites us, without something like a sense of impiety and profanation. Yet, though some little superstition may mingle with our faith, we must still believe it to be the true one. Though time may have hallowed many things that were at first but common, and accidental associations imparted a charm to much that was in itself indifferent, we cannot but believe that there was an original sanctity, which time only matured and extended — and an inherent charm from which the association derived all its power. And when we look candidly and calmly to the works of our early dramatists, it is impossible, we think, to dispute, that after criticism has done its worst on them — after all deductions for impossible plots and fantastical characters, unaccountable forms of speech, and occasional extravagance, indelicacy, and horrors — there is a facility and richness about them, both of thought and of diction — a force of invention, and a depth of sagacity — an originality of conception, and a play of fancy — a nakedness and energy of passion; and, above all, a copiousness of imagery, and a sweetness and flexibility of verse, which is altogether unrivalled, in earlier or in later times; — and places them, in our estimation, in the very highest and foremost place among ancient or modern poets.

It is in these particulars that the inferiority of their recent imitators is most apparent — in the want of ease and variety — originality and grace. There is, in all their attempts, whatever may be their other merits or defects, an air of anxiety and labour — and indications,

* It is not a little remarkable to find such a man as Goldsmith joining in this pitiful sneer. In his Vicar of Wakefield, he constantly represents his famous town ladies, Miss Caroline Amelia Wilelmina Skeggs, and the other, as discoursing about "high life, *Shakspeare*, and the musical glasses!" — And, in a more serious passage, he introduces a player as astonishing the Vicar, by informing him that "Dryden and Rowe's manner were quite out of fashion — our taste has gone back a whole century; Fletcher, Ben Jonson, and, above all, the *plays of Shakspeare*, are the only things that go down." "How!" says the Vicar, "is it possible that the present age can be pleased with *that antiquated dialect*, that *obsolete humour*, and those *overcharged characters* which abound in the works you mention?" No writer of name, who was not aiming at a paradox, would venture to say this now.

by far too visible, at once of timidity and ambition. This may arise, in part, from the fact of their being, too obviously and consciously, imitators. They do not aspire so much to rival the genius of their originals, as to copy their manner. They do not write as *they* would have written in the present day, but as they imagine they themselves would have written two hundred years ago. They revive the antique phraseology, repeat the venerable oaths, and emulate the quaint familiarities of that classical period — and wonder that they are not mistaken for new incarnations of its departed poets! One great cause why they are not, is, that they speak an unnatural dialect, and are constrained by a masquerade habit; in neither of which it is possible to display that freedom, and those delicate traits of character, which are the life of the drama, and were among the chief merits of those who once exalted it so highly. Another bad effect of imitation, and especially of the imitation of unequal and irregular models in a critical age, is, that nothing is thought fit to be copied but the exquisite and shining passages; — from which it results, in the *first* place, that all our rivalry is reserved for occasions in which its success is most hopeless; and, in the *second* place, that instances, even of occasional success, want their proper grace and effect, by being deprived of the relief, shading, and preparation, which they would naturally have received in a less fastidious composition; and, instead of the warm and native and ever-varying graces of a spontaneous effusion, the work acquires the false and feeble brilliancy of a prize essay in a foreign tongue — a collection of splendid patches of different texture and pattern.

At the bottom of all this — and perhaps as its most efficient cause — there lurks, we suspect, an unreasonable and undue dread of criticism; — not the deliberate and indulgent criticism which *we* exercise, rather for the encouragement of talent than its warning — but the vigilant and paltry derision which is perpetually stirring in idle societies, and but too continually present to the spirits of all who aspire to their notice. There is nothing so certain, we take it, as that those who are the most alert in discovering the faults of a work of genius, are the least touched with its beauties. Those who admire and enjoy fine poetry, in short, are quite a different class of persons from those who find out its flaws and defects — who are sharp at detecting a plagiarism or a grammatical inaccuracy, and laudably industrious in bringing to light an obscure passage — sneering at an exaggerated one — or wondering at the meaning of some piece of excessive simplicity. It is in vain to expect the praises of such people; for they never praise; — and it is truly very little worth while to disarm their censure. It is only the praises of the real lovers of poetry that ever give it true fame or popularity — and these are little affected by the cavils of the fastidious. Yet the genius of most modern writers seems to be rebuked under that of those pragmatical and insignificant censors. They are so much afraid of faults, that they will scarcely venture upon beauties; and seem more anxious in general to be *safe*, than original. They dare not indulge in a florid and magnificent way of writing, for fear of being charged with bombast by the cold-blooded and malignant. They must not be tender lest they should be laughed at for puling and whining; nor discursive nor fanciful like their great predecessors, under pain of being held out to derision, as ingenious gentlemen who have dreamed that the gods have made them poetical!

Thus, the dread of ridicule, which they have ever before their eyes, represses all the emotions, on the expression of which their success entirely depends; and in order to escape the blame of those to whom they can give no pleasure, and through whom they can gain no fame, they throw away their best chance of pleasing these who are capable of relishing their excellences, and on whose admiration alone their reputation must at all events be founded. There is a great want of magnanimity, we think, as well as of wisdom, in this sensitiveness to blame; and we are convinced that no modern author will ever write with the grace and vigour of the older ones, who does not write with some portion of their fearlessness and indifference to censure. *Courage*, in short, is at least as necessary as genius to the success of a work of imagination; since, without this, it is impossible to attain that freedom and self-possession, without

which no talents can ever have fair play, and, far less, that inward confidence and exaltation of spirit which must accompany all the higher acts of the understanding. The earlier writers had probably less occasion for courage to secure them these advantages; as the public was far less critical in their day, and much more prone to admiration than to derision: but we can still trace in their writings the indications both of a proud consciousness of their own powers and privileges, and of a brave contempt for the cavils to which they might expose themselves. In our own times, we know but one writer who is emancipated from this slavish awe of vulgar detraction — this petty timidity about being detected in blunders and faults; and that is the illustrious author of Waverley, and the other novels that have made an era in our literature as remarkable, and as likely to be remembered, as any which can yet be traced in its history. We shall not now say how large a portion of his success we ascribe to this intrepid temper of his genius; but we are confident that no person can read any one of his wonderful works, without feeling that their author was utterly careless of the reproach of small imperfections; disdained the inglorious labour of perpetual correctness, and has *consequently* imparted to his productions that spirit and ease and variety, which reminds us of better times, and gives lustre and effect to those rich and resplendent passages to which it left him free to aspire.

Lord Byron, in some respects, may appear not to have been wanting in intrepidity. He has not certainly been very tractable to advice, nor very patient of blame. But this, in him, we fear, is not superiority to censure, but aversion to it; and, instead of proving that he is indifferent to detraction, shows only, that the dread and dislike of it operate with more than common force on his mind. A critic, whose object was to give pain, would desire no better proof of the efficacy of his inflictions, than the bitter scorn and fierce defiance with which they are encountered; and the more vehemently the noble author protests that he despises the reproaches that have been bestowed on him, the more certain it is that he suffers from their severity, and would be glad to escape, if he cannot overbear, them. But however this may be, we think it is certain that his late dramatic efforts have not been made carelessly, or without anxiety. To us, at least, they seem very elaborate and hard-wrought compositions; and this indeed we take to be their leading characteristic, and the key to most of their peculiarities.

Considered as Poems, we confess they appear to us to be rather heavy, verbose, and inelegant — deficient in the passion and energy which belongs to the other writings of the noble author — and still more in the richness of imagery, the originality of thought, and the sweetness of versification for which he used to be distinguished. They are, for the most part, solemn, prolix, and ostentatious — lengthened out by large preparations for catastrophes that never arrive, and tantalizing us with slight specimens and glimpses of a higher interest, scattered thinly up and down many weary pages of declamation. Along with the concentrated pathos and home-struck sentiments of his former poetry, the noble author seems also, we cannot imagine why, to have discarded the spirited and melodious versification in which they were embodied, and to have formed to himself a measure equally remote from the spring and vigour of his former compositions, and from the softness and flexibility of the ancient masters of the drama. There are some sweet lines, and many of great weight and energy; but the general march of the verse is cumbrous and unmusical. His lines do not vibrate like polished lances, at once strong and light, in the hands of his persons, but are wielded like clumsy batons in a bloodless affray. Instead of the graceful familiarity and idiomatical melodies of Shakspeare, they are apt, too, to fall into clumsy prose, in their approaches to the easy and colloquial style; and, in the loftier passages, are occasionally deformed by low and common images, that harmonize but ill with the general solemnity of the diction.

As Plays, we are afraid we must also say that the pieces before us are wanting in interest, character, and action: — at least we must say this of the three last of them — for *there is* interest in Sardanapalus — and beauties besides, that make us blind to its other defects. There is, however, throughout, a want of dramatic effect and variety; and we suspect there

is something in the character or habit of Lord Byron's genius which will render this unattainable. He has too little sympathy with the ordinary feelings and frailties of humanity, to succeed well in their representation — "His soul is like a star, and dwells apart." It does not "hold the mirror up to nature," nor catch the hues of surrounding objects; but, like a kindled furnace, throws out its intense glare and gloomy grandeur on the narrow scene which it irradiates. He has given us, in his other works, some glorious pictures of nature — some magnificent reflections, and some inimitable delineations of character: but the same feelings prevail in them all: and his portraits in particular, though a little varied in the drapery and attitude, seem all copied from the same original. His Childe Harold, his Giaour, Conrad, Lara, Manfred, Cain, and Lucifer — are all one individual. There is the same varnish of voluptuousness on the surface — the same canker of misanthropy at the core, of all he touches. He cannot draw the changes of many-coloured life, nor transport himself into the condition of the infinitely diversified characters by whom a stage should be peopled. The very intensity of his feelings — the loftiness of his view — the pride of his nature or his genius — withhold him from this identification; so that in personating the heroes of the scene, he does little but repeat himself. It would be better for him, we think, if it were otherwise. We are sure it would be better for his readers. He would get more fame, and things of far more worth than fame, if he would condescend to a more extended and cordial sympathy with his fellow-creatures; and we should have more variety of fine poetry, and, at all events, better tragedies. We have no business to read him a homily on the sinfulness of pride and uncharity; but we have a right to say, that it argues a poorness of genius to keep always to the same topics and persons; and that the world will weary at last of the most energetic pictures of misanthropes and madmen — outlaws and their mistresses!

A man gifted as he is, when he aspires at dramatic fame, should emulate the greatest of dramatists. Let Lord Byron then think of Shakspeare — and consider what a noble range of character, what a freedom from mannerism and egotism, there is in him! How much he seems to have studied nature; how little to have thought about himself; how seldom to have repeated or glanced back at his own most successful inventions! Why indeed should he? Nature was still open before him, and inexhaustible; and the freshness and variety that still delight his readers, must have had constant attractions for himself. Take his Hamlet, for instance. What a character is there! — how full of thought and refinement, and fancy and individuality! "How infinite in faculties! In form and motion how express and admirable! The beauty of the universe, the paragon of animals!" Yet close the play, and we meet with him no more — neither in the author's other works, nor any where else! A common author, who had hit upon such a character, would have dragged it in at every turn, and worn it to very tatters. Sir John Falstaff, again, is a world of wit and humour in himself. But except in the two parts of Henry IV., there would have been no trace of such a being, had not the author been "ordered to continue him" in the Merry Wives of Windsor. He is not the least like Benedick, or Mercutio, or Sir Toby Belch, or any of the other witty and jovial personages of the same author — nor are they like each other. Othello is one of the most striking and powerful inventions on the stage. But when the play closes, we hear no more of him. The poet's creation comes no more to life again, under a fictitious name, than the real man would have done. Lord Byron in Shakspeare's place, would have peopled the world with black Othellos! What indications are there of Lear in any of his earlier plays? What traces of it in any that he wrote afterwards? None. It might have been written by any other man, he is so little conscious of it. He never once returns to that huge sea of sorrow; but has left it standing by itself, shoreless and unapproachable! Who else could have afforded not to have "drowned the stage with tears" from such a source? But we must break away from Shakspeare, and come at last to the work before us.

In a very brief preface, Lord Byron renews his protest against looking upon any of his plays as having been composed "with the most remote view to the stage,"—and, at the same time, testifies in behalf of the *Unities*, as essential to the existence of the drama — according to what

"was, till lately, the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so, in the more civilized parts of it." We do not think those opinions very consistent; and we think that neither of them could possibly find favour with a person whose genius had a truly dramatic character. We should as soon expect an orator to compose a speech altogether unfit to be spoken. A drama is not merely a dialogue, but *an action:* and necessarily supposes that something is to pass before the eyes of assembled spectators. Whatever is peculiar to its written part, should derive its peculiarity from this consideration. Its style should be throughout an accompaniment to action — and should be calculated to excite the emotions, and keep alive the attention, of gazing multitudes. If an author does not bear this continually in his mind, and does not write in the ideal presence of an eager and diversified assemblage, he may be a poet perhaps, but assuredly he never will be a dramatist. If Lord Byron really does not wish to impregnate his elaborate scenes with the living spirit of the drama — if he has no hankering after stage effect — if he is not haunted with the visible presentment of the persons he has created — if, in setting down a vehement invective, he does not fancy the tone in which Mr. Kean would deliver it, and anticipate the long applauses of the pit, then he may be sure that neither his feelings nor his genius are in unison with the stage at all. Why, then, should he affect the form, without the power of tragedy? He may, indeed, produce a mystery like Cain, or a far sweeter vision, like Manfred, without subjecting himself to the censure of legitimate criticism: but if, with a regular subject before him, capable of all the strength and graces of the drama, he does not feel himself able or willing to draw forth its resources so as to affect an audience with terror and delight, he is not the man we want — and his time and talents are wasted here. Didactic reasoning and eloquent description will not compensate, in a play, for a dearth of dramatic spirit and invention: and besides, sterling sense and poetry, as such, ought to stand by themselves, without the unmeaning mockery of a *dramatis personæ.*

As to Lord Byron's pretending to set up the *Unities* at this time of day, as "the law of literature throughout the world," it is mere caprice and contradiction. He, if ever man was, is *a law to himself* — "a chartered libertine;" — and now, when he is tired of this unbridled licence, he wants to do penance within the *Unities!* This certainly looks very like affectation; or, if there is any thing sincere in it, the motive must be, that, by getting rid of so much story and action, in order to simplify the plot and bring it within the prescribed limits, he may fill up the blank spaces with long discussions, and have nearly all the talk to himself! For ourselves, we will confess that we have had a considerable contempt for those same *Unities*, ever since we read Dennis's Criticism on Cato in our boyhood — except indeed the unity of action, which Lord Byron does not appear to set much store by. Dr. Johnson, we conceive, has pretty well settled this question: and if Lord Byron chooses to grapple with him, he will find that it requires a stronger arm than that with which he puts down our Laureates. We shall only add, that when the moderns tie themselves down to write tragedies of the same length, and on the same simple plan, in other respects, with those of Sophocles and Æschylus, we shall not object to their adhering to the Unities; for there can, in that case, be no sufficient inducement for violating them. But in the mean time, we hold that English dramatic poetry soars *above the Unities*, just as the imagination does. The only pretence for insisting on them is, that we suppose the stage itself to be, actually and really, the very spot on which a given action is performed; and if so, this space cannot be removed to another. But the supposition is manifestly quite contrary to truth and experience. The stage is considered merely as a place in which any given action *ad libitum* may be performed; and accordingly may be shifted, and is so in imagination, as often as the action requires it. That any writer should ever have insisted on such an unity as this, must appear sufficiently preposterous; but, that the defence of it should be taken up by an author whose plays are never to be acted at all, and which, therefore, have nothing more than a nominal reference to any stage or locality whatever, must strike one as absolutely incredible.

It so happens, however, that the disadvantage, and, in truth, absurdity, of sacrificing higher

objects to a formality of this kind, is strikingly displayed in one of these dramas — The Two Foscari. The whole interest here turns upon the younger of them having returned from banishment, in defiance of the law and its consequences, from an unconquerable longing after his native country. Now, the only way to have made this sentiment palpable, the practicable foundation of stupendous sufferings, would have been, to have presented him to the audience wearing out his heart in exile — and forming his resolution to return, at a distance from his country, or hovering, in excruciating suspense, within sight of its borders. We might then have caught some glimpse of the nature of his motives, and of so extraordinary a character. But as this would have been contrary to one of the Unities, we first meet with him led from "the Question," and afterwards taken back to it in the Ducal Palace, or clinging to the dungeon-walls of his native city, and expiring from his dread of leaving them; and therefore feel more wonder than sympathy, when we are told, in a Jeremiad of wilful lamentations, that these agonising consequences have resulted, not from guilt or disaster, but merely from the intensity of his love for his country.

But we must now look at the other Tragedies; and on turning again to Sardanapalus, we are half inclined to repent of the severity of some of our preceding remarks, or to own at least that they are not strictly applicable to this performance. It is a work, beyond all question, of great beauty and power; and though the heroine has many traits in common with the Medoras and Gulnares of Lord Byron's undramatic poetry, the hero must be allowed to be a new character in his hands. He has, indeed, the scorn of war, and glory, and priestcraft, and regular morality, which distinguishes the rest of his Lordship's favourites; but he has no misanthropy, and very little pride — and may be regarded, on the whole, as one of the most truly good-humoured, amiable, and respectable voluptuaries to whom we have ever been presented. In this conception of his character, the author has very wisely followed nature and fancy rather than history. *His* Sardanapalus is not an effeminate, worn-out debauchee, with shattered nerves and exhausted senses, the slave of indolence and vicious habits; but a sanguine votary of pleasure, a princely epicure, indulging, revelling in boundless luxury while he can, but with a soul so inured to voluptuousness, so saturated with delights, that pain and danger, when they come uncalled for, give him neither concern nor dread; and he goes forth from the banquet to the battle, as to a dance or measure, attired by the Graces, and with youth, joy, and love for his guides. He dallies with Bellona as her bridegroom — for his sport and pastime; and the spear or fan, the shield or shining mirror, become his hands equally well. He enjoys life, in short, and triumphs over death; and whether in prosperous or adverse circumstances, his soul smiles out superior to evil. The Epicurean philosophy of Sardanapalus gives him a fine opportunity, in his conferences with his stern and confidential adviser, Salemenes, to contrast his own imputed and fatal vices of ease and love of pleasure with the boasted virtues of his predecessors, war and conquest; and we may as well begin with a short specimen of this characteristic discussion. Salemenes is brother to the neglected queen; and the controversy originates in the monarch's allusion to her.

"*Sard.* Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the queen: is't not so?
Sale. *Think!* Thou hast wrong'd her!
Sard. Patience, prince, and hear me.
She has all power and splendour of her station,
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.
I married her, as monarchs wed — for state,
And loved her, as most husbands love their wives.
If she or thou supposedst I could link me
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,
Ye knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor mankind.
Sale. I pray thee, change the theme; my blood disdains
Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not
Reluctant love, even from Assyria's lord!
Nor would she deign to accept divided passion
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.
The queen is silent.
Sard. And why not her brother?
Sale. I only echo thee the voice of empires,
Which he who long neglects not long will govern.
Sard. The ungrateful and ungracious slaves! they murmur
Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them
To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,
Or whiten with their bones the banks of Ganges;
Nor decimated them with savage laws,

Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,
Or Babylonian walls.
Sale. Yet these are trophies
More worthy of a people and their prince
Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,
And lavish'd treasures, and contemned virtues.
Sard. Oh! for my trophies I have founded cities:
There's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built
In one day—what could that blood-loving beldame,
My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,
Do more—except destroy them?
Sale. 'Tis most true;
I own thy merit in those founded cities,
Built for a whim, recorded with a verse
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.
Sard. Shame me! By Baal, the cities, though well built,
Are not more goodly than the verse! Say what
Thou wilt against the truth of that brief record,
Why, those few lines contain the history
Of all things human; hear—'Sardanapalus
The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.
Eat, drink, and love! the rest's not worth a fillip.'
Sale. A worthy moral and a wise inscription,
For a king to put up before his subjects!
Sard. Oh, thou wouldst have me doubtless set up edicts—
'Obey the king—contribute to his treasure—
Recruit his phalanx—spill your blood at bidding—
Fall down and worship, or get up and toil.'
Or thus—'Sardanapalus on this spot
Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.
These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy.'
I leave such things to conquerors; enough
For me, if I can make my subjects feel
The weight of human misery less, and glide
Ungroaning to the tomb; I take no licence
Which I deny to them. We all are men.
Sale. Thy sires have been revered as gods—
Sard. In dust
And death—where they are neither gods nor men.
Talk not of such to me! the worms are gods;
At least they banqueted upon your gods,
And died for lack of farther nutriment.
Those gods were merely men; look to their issue—
I feel a thousand mortal things about me,
But nothing godlike—unless it may be
The thing which you condemn, a disposition
To love and to be merciful; to pardon
The follies of my species, and (that's human)
To be indulgent to my own."—Pp. 18—21.

But the chief charm and vivifying angel of the piece is MYRRHA, the Greek slave of Sardanapalus—a beautiful, heroic, devoted, and ethereal being—in love with the generous and infatuated monarch—ashamed of loving a barbarian—and using all her influence over him to ennoble as well as to adorn his existence, and to arm him against the terrors of its close. Her voluptuousness is that of the heart—her heroism of the affections. If the part she takes in the dialogue be sometimes too subdued and submissive for the lofty daring of her character, it is still such as might become a Greek slave—a lovely Ionian girl, in whom the love of liberty and the scorn of death, were tempered by the consciousness of what she regarded as a degrading passion, and an inward sense of fitness and decorum with reference to her condition. The development of this character and its consequences form so material a part of the play, that most of the citations with which we shall illustrate our abstract of it will be found to bear upon it.

Salemenes, in the interview to which we have just alluded, had driven "the Ionian minion" from the royal presence by his reproaches. After his departure, the Monarch again recalls his favourite, and reports to her the warning he had received. Her answer lets us at once into the nobleness and delicacy of her character.

"*Myr.* He did well.
Sard. And say'st *thou* so?
Thou whom he spurn'd so harshly, and now dared
Drive from our presence with his savage jeers,
And made thee weep and blush?
Myr. *I should do both*
More frequently! and he did well to call me
Back to my duty. But thou spakest of peril—
Peril to thee—
Sard. Ay, from dark plots and snares
From Medes—and discontented troops and nations.
I know not what—a labyrinth of things—
A maze of mutter'd threats and mysteries:
Thou know'st the man—it is his usual custom.
But he is honest. Come, we'll think no more on't—
But of the midnight festival.
Myr. 'Tis time
To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast not
Spurn'd his sage cautions?
Sard. What?—and dost thou fear?
Myr. Fear!—I'm a Greek, and how should I fear death?
A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom?
Sard. Then wherefore dost thou turn so pale?
Myr. I love—
Sard. And do not I? I love thee far—far more
Than either the brief life or the wide realm,
Which, it may be, are menaced; yet I blench not.
Myr. When he who is their ruler
Forgets himself, will they remember him?
Sard. Myrrha!
Myr. Frown not upon me: you have smil'd

Too often on me, not to make those frowns
Bitterer to bear than any punishment
Which they may augur. — King, I am your subject!
Master, I am your slave! Man, I have loved you! —
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs —
A slave, and hating fetters — an Ionian,
And therefore, when I love a stranger, more
Degraded by that passion than by chains!
Still I have loved you. If that love were strong
Enough to overcome all former nature,
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?
Sard. Save me, my beauty! Thou art very fair,
And what I seek of thee is love — not safety.
Myr. And without love, where dwells security?
Sard. I speak of woman's love.
Myr. The very first
Of human life must spring from woman's breast;
Your first small words are taught you from her lips,
Your first tears quench'd by her, and your last sighs
Too often breathed out in a woman's hearing,
When men have shrunk from the ignoble care
Of watching the last hour of him who led them.
Sard. My eloquent Ionian! thou speak'st music!
The very chorus of the tragic song
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite pastime
Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not — calm thee.
Myr. I weep not — but I pray thee, do not speak
About my fathers, or their land!
Sard. Yet oft
Thou speakest of them.
Myr. True — true! constant thought
Will overflow in words unconsciously;
But when another speaks of Greece, it wounds me.
Sard. Well then, how wouldst *thou* save me, as thou saidst?
Myr. Look to the annals of thine empire's founders.
Sard. They are so blotted o'er with blood, I cannot.
But what wouldst have? the empire *has been* founded.
I cannot go on multiplying empires.
Myr. Preserve thine own.
Sard. At least I will enjoy it.
Come, Myrrha, let us on to the Euphrates;
The hour invites, the galley is prepared,
And the pavilion, deck'd for our return,
In fit adornment for the evening banquet,
Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until
It seems unto the stars which are above us
Itself an opposite star; and we will sit
Crown'd with fresh flowers like ——
Myr. Victims.
Sard. No, like sovereigns,
The shepherd kings of patriarchal times,
Who knew no brighter gems than summer wreaths,
And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on."
Pp. 31—36.

The second act, which contains the details of the conspiracy of Arbaces, its detection by the vigilance of Salemenes, and the too rash and hasty forgiveness of the rebels by the King, is, on the whole, heavy and uninteresting. Early in the third act, the royal banquet is disturbed by sudden tidings of treason and revolt; and then the reveller blazes out into the hero, and the Greek blood of Myrrha mounts to its proper office! The following passages are striking. A messenger says,

"Prince Salemenes doth implore the king
To arm himself, although but for a moment,
And show himself unto the soldiers: his
Sole presence in this instant might do more
Than hosts can do in his behalf.
Sard. What, ho!
My armour there.
Myr. And wilt thou?
Sard. Will I not?
Ho, there! — But seek not for the buckler; 'tis
Too heavy: — a light cuirass and my sword.
Myr. How I do love thee!
Sard. I ne'er doubted it.
Myr. But now I know thee.
Sard. (*arming himself*)
Give me the cuirass — so: my baldric! now
My sword: I had forgot the helm, where is it?
That's well — no, 'tis too heavy: you mistake, too —
It was not this I meant, but that which bears
A diadem around it.
Sfero. Sire, I deem'd
That too conspicuous from the precious stones
To risk your sacred brow beneath — and, trust me,
This is of better metal, though less rich.
Sard. You deem'd! Are you too turn'd a rebel? Fellow!
Your part is to obey: return, and — no —
It is too late — I will go forth without it.
Sfero. At least wear this.
Sard. Wear Caucasus! why, 'tis
A mountain on my temples.
Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.
Why went you not forth with the other damsels?
Myr. Because my place is here.
I dare all things
Except survive what I have loved, to be
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest."
Pp. 85—89.

The noise of the conflict now reaches her in doubtful clamour; and a soldier comes in, of whom she asks how the King bears himself — and is answered,

"*Alt.* Like a king. I must find Sfero,
And bring him a new spear and his own helmet.
He fights till now bare-headed, and by far
Too much exposed. The soldiers knew his face,
And the foe too; and in the moon's broad light,
His silk tiara and his flowing hair
Make him a mark too royal. Every arrow
Is pointed at the fair hair and fair features,

And the broad fillet which crowns both.
The king! the king fights as he revels!
Myr. 'Tis no dishonour — no —
'Tis no dishonour! to have loved this man.
I almost wish now, what I never wish'd
Before, that he were Grecian. If Alcides
Were shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's
She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff; surely
He, who springs up a Hercules at once,
Nurs'd in effeminate arts from youth to manhood,
And rushes from the banquet to the battle,
As though it were a bed of love, deserves
That a Greek girl should be his paramour,
And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek tomb
His monument!" — Pp. 92, 93.

Soon after, she rushes out in agony to meet the fate that seemed impending. The King, however, by his daring valour, restores the fortune of the fight; and returns, with all his train, to the palace. The scene that ensues is very masterly and characteristic. Turning to Myrrha—

"Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on
This minion?
Sale. Herding with the other females
Like frighten'd antelopes.
Sard. No! Like the dam
Of the young lion, femininely raging,
She urged on, with her voice and gesture, and
Her floating hair and flashing eyes, the soldiers
In the pursuit.
Sale. Indeed!
Sard. You see, this night
Made warriors of more than me. I paused
To look upon her, and her kindled cheek;
Her large black eyes, that flashed through her long hair
As it stream'd o'er her; her blue veins that rose
Along her most transparent brow; her nostril
Dilated from its symmetry; her lips
Apart; her voice that clove through all the din,
As a lute's pierceth through the cymbal's clash,
Jarr'd but not drown'd by the loud brattling; her
Waved arms, more dazzling with their own born whiteness
Than the steel her hand held, which she caught up
From a dead soldier's grasp; all these things made
Her seem unto the troops a prophetess
Of victory, or Victory herself,
Come down to hail us hers.
Sale. (*in retiring.*) Myrrha!
Myr. Prince.
Sale. You have shown a soul to-night,
Which, were he not my sister's lord ——— But now
I have no time: thou lov'st the king?
Myr. I love
Sardanapalus.
Sale. But wouldst have him king still?
Myr. I would not have him less than what he should be.
Sale. Well, then, to have him king, and yours, and all
He should, or should not be; to have him *live*,
Let him not sink back into luxury.
You have more power upon his spirit than
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion
Raging without: look well that he relapse not.
[*Exit* SALEMENES.
Sard. Myrrha! what, at whispers
With my stern brother? I shall soon be jealous.
Myr. (*smiling.*) You have cause, sire! for on the earth there breathes not
A man more worthy of a woman's love—
A soldier's trust—a subject's reverence—
A king's esteem—the whole world's admiration!
Sard. Praise him, but not so warmly. I must not
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught
That throws me into shade: yet you speak truth."
Pp. 100—105.

After this, there is an useless and unnatural scene with the Queen, whose fondness her erring husband meets with great kindness and remorse. It is carefully, but rather tediously written; and ends, a great deal too long after it ought to have ended, by Salemenes carrying off his sister in a fit.

The fifth act gives, rather languidly, the consummation of the rebellion. Salemenes is slain; and the King, in spite of a desperate resistance, driven back to his palace and its gardens. He then distributes his treasure to his friends, and forces them to embark on the river, which is still open for their escape; only requiring, as the last service of his faithful veterans, that they should build up a huge pile of combustibles round the throne in his presence-chamber, and leave him there with Myrrha alone; and commanding them, when they had cleared the city with their galleys, to sound their trumpets as a signal of safety. We shall close our extracts with a few fragments of the final scene. This is his farewell to the troops.

"*Sard* My best! my last friends!
Let's not unman each other—part at once:
All farewells should be sudden, when for ever,
Else they make an eternity of moments,
And clog the last sad sands of life with tears.
Hence, and be happy: trust me, I am not
Now to be pitied; or far more for what
Is past than present;—for the future, 'tis
In the hands of the deities, if such
There be: I shall know soon. Farewell—farewell.
[*Exeunt* PANIA *and Soldiers.*

Myr. These men were honest; it is comfort still
That our last looks should be on loving faces.
Sard. And *lovely* ones, my beautiful!—but hear me!
If at this moment, for we now are on
The brink, thou feel'st an inward shrinking from
This leap through flame into the future, say it:
I shall not love thee less: nay, perhaps more,
For yielding to thy nature: and there's time
Yet for thee to escape hence.
Myr. Shall I light
One of the torches which lie heap'd beneath
The ever-burning lamp that burns without,
Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall?
Sard. Do so. Is that thy answer?
Myr. Thou shalt see."—Pp. 162, 163.

There is then a long invocation to the shades of his ancestors; at the end of which Myrrha returns with a lighted torch and a cup of wine—and says,

"Lo!
I've lit the lamp which lights us to the stars.
Sard. And the cup?
Myr. 'Tis my country's custom to
Make a libation to the gods.
Sard. And mine
To make libations amongst men. I've not
Forgot the custom; and although alone,
Will drain one draught in memory of many
A joyous banquet past.
Yet pause,
My Myrrha! dost thou truly follow me,
Freely and fearlessly?
Myr. And dost thou think
A Greek girl dare not do for love, that which
An Indian widow braves for custom?
Sard. Then
We but await the signal.
Myr. It is long
In sounding.
Sard. Now, farewell; one last embrace.
Myr. Embrace, but *not* the last; there is one more.
Sard. True, the commingling fire will mix our ashes.
Myr. Then farewell, thou earth!
And loveliest spot of earth! *farewell, Ionia!*
Be thou still free and beautiful, and far
Aloof from desolation! My last prayer
Was for thee, my last thoughts, save *one*, were of thee!
Sard. And that?
Myr. Is yours.
[*The trumpet of* PANIA *sounds without.*
Sard. Hark!
Myr. *Now!*
Sard. Adieu, Assyria!
I loved thee well, my own, my father's land,
And better as my country than my kingdom.
I satiated thee with peace and joys; and this
Is my reward! and now I owe thee nothing.
Not even a grave. [*He mounts the pile.*
Now, Myrrha!
Myr. Art thou ready?
Sard. As the torch in thy grasp.
[MYRRHA *fires the pile.*
Myr. 'Tis fired! I come.
[*As* MYRRHA *springs forward to throw herself into the flames, the Curtain falls.*"
Pp. 164—167.

Having gone so much at length into this drama, which we take to be much the best in the volume, we may be excused for saying little of the others. "The Two Foscari," we think, is a failure. The interest is founded upon feelings so peculiar or overstrained, as to engage no sympathy; and the whole story turns on incidents that are neither pleasing nor natural. The *Younger Foscari* undergoes the rack twice (once in the hearing of the audience), merely because he has chosen to feign himself a traitor, that he might be brought back from undeserved banishment, and dies at last of pure dotage on this sentiment; while the Elder Foscari submits, in profound and immovable silence, to this treatment of his son, lest, by seeming to feel for his unhappy fate, he should be implicated in his guilt,—though he is supposed guiltless.

The "Marino Faliero"—though rather more vigorously written—is scarcely more successful. The story, in so far as it is original in our drama, is extremely improbable; though, like most other very improbable stories, derived from authentic sources: but, in the main, it is not original—being indeed merely another Venice Preserved; and continually recalling, though certainly without eclipsing, the memory of the first. Except that Jaffier is driven to join the conspirators by the natural impulse of love and misery, and the Doge by a resentment so outrageous as to exclude all sympathy—and that the disclosure, which is produced by love in the old play, is here ascribed (with less likelihood) to mere friendship, the general action and catastrophe of the two pieces are almost identical—while, with regard to the writing and management, it must be owned that, if Lord Byron has most sense and vigour, Otway has by far the most passion and pathos; and that, though our new conspirators are better orators and reasoners than the gang of Pierre and Reynault, the tenderness of Belvidera is as

much more touching, as it is more natural than the stoical and self-satisfied decorum of Angiolina. The abstract, or argument of the piece, is shortly as follows.

Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice, and nearly fourscore years of age, marries a young beauty of the name of Angiolina — and, soon after their union, a giddy young nobleman, whom he had had occasion to rebuke in public, sticks up some indecent lines on his chair of state; purporting that he was the husband of a fair wife, whom he had the honour of keeping for the benefit of others. The Doge having discovered the author of this lampoon, complains of him to the Senate — who, upon proof of the charge, sentence him to a month's confinement. The Doge, considering this as altogether inadequate to the reparation of his injured honour, immediately conceives a most insane and unintelligible animosity at the whole body of the nobility — and, in spite of the dignified example and gentle soothing of Angiolina, puts himself at the head of a conspiracy, which had just been organized for the overthrow of the government by certain plebeian malcontents, who had more substantial wrongs and grievances to complain of. One of the faction, however, had a friend in the Senate whom he wished to preserve; and goes to him, on the eve of the insurrection, with words of warning, which lead to its timely detection. The Doge and his associates are arrested and brought to trial; and the former, after a vain intercession from Angiolina, who candidly admits the enormity of his guilt, and prays only for his life, is led, in his ducal robes, to the place where he was first consecrated a sovereign, and there publicly decapitated by the hands of the executioner.

We can afford but a few specimens of the execution. The following passage, in which the ancient Doge, while urging his gentle spouse to enter more warmly into his resentment, reminds her of the motives that had led him to seek her alliance, (her father's request, and his own desire to afford her orphan helplessness the highest and most unsuspected protection,) though not perfectly dramatic, has great sweetness and dignity; and reminds us, in its rich verbosity, of the moral and mellifluous parts of Massinger.

"*Doge.* For love, romantic love, which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes;
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
As youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
You had been won, but thought the change your choice;
A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct —
A trust in you — a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage — friendship, faith —
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for." —
"I trusted to the blood of Loredano
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you — to the truths your father taught you —
To your belief in heaven — to your mild virtues —
To your own faith and honour, for my own. —
Where light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'Twere hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 'twere wed to him it covets most:
An incarnation of the poet's god
In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not."

Pp. 50—53.

The fourth Act opens with the most poetical and brilliantly written scene in the play — though it is a soliloquy, and altogether alien from the business of the piece. Lioni, a young nobleman, returns home from a splendid assembly, rather out of spirits; and, opening his palace window for air, contrasts the tranquillity of the night scene which lies before him, with the feverish turbulence and glittering enchantments of that which he has just quitted. Nothing can be finer than this picture, in both its compartments. There is a truth and a luxuriance in the description of the route, which mark at once the hand of a master, and raise it to a very high rank as a piece of poetical painting — while the moonlight view from the window is equally grand and beautiful, and reminds us of those magnificent and enchanting lookings forth in Manfred, which have left, we will confess, far deeper traces on our fancy, than any thing in the more elaborate work before us. Lioni says,

"——— I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness!
[*Goes to an open lattice.*
And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam, along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were,
&c. —
The music, and the banquet, and the wine —
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers —
The sparkling eyes and flashing ornaments —
The white arms and the raven hair — the braids
And bracelets; swan-like bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many twinkling feet, so small and sylphlike,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry
Of the fair forms which terminate so well!
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments — art and nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone. — Around me are the stars and waters —
Worlds mirror'd in the ocean! goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Soften'd with the first breathings of the spring;
The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces.
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record! All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight! — the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen, answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow chequering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding city."
Pp. 98—101.

We can now afford but one other extract; — and we take it from the grand and prophetic rant of which the unhappy Doge delivers himself at the place of execution. He asks whether he may speak; and is told he may, but that the people are too far off to hear him. He then says,

"I speak to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion — not to man!
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails, as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns! — Attest!
I am not innocent — But are these guiltless?
I perish: but not unavenged: far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city! —— Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila; without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice. — She shall be *bought!* —
Then, when the Hebrews in thy palaces,
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his;
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity; — when
Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,
Despis'd by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorn'd even by the vicious for their vices,
When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, sin without relief; —
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou *wilt* not strive, and *dar'st* not
murmur,
Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
Then — in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine!*

Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!
Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!
[*Here the* DOGE *turns, and addresses the Executioner.*
Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike — and but once!"— Pp. 162—165.

It will not now be difficult to estimate the character of this work. — As a play, it is deficient in the attractive passions; in probability, and in depth and variety of interest; and revolts throughout, by the extravagant disproportion which the injury bears to the unmeasured resentment with which it is pursued. Lord Byron is, undoubtedly, a poet of the very first order — and has talents to reach the very highest honours of the drama. But he must not again disdain love and ambition and jealousy. He must not substitute what is merely *bizarre* and extraordinary, for what is naturally and universally interesting — nor expect, by any exaggerations, so to rouse and rule our sympathies, by the senseless anger of an old man, and the prudish proprieties of an untempted woman, as by the agency of the great and simple passions with which, in some of their degrees, all men are familiar, and by which alone the Dramatic Muse has hitherto wrought her miracles.

Of "Cain, a Mystery," we are constrained to say, that, though it abounds in beautiful passages, and shows more *power* perhaps than any of the author's dramatical compositions, we regret very much that it should ever have been published. It will give great scandal and offence to pious persons in general — and may be the means of suggesting the most painful doubts and distressing perplexities, to hundreds of minds that might never otherwise have been exposed to such dangerous disturbance. It is nothing less than absurd, in such a case, to observe, that Lucifer cannot well be expected to talk like an orthodox divine — and that the conversation of the first Rebel and the first Murderer was not likely to be very unexceptionable — or to plead the authority of Milton, or the authors of the old mysteries, for such offensive colloquies. The fact is, that here *the whole argument* — and a very elaborate and specious argument it is — is directed against the goodness or the power of the Deity, and against the reasonableness of religion in general; and there is no answer so much as attempted to the offensive doctrines that are so strenuously inculcated. The Devil and his pupil have the field entirely to themselves — and are encountered with nothing but feeble obtestations and unreasoning horrors. Nor is this argumentative blasphemy a mere incidental deformity that arises in the course of an action directed to the common sympathies of our nature. It forms, on the contrary, the great staple of the piece — and occupies, we should think, not less than two-thirds of it; so that it is really difficult to believe that it was written for any other purpose than to inculcate these doctrines — or at least to discuss the question upon which they bear. Now, we can certainly have no objection to Lord Byron writing an Essay on the Origin of Evil — and sifting the whole of that vast and perplexing subject with the force and the freedom that would be expected and allowed in a fair philosophical discussion. But we do not think it fair, thus to argue it partially and *con amore*, in the name of Lucifer and Cain; without the responsibility or the liability to answer that would attach to a philosophical disputant — and in a form which both doubles the danger, if the sentiments are pernicious, and almost precludes his opponents from the possibility of a reply.

Philosophy and Poetry are both very good things in their way; but, in our opinion, they do not go very well together. It is but a poor and pedantic sort of poetry that seeks chiefly to embody metaphysical subtilties and abstract deductions of reason — and a very suspicious philosophy that aims at establishing its doctrines by appeals to the passions and the fancy. Though such arguments, however, are worth little in the schools, it does not follow that their effect is inconsiderable in the world. On the contrary, it is the mischief of all poetical paradoxes, that, from the very limits and end of poetry, which deals only in obvious and glancing views, they are never brought to the fair test of argument. An allusion to a doubtful topic will often pass for a definitive conclusion on it; and, when clothed in beautiful language, may leave the most pernicious impressions behind. In the courts of morality, poets are unexceptionable *witnesses*: they may give in evidence, and depose to facts

whether good or ill; but we demur to their arbitrary and self-pleasing summings up. They are suspected *judges*, and not very often safe advocates; where great questions are concerned, and universal principles brought to issue. But we shall not press this point farther at present.

We shall give but one specimen, and that the least offensive we can find, of the prevailing tone of this extraordinary drama. It is the address (for we cannot call it prayer) with which Cain accompanies the offering of his sheaves on the altar — and directed to be delivered, standing erect.

"Spirit! whate'er or whosoe'er thou art,
Omnipotent, it may be — and, if good,
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil;
Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!
And it may be with other names, because
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works: —
If thou must be propitiated with prayers,
Take them! If thou must be induced with altars,
And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them!
Two beings here erect them unto thee.
If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes
On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service,
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek
In sanguinary incense to thy skies;
Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf
I spread them on now offers in the face
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem
Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
A sample of thy works, than supplication
To look on ours! If a shrine without victim,
And altar without gore, may win thy favour,
Look on it! and for him who dresseth it,
He is — such as thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
Which must be won by kneeling. If he's evil,
Strike him! thou art omnipotent, and may'st,—
For what can he oppose? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt! since all
Rests upon thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power themselves, save in thy will;
And whether that be good or ill I know not,
Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
Omnipotence: but merely to endure
Its mandate — which thus far I have endured."

Pp. 424, 425.

The catastrophe follows soon after, and is brought about with great dramatic skill and effect. The murderer is sorrowful and confounded — his parents reprobate and renounce him — his wife clings to him with eager and unhesitating affection; and they wander forth together into the vast solitude of the universe.

We have now gone through the poetical part of this volume, and ought here, perhaps, to close our account of it. But there are a few pages in prose that are more talked of than all the rest; and which lead irresistibly to topics, upon which it seems at last necessary that we should express an opinion. We allude to the concluding part of the Appendix to "The Two Foscari," in which Lord Byron resumes his habitual complaint of the hostility which he has experienced from the writers of his own country — makes reprisals on those who have assailed his reputation — and inflicts, in particular, a memorable chastisement upon the unhappy Laureate, interspersed with some political reflections of great weight and authority.

It is not, however, with these or the merits of the treatment which Mr. Southey has either given or received; that we have now any concern. But we have a word or two to say on the griefs of Lord Byron himself. He complains bitterly of the detraction by which he has been assailed — and intimates that his works have been received by the public with far less cordiality and favour than he was entitled to expect. We are constrained to say that this appears to us a very extraordinary mistake. In the whole course of our experience, we cannot recollect a single author who has had so little reason to complain of his reception — to whose genius the public has been so early and so constantly just — to whose faults they have been so long and so signally indulgent. From the very first, he must have been aware that he offended the principles and shocked the prejudices of the majority, by his sentiments, as much as he delighted them by his talents. Yet there never was an author so universally and warmly applauded, so gently admonished — so kindly entreated to look more heedfully to his opinions. He took the praise, as usual, and rejected the advice. As he grew in fame and authority, he aggravated all his offences — clung more fondly to all he had been reproached with — and only took leave of Childe Harold to ally himself to Don Juan! That he has since been talked of, in public and in private, with less unmingled admiration — that his name is now mentioned as often for censure as for praise — and that the exultation

with which his countrymen once hailed the greatest of our living poets, is now alloyed by the recollection of the tendency of his writings — is matter of notoriety to all the world; but matter of surprise, we should imagine, to nobody but Lord Byron himself.

He would fain persuade himself, indeed, that for this decline of his popularity — or rather this stain upon its lustre — for he is still popular beyond all other example — and it is only because he is so that we feel any interest in this discussion; — he is indebted, not to any actual demerits of his own, but to the jealousy of those he has supplanted, the envy of those he has outshone, or the party rancour of those against whose corruptions he has testified; — while, at other times, he seems inclined to insinuate, that it is chiefly because he is a *Gentleman* and a *Nobleman* that plebeian censors have conspired to bear him down! We scarcely think, however, that these theories will pass with Lord Byron himself — we are sure they will pass with no other person. They are so manifestly inconsistent, as mutually to destroy each other — and so weak, as to be quite insufficient to account for the fact, even if they could be effectually combined for that purpose. *The party* that Lord Byron has chiefly offended, bears no malice to Lords and Gentlemen. Against its rancour, on the contrary, these qualities have undoubtedly been his best protection; and had it not been for them, he may be assured that he would, long ere now, have been shown up in the pages of the Quarterly, with the same candour and liberality that has there been exercised towards his friend Lady Morgan. That the base and the bigoted — those whom he has darkened by his glory, spited by his talent, or mortified by his neglect — have taken advantage of the prevailing disaffection, to vent their puny malice in silly nicknames and vulgar scurrility, is natural and true. But Lord Byron may depend upon it that the dissatisfaction is not confined to them — and, indeed, that they would never have had the courage to assail one so immeasurably their superior, if he had not at once made himself vulnerable by his errors, and alienated his natural defenders by his obstinate adherence to them. *We* are not bigots or rival poets. We have not been detractors from Lord Byron's fame, nor the friends of his detractors; and *we* tell him — far more in sorrow than in anger — that we verily believe the great body of the English nation — the religious, the moral, and the candid part of it — consider the tendency of his writings to be immoral and pernicious — and look upon his perseverance in that strain of composition with regret and reprehension.

He has no priest-like cant or priest-like reviling to apprehend from us. We do not charge him with being either a disciple or an apostle of Satan; nor do we describe his poetry as a mere compound of blasphemy and obscenity. On the contrary, we are inclined to believe that he wishes well to the happiness of mankind — and are glad to testify, that his poems abound with sentiments of great dignity and tenderness, as well as passages of infinite sublimity and beauty. But their general tendency we believe to be in the highest degree pernicious; and we even think that it is chiefly by means of the fine and lofty sentiments they contain, that they acquire their most fatal power of corruption. This may sound at first, perhaps, like a paradox; but we are mistaken if we shall not make it intelligible enough in the end.

We think there are indecencies and indelicacies, seductive descriptions and profligate representations, which are extremely reprehensible; and also audacious speculations, and erroneous and uncharitable assertions, equally indefensible. But if these had stood alone, and if the whole body of his works had been made up of gaudy ribaldry and flashy scepticism, the mischief, we think, would have been much less than it is. He is not more obscene, perhaps, than Dryden or Prior, and other classical and pardoned writers; nor is there any passage in the history even of Don Juan, so offensively degrading as Tom Jones's affair with Lady Bellaston. It is no doubt a wretched apology for the indecencies of a man of genius, that equal indecencies have been forgiven to his predecessors: but the precedent of lenity might have been followed; and we might have passed both the levity and the voluptuousness — the dangerous warmth of his romantic situations, and the scandal of his cold-blooded dissipation. It might not have been so easy to get over his dogmatic scepticism — his hard-hearted maxims of misan-

thropy — his cold-blooded and eager expositions of the non-existence of virtue and honour. Even this, however, might have been comparatively harmless, if it had not been accompanied by that which may look, at first sight, as a palliation — the frequent presentment of the most touching pictures of tenderness, generosity, and faith.

The charge we bring against Lord Byron, in short, is, that his writings have a tendency to destroy all belief in the reality of virtue — and to make all enthusiasm and constancy of affection ridiculous; and this not so much by direct maxims and examples, of an imposing or seducing kind, as by the constant exhibition of the most profligate heartlessness in the persons who had been transiently represented as actuated by the purest and most exalted emotions — and in the lessons of that very teacher who had been, but a moment before, so beautifully pathetic in the expression of the loftiest conceptions. When a gay voluptuary descants, somewhat too freely, on the intoxications of love and wine, we ascribe his excesses to the effervescence of youthful spirits, and do not consider him as seriously impeaching either the value or the reality of the severer virtues; and in the same way, when the satirist deals out his sarcasms against the sincerity of human professions, and unmasks the secret infirmities of our bosoms, we consider this as aimed at hypocrisy, and not at mankind: or, at all events, and in either case, we consider the Sensualist and the Misanthrope as wandering, each in his own delusion — and are contented to pity those who have never known the charms of a tender or generous affection. The true antidote to such seductive or revolting views of human nature, is to turn to the scenes of its nobleness and attraction; and to reconcile ourselves again to our kind, by listening to the accents of pure affection and incorruptible honour. But if those accents have flowed in all their sweetness, from the very lips that instantly open again to mock and blaspheme them, the antidote is mingled with the poison, and the draught is the more deadly for the mixture!

The reveller may pursue his orgies, and the wanton display her enchantments, with comparative safety to those around them, as long as they know or believe that there are purer and higher enjoyments, and teachers and followers of a happier way. But if the Priest pass from the altar, with persuasive exhortations to peace and purity still trembling on his tongue, to join familiarly in the grossest and most profane debauchery, — if the Matron, who has charmed all hearts by the lovely sanctimonies of her conjugal and maternal endearments, glides out from the circle of her children, and gives bold and shameless way to the most abandoned and degrading vices — our notions of right and wrong are at once confounded — our confidence in virtue shaken to the foundation — and our reliance on truth and fidelity at an end for ever.

This is the charge which we bring against Lord Byron. We say that, under some strange misapprehension as to the truth, and the duty of proclaiming it, he has exerted all the powers of his powerful mind to convince his readers, both directly and indirectly, that all ennobling pursuits, and disinterested virtues, are mere deceits or illusions — hollow and despicable mockeries for the most part, and, at best, but laborious follies. Religion, love, patriotism, valour, devotion, constancy, ambition — all are to be laughed at, disbelieved in, and despised! — and nothing is really good, so far as we can gather, but a succession of dangers to stir the blood, and of banquets and intrigues to sooth it again! If this doctrine stood alone, with its examples, it would revolt, we believe, more than it would seduce: — but the author of it has the unlucky gift of personating all those sweet and lofty illusions, and that with such grace and force, and truth to nature, that it is impossible not to suppose, for the time, that he is among the most devoted of their votaries — till he casts off the character with a jerk — and, the moment after he has moved and exalted us to the very height of our conception, resumes his mockery at all things serious or sublime — and lets us down at once on some coarse joke, hard-hearted sarcasm, or fierce and relentless personality — as if on purpose to show

> "Whoe'er was edified, himself was not"—

or to demonstrate practically as it were, and by example, how possible it is to have all fine and noble feelings, or their appearance, for a moment, and yet retain no particle of respect for them — or of belief in their intrinsic worth

or permanent reality. Thus, we have an indelicate but very clever scene of young Juan's concealment in the bed of an amorous matron, and of the torrent of "rattling and audacious eloquence" with which she repels the too just suspicions of her jealous lord. All this is merely comic and a little coarse: — but then the poet chooses to make this shameless and abandoned woman address to her young gallant an epistle breathing the very spirit of warm, devoted, pure, and unalterable love — thus profaning the holiest language of the heart, and indirectly associating it with the most hateful and degrading sensuality. In like manner, the sublime and terrific description of the Shipwreck is strangely and disgustingly broken by traits of low humour and buffoonery; — and we pass immediately from the moans of an agonizing father fainting over his famished son, to facetious stories of Juan's begging a paw of his father's dog — and refusing a slice of his tutor! — as if it were a fine thing to be hard-hearted — and pity and compassion were fit only to be laughed at. In the same spirit, the glorious Ode on the aspirations of Greece after liberty, is instantly followed up by a strain of dull and cold-blooded ribaldry; — and we are hurried on from the distraction and death of Haidee to merry scenes of intrigue and masquerading in the seraglio. Thus all good feelings are excited only to accustom us to their speedy and complete extinction; and we are brought back, from their transient and theatrical exhibition, to the staple and substantial doctrine of the work — the non-existence of constancy in women or honour in men, and the folly of expecting to meet with any such virtues, or of cultivating them, for an undeserving world; — and all this mixed up with so much wit and cleverness, and knowledge of human nature, as to make it irresistibly pleasant and plausible — while there is not only no antidote supplied, but every thing that might have operated in that way has been anticipated, and presented already in as strong and engaging a form as possible — but under such associations as to rob it of all efficacy, or even turn it into an auxiliary of the poison.

This is our sincere opinion of much of Lord Byron's most splendid poetry — a little exaggerated perhaps in the expression, from a desire to make our exposition clear and impressive — but, in substance, we think merited and correct. We have already said, and we deliberately repeat, that we have no notion that Lord Byron had any mischievous intention in these publications — and readily acquit him of any wish to corrupt the morals, or impair the happiness of his readers. Such a wish, indeed, is in itself altogether inconceivable; but it is our duty, nevertheless, to say, that much of what he has published appears to us to have this tendency — and that we are acquainted with no writings so well calculated to extinguish in young minds all generous enthusiasm and gentle affection — all respect for themselves, and all love for their kind — to make them practise and profess hardily what it teaches them to suspect in others — and actually to persuade them that it is wise and manly and knowing to laugh, not only at self-denial and restraint, but at all aspiring ambition, and all warm and constant affection.

How opposite to this is the system, or the temper, of the great author of Waverley — the only living individual to whom Lord Byron must submit to be ranked as inferior in genius — and still more deplorably inferior in all that makes genius either amiable in itself, or useful to society! With all his unrivalled power of invention and judgment, of pathos and pleasantry, the tenor of his sentiments is uniformly generous, indulgent, and good-humoured; and so remote from the bitterness of misanthropy, that he never indulges in sarcasm, and scarcely, in any case, carries his merriment so far as derision. But the peculiarity by which he stands most broadly and proudly distinguished from Lord Byron is, that, beginning, as he frequently does, with some ludicrous or satirical theme, he never fails to raise out of it some feelings of a generous or gentle kind, and to end by exciting our tender pity, or deep respect, for those very individuals or classes of persons who seemed at first to be brought on the stage for our mere sport and amusement— thus making the ludicrous itself subservient to the cause of benevolence — and inculcating, at every turn, and as the true end and result of all his trials and experiments, the love of our kind, and the duty and delight of a cordial and genuine sympathy with the joys and sorrows of every condition of men. It seems to be Lord Byron's way, on the contrary, never to

excite a kind or a noble sentiment, without making haste to obliterate it by a torrent of unfeeling mockery, or relentless abuse, and taking pains to show how well those passing fantasies may be reconciled to a system of resolute misanthropy, or so managed as even to enhance its merits, or confirm its truth. With what different sensations, accordingly, do we read the works of those two great writers! — With the one, we seem to share a gay and gorgeous banquet — with the other, a wild and dangerous intoxication. Let Lord Byron bethink him of this contrast — and its causes and effects. Though he scorns the precepts, and defies the censure of ordinary men, he may yet be moved by *the example* of his only superior! — In the mean time, we have endeavoured to point out the canker that stains the splendid flowers of his poetry — or, rather, the serpent that lurks beneath them. If it will not listen to the voice of the charmer, that brilliant garden, gay and glorious as it is, must be deserted, and its existence deplored, as a snare to the unwary.

LORD BYRON'S MANFRED.

(August, 1817.)

Manfred; a Dramatic Poem. By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 75. London: 1817.

This is a very strange — not a very pleasing — but unquestionably a very powerful and most poetical production. The noble author, we find, still deals with that dark and overawing Spirit, by whose aid he has so often subdued the minds of his readers, and in whose might he has wrought so many wonders. In Manfred, we recognize at once the gloom and potency of that soul which burned and blasted and fed upon itself in Harold, and Conrad, and Lara — and which comes again in this piece, more in sorrow than in anger — more proud, perhaps, and more awful than ever — but with the fiercer traits of its misanthropy subdued, as it were, and quenched in the gloom of a deeper despondency. Manfred does not, like Conrad and Lara, wreak the anguish of his burning heart in the dangers and daring of desperate and predatory war — nor seek to drown bitter thoughts in the tumult of perpetual contention — nor yet, like Harold, does he sweep over the peopled scenes of the earth with high disdain and aversion, and make his survey of the business and pleasures and studies of man an occasion for taunts and sarcasms, and the food of an immeasurable spleen. He is fixed by the genius of the poet in the majestic solitudes of the central Alps — where, from his youth up, he has lived in proud but calm seclusion from the ways of men; conversing only with the magnificent forms and aspects of nature by which he is surrounded, and with the Spirits of the Elements over whom he has acquired dominion, by the secret and unhallowed studies of Sorcery and Magic. He is averse indeed from mankind, and scorns the low and frivolous nature to which he belongs; but he cherishes no animosity or hostility to that feeble race. Their concerns excite no interest — their pursuits no sympathy — their joys no envy. It is irksome and vexatious for him to be crossed by them in his melancholy musings, — but he treats them with gentleness and pity; and, except when stung to impatience by too importunate an intrusion, is kind and considerate of the comforts of all around him.

This piece is properly entitled a Dramatic Poem — for it is merely poetical, and is not at all a drama or play in the modern acceptation of the term. It has no action; no plot — and no characters; Manfred merely muses and suffers from the beginning to the end. His distresses are the same at the opening of the scene and at its closing — and the temper in which they are borne is the same. A hunter and a priest, and some domestics, are indeed introduced; but they have no connection with the passions or sufferings on which the interest depends; and Manfred is substantially *alone* throughout the whole piece. He holds no communion but with the memory of the Being he had loved; and the immortal Spirits whom he evokes to reproach with his misery, and their inability to relieve it. These unearthly beings approach nearer to the character of persons of the drama — but still they are but choral accompaniments to the performance; and Manfred is, in reality, the only actor and sufferer on the scene. To delineate his character indeed — to render conceivable his feelings — is plainly the whole scope and design of the poem; and the conception and execution

are, in this respect, equally admirable. It is a grand and terrific vision of a being invested with superhuman attributes, in order that he may be capable of more than human sufferings, and be sustained under them by more than human force and pride. To object to the improbability of the fiction is, we think, to mistake the aim and end of the author. Probabilities, we apprehend, did not enter at all into his consideration — his object was, to produce effect — to exalt and dilate the character through whom he was to interest or appal us — and to raise our conception of it, by all the helps that could be derived from the majesty of nature, or the dread of superstition. It is enough, therefore, if the situation in which he has placed him is *conceivable* — and if the supposition of its reality enhances our emotions and kindles our imagination; for it is Manfred only that we are required to fear, to pity, or admire. If we can once conceive of him as a real existence, and enter into the depth and the height of his pride and his sorrows, we may deal as we please with the means that have been used to furnish us with this impression, or to enable us to attain to this conception. We may regard them but as types, or metaphors, or allegories: but *he* is the thing to be expressed; and the feeling and the intellect, of which all these are but shadows.

The events, such as they are, upon which the piece may be said to turn, have all taken place long before its opening, and are but dimly shadowed out in the casual communications of the agonizing being to whom they relate. Nobly born and trained in the castle of his ancestors, he had very soon sequestered himself from the society of men; and, after running through the common circle of human sciences, had dedicated himself to the worship of the wild magnificence of nature, and to those forbidden studies by which he had learned to command its presiding powers. One companion, however, he had, in all his tasks and enjoyments — a female of kindred genius, taste, and capacity — lovely too beyond all loveliness; but, as we gather, too nearly related to be lawfully beloved. The catastrophe of their unhappy passion is insinuated in the darkest and most ambiguous terms — all that we make out is, that she died untimely and by violence, on account of this fatal attachment — though not by the act of its object. He killed her, he says, not with his hand — but his heart; and her blood was shed, though not by him! From that hour, life is a burden to him, and memory a torture — and the extent of his power and knowledge serves only to show him the hopelessness and endlessness of his misery.

The piece opens with his evocation of the Spirits of the Elements, from whom he demands the boon of forgetfulness — and questions them as to his own immortality. The scene is in his Gothic tower at midnight — and opens with a soliloquy that reveals at once the state of the speaker, and the genius of the author.

" The lamp must be replenish'd — but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch!
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself —
But they avail not; I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men —
But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me —
But this avail'd not; — Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour! I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love, of something on the earth —
Now to my task." — Pp. 7, 8.

When his evocation is completed, a star is seen at the far end of a gallery, and celestial voices are heard reciting a great deal of poetry. After they have answered that the gift of oblivion is not at their disposal, and intimated that death itself could not bestow it on him, they ask if he has any further demand to make of them. He answers,

" No, none: yet stay! — one moment, ere we part —
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters: and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.
Spirit. We have no forms beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form — in that we will appear.
Man. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,

Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting. — Come!
Seventh Spirit. (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*) Behold!
Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy. — I will clasp thee,
And we again will be —— [*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd!
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*" — Pp. 15, 16.

The first scene of this extraordinary performance ends with a long poetical incantation, sung by the invisible spirits over the senseless victim before them. The second shows him in the bright sunshine of morning, on the top of the Jungfrau mountain, meditating self-destruction — and uttering forth in solitude as usual the voice of his habitual despair, and those intermingled feelings of love and admiration for the grand and beautiful objects with which he is environed, that unconsciously win him back to a certain kindly sympathy with human enjoyments.

"*Man.* The spirits I have raised abandon me —
The spells which I have studied baffle me —
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me:
I lean no more on superhuman aid:
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search. — My Mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight — thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever — wherefore do I pause?
—— Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,
[*An eagle passes.*
Whose happy flight is highest unto heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me — I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets! thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet piercest downward, onward, or above
With a pervading vision. — Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are — what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[*The shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*
The natural music of the mountain reed —
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes; — Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!" — Pp. 20—22.

At this period of his soliloquy, he is descried by a Chamois hunter, who overhears its continuance.

"To be thus —
Grey-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay —
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise!
Ye topling crags of ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
And only fall on things which still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.
The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles. — I am giddy!"
Pp. 23, 24.

Just as he is about to spring from the cliff, he is seized by the hunter, who forces him away from the dangerous place in the midst of the rising tempest. In the second act, we find him in the cottage of this peasant, and in a still wilder state of disorder. His host offers him wine; but, upon looking at the cup, he exclaims

"Away, away! there 's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never — never sink in the earth?
C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.
Man. I say 'tis blood — my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other — as we should not love! —

And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds that shut me out from Heaven,
Where thou art not — and I shall never be!
C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin, &c.
Man. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcases and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.
C. Hun. Alas! he 's mad — but yet I must not leave him.
Man. I would I were — for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.
C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?
Man. Myself, and thee — a peasant of the Alps —
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free:
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age, and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;
This do I see — and then I look within —
It matters not — my soul was scorch'd already!
Pp. 27—29.

The following scene is one of the most poetical and most sweetly written in the poem. There is a still and delicious witchery in the tranquillity and seclusion of the place, and the celestial beauty of the Being who reveals herself in the midst of these visible enchantments. In a deep valley among the mountains, Manfred appears alone before a lofty cataract, pealing in the quiet sunshine down the still and everlasting rocks; and says

" It is not noon — the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters. — I will call her.
[*He takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*]
Man. Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory! in whose form
The charms of Earth's least-mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee!
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of earth, whom the abstruser Powers permit
At times to commune with them — if that he
Avail him of his spells — to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.
Witch. Son of Earth!
I know thee, and the Powers which give thee power!
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both.
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this — what wouldst thou with me?
Man. To look upon thy beauty! — nothing further."
Pp. 31, 32.

There is something exquisitely beautiful, to our taste, in all this passage; and both the apparition and the dialogue are so managed, that the sense of their improbability is swallowed up in that of their beauty; — and, without actually believing that such spirits exist or communicate themselves, we feel for the moment as if we stood in their presence. What follows, though extremely powerful, and more laboured in the writing, has less charm for us. He tells his celestial auditor the brief story of his misfortune; and when he mentions the death of the only being he had ever loved, the beauteous Spirit breaks in with her superhuman pride.

" And for this
A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality —— Away!
Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour
But words are breath! — Look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings — Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies! — I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset; — I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing — 'tis denied me.

I have affronted Death — but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless." — Pp. 36, 37.

The third scene is the boldest in the exhibition of supernatural persons. The three Destinies and Nemesis meet, at midnight, on the top of the Alps, on their way to the hall of Arimanes, and sing strange ditties to the moon, of their mischiefs wrought among men. Nemesis being rather late, thus apologises for keeping them waiting.

" I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh; for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit. — Away!
We have outstaid the hour — mount we our clouds!" — P. 44.

This we think is out of place at least, if we must not say out of character: and though the author may tell us that human calamities are naturally subjects of derision to the Ministers of Vengeance, yet we cannot be persuaded that satirical and political allusions are at all compatible with the feelings and impressions which it was here his business to maintain. When the Fatal Sisters are again assembled before the throne of Arimanes, Manfred suddenly appears among them, and refuses the prostrations which they require. The first Destiny thus loftily announces him.

" Prince of the Powers invisible! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote; his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own; his knowledge and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know —
That knowledge is not happiness; and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all; — the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath, from the worm upwards, is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
And thine, it may be — be it so, or not,
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his — or power upon his soul."
Pp. 47, 48.

At his desire, the ghost of his beloved Astarte is then called up, and appears — but refuses to speak at the command of the Powers who have raised her, till Manfred breaks out into this passionate and agonizing address.

" Hear me, hear me —
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me!
I have so much endured — so much endure —
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not — that I do bear
This punishment for both — that thou wilt be
One of the blessed — and that I shall die!
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence — in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality —
A future like the past! I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art — and what I am;
And I would hear yet once, before I perish,
The voice which was my music. — Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answer'd me — many things answer'd me —
Spirits and men — but thou wert silent still!
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth
And never found thy likeness. — Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around — they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone. —
Speak to me! though it be in wrath; — but say —
I wreck not what — but let me hear thee once —
This once! — once more!
Phantom of Astarte. Manfred!
Man. Say on, say on —
I live but in the sound — it is thy voice!
Phan. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills. Farewell!
Man. Yet one word more — am I forgiven?
Phan. Farewell!
Man. Say, shall we meet again?
Phan. Farewell!
Man. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me!
Phan. Manfred! [*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.*
Nem. She's gone, and will not be recalled."
Pp. 50—52.

The last act, though in many passages very beautifully written, seems to us less powerful.

It passes altogether in Manfred's castle, and is chiefly occupied in two long conversations between him and a holy abbot, who comes to exhort and absolve him, and whose counsel he repels with the most reverent gentleness, and but few bursts of dignity and pride. The following passages are full of poetry and feeling:—

"Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions
And noble aspirations in my youth;
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies),
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past!
My thoughts mistook themselves.
Abbot. And why not live and act with other men?
Man. Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation:—like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly! Such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more."
Pp. 59, 60.

There is also a fine address to the setting sun—and a singular miscellaneous soliloquy, in which one of the author's Roman recollections is brought in, we must say somewhat unnaturally.

"The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world!
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering—upon such a night
I stood within the Colosseum's wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watchdog bayed beyond the Tiber; and
More near, from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appear'd to skirt the horizon; yet they stood
Within a bowshot.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon! upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 'twere, anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old!"
Pp. 68, 69.

In his dying hour he is beset with Demons, who pretend to claim him as their forfeit;—but he indignantly and victoriously disputes their claim, and asserts his freedom from their thraldom.

"Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or ill—derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me.
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me—but not yours!
[*The Demons disappear.*"—Pp. 74, 75.

There are great faults, it must be admitted, in this poem;—but it is undoubtedly a work of genius and originality. Its worst fault, perhaps, is, that it fatigues and overawes us by the uniformity of its terror and solemnity. Another is the painful and offensive nature of the circumstance on which its distress is ultimately founded. It all springs from the disappointment or fatal issue of an incestuous passion; and incest, according to our modern ideas—for it was otherwise in antiquity—is not a thing to be at all brought before the imagination. The lyrical songs of the Spirits are too long; and not all excellent. There is something of pedantry in them now and then; and even Manfred deals in classical allusions a little too much. If we were to consider it as a proper drama, or even as a finished poem, we should be obliged to add, that it is far too indistinct and unsatisfactory. But this we

take to be according to the design and conception of the author. He contemplated but a dim and magnificent sketch of a subject which did not admit of more accurate drawing, or more brilliant colouring. Its obscurity is a part of its grandeur; — and the darkness that rests upon it, and the smoky distance in which it is lost, are all devices to increase its majesty, to stimulate our curiosity, and to impress us with deeper awe.

It is suggested, in an ingenious paper, in a late Number of the Edinburgh Magazine, that the general conception of this piece, and much of what is excellent in the manner of its execution, have been borrowed from "The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus" of Marlowe; and a variety of passages are quoted, which the author considers as similar, and, in many respects, superior to others in the poem before us. We cannot agree in the general terms of this conclusion;— but there is, no doubt, a certain resemblance, both in some of the topics that are suggested, and in the cast of the diction in which they are expressed. Thus, to induce Faustus to persist in his unlawful studies, he is told that the Spirits of the elements will serve him —

"Sometimes like women or unwedded maids,
Shadowing more beauty in their ayrie browes
Than have the white breasts of the Queene of Love."

And again, when the amorous sorcerer commands Helen of Troy to be revived, as his paramour, he addresses her, on her first appearance, in these rapturous lines —

"Was this the face that launcht a thousand ships,
And burn'd the toplesse towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen! make me immortal with a kiss!
Her lips sucke forth my soule! — see where it flies!
Come, Helen, come, give me my soule againe!
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in that lip,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
O! thou art fairer than the evening ayre,
Clad in the beauty of a thousand starres;
More lovely than the monarch of the skyes
In wanton Arethusa's azure arms!"

The catastrophe, too, is bewailed in verses of great elegance and classical beauty.

"Cut is the branch that might have growne full straight,
And burned is Apollo's laurel bough
That sometime grew within this learned man.
Faustus is gone! — regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful torture may exhort the wise,
Only to wonder at unlawful things."

But these, and many other smooth and fanciful verses in this curious old drama, prove nothing, we think, against the originality of Manfred; for there is nothing to be found there of the pride, the abstraction, and the heart-rooted misery in which that originality consists. Faustus is a vulgar sorcerer, tempted to sell his soul to the Devil for the ordinary price of sensual pleasure, and earthly power and glory — and who shrinks and shudders in agony when the forfeit comes to be exacted. The style, too, of Marlowe, though elegant and scholarlike, is weak and childish compared with the depth and force of much of what we have quoted from Lord Byron; and the disgusting buffoonery and low farce of which his piece is principally made up, place it much more in contrast, than in any terms of comparison, with that of his noble successor. In the tone and pitch of the composition, as well as in the character of the diction in the more solemn parts, the piece before us reminds us much more of the Prometheus of Æschylus, than of any more modern performance. The tremendous solitude of the principal person — the supernatural beings with whom alone he holds communion — the guilt — the firmness — the misery — are all points of resemblance, to which the grandeur of the poetic imagery only gives a more striking effect. The chief differences are, that the subject of the Greek poet was sanctified and exalted by the established belief of his country; and that his terrors are nowhere tempered with the sweetness which breathes from so many passages of his English rival.

ROBERT BURNS.

(January, 1809.)

Reliques of Robert Burns, *consisting chiefly of Original Letters, Poems, and Critical Observations on Scottish Songs. Collected and published by* R. H. Cromek. 8vo. pp. 450. London: 1808.

Burns is certainly by far the greatest of our poetical prodigies — from Stephen Duck down to Thomas Dermody. *They* are forgotten already; or only remembered for derision. But the name of Burns, if we are not mistaken, has not yet "gathered all its fame;" and will endure long after those circumstances

are forgotten which contributed to its first notoriety. So much indeed are we impressed with a sense of his merits, that we cannot help thinking it a derogation from them to consider him as a prodigy at all; and are convinced that he will never be rightly estimated as a poet, till that vulgar wonder be entirely repressed which was raised on his having been a ploughman. It is true, no doubt, that he was born in an humble station; and that much of his early life was devoted to severe labour, and to the society of his fellow-labourers. But he was not himself either uneducated or illiterate; and was placed in a situation more favourable, perhaps, to the development of great poetical talents, than any other which could have been assigned him. He was taught, at a very early age, to read and write; and soon after acquired a competent knowledge of French, together with the elements of Latin and Geometry. His taste for reading was encouraged by his parents and many of his associates; and, before he had ever composed a single stanza, he was not only familiar with many prose writers, but far more intimately acquainted with Pope, Shakspeare, and Thomson than nine-tenths of the youth that now leave our schools for the university. Those authors, indeed, with some old collections of songs, and the lives of Hannibal and Sir William Wallace, were his habitual study from the first days of his childhood; and co-operating with the solitude of his rural occupations, were sufficient to rouse his ardent and ambitious mind to the love and the practice of poetry. He had about as much scholarship, in short, we imagine, as Shakspeare; and far better models to form his ear to harmony, and train his fancy to graceful invention.

We ventured, on a former occasion, to say something of the effects of regular education, and of the general diffusion of literature, in repressing the vigour and originality of all kinds of mental exertion. That speculation was perhaps carried somewhat too far; but if the paradox have proof any where, it is in its application to poetry. Among well educated people, the standard writers of this description are at once so venerated and so familiar, that it is thought equally impossible to rival them, as to write verses without attempting it. If there be one degree of fame which excites emulation, there is another which leads to despair: nor can we conceive any one less likely to be added to the short list of original poets, than a young man of fine fancy and delicate taste, who has acquired a high relish for poetry, by perusing the most celebrated writers, and conversing with the most intelligent judges. The head of such a person is filled, of course, with all the splendid passages of ancient and modern authors, and with the fine and fastidious remarks which have been made even on those passages. When he turns his eyes, therefore, on his own conceptions or designs, they can scarcely fail to appear rude and contemptible. He is perpetually haunted and depressed by the ideal presence of those great masters, and their exacting critics. He is aware to what comparisons his productions will be subjected among his own friends and associates, and recollects the derision with which so many rash adventurers have been chased back to their obscurity. Thus, the merit of his great predecessors chills, instead of encouraging his ardour; and the illustrious names which have already reached to the summit of excellence, act like the tall and spreading trees of the forest, which overshadow and strangle the saplings which may have struck root in the soil below — and afford efficient shelter to nothing but creepers and parasites.

There is, no doubt, in some few individuals, "that strong divinity of soul" — that decided and irresistible vocation to glory, which, in spite of all these obstructions, calls out, perhaps once or twice in a century, a bold and original poet from the herd of scholars and academical literati. But the natural tendency of their studies, and by far their most common effect, is to repress originality, and discourage enterprise; and either to change those whom nature meant for poets, into mere readers of poetry, or to bring them out in the form of witty parodists, or ingenious imitators. Independent of the reasons which have been already suggested, it will perhaps be found, too, that necessity is the mother of invention, in this as well as in the more vulgar arts; or, at least, that inventive genius will frequently slumber in inaction, where the preceding ingenuity has in part supplied the wants of the owner. A solitary and uninstructed man, with lively feelings and an inflammable imagination, will

often be irresistibly led to exercise those gifts, and to occupy and relieve his mind in poetical composition: but if his education, his reading, and his society supply him with an abundant store of images and emotions, he will probably think but little of those internal resources, and feed his mind contentedly with what has been provided by the industry of others.

To say nothing, therefore, of the distractions and the dissipation of mind that belong to the commerce of the world, nor of the cares of minute accuracy and high finishing which are imposed on the professed scholar, there seem to be deeper reasons for the separation of originality and accomplishment; and for the partiality which has led poetry to choose almost all her prime favourites among the recluse and uninstructed. A youth of quick parts, in short, and creative fancy — with just so much reading as to guide his ambition, and rough-hew his notions of excellence—if his lot be thrown in humble retirement, where he has no reputation to lose, and where he can easily hope to excel all that he sees around him, is much more likely, we think, to give himself up to poetry, and to train himself to habits of invention, than if he had been encumbered by the pretended helps of extended study and literary society.

If these observations should fail to strike of themselves, they may perhaps derive additional weight from considering the very remarkable fact, that almost all the great poets of every country have appeared in an early stage of their history, and in a period comparatively rude and unlettered. Homer went forth, like the morning star, before the dawn of literature in Greece, and almost all the great and sublime poets of modern Europe are already between two and three hundred years old. Since that time, although books and readers, and opportunities of reading, are multiplied a thousand fold, we have improved chiefly in point and terseness of expression, in the art of raillery, and in clearness and simplicity of thought. Force, richness, and variety of invention, are now at least as rare as ever. But the literature and refinement of the age does not exist at all for a rustic and illiterate individual; and, consequently, the present time is to him what the rude times of old were to the vigorous writers which adorned them.

But though, for these and for other reasons, we can see no propriety in regarding the poetry of Burns chiefly as the wonderful work of a peasant, and thus admiring it much in the same way as if it had been written with his toes; yet there are peculiarities in his works which remind us of the lowness of his origin, and faults for which the defects of his education afford an obvious cause if not a legitimate apology. In forming a correct estimate of these works, it is necessary to take into account those peculiarities.

The first is, the undisciplined harshness and acrimony of his invective. The great boast of polished life is the delicacy, and even the generosity of its hostility — that quality which is still the characteristic, as it furnishes the denomination, of a gentleman — that principle which forbids us to attack the defenceless, to strike the fallen, or to mangle the slain — and enjoins us, in forging the shafts of satire, to increase the polish exactly as we add to their keenness or their weight. For this, as well as for other things, we are indebted to chivalry; and of this Burns had none. His ingenious and amiable biographer has spoken repeatedly in praise of his talents for satire — we think, with a most unhappy partiality. His epigrams and lampoons appear to us, one and all, unworthy of him; — offensive from their extreme coarseness and violence — and contemptible from their want of wit or brilliancy. They seem to have been written, not out of playful malice or virtuous indignation, but out of fierce and ungovernable anger. His whole raillery consists in railing; and his satirical vein displays itself chiefly in calling names and in swearing. We say this mainly with a reference to his personalities. In many of his more general representations of life and manners, there is no doubt much that may be called satirical, mixed up with admirable humour, and description of inimitable vivacity.

There is a similar want of polish, or at least of respectfulness, in the general tone of his gallantry. He has written with more passion, perhaps, and more variety of natural feeling, on the subject of love, than any other poet whatever — but with a fervour that is sometimes indelicate, and seldom accommodated to the timidity and "sweet austere composure" of women of refinement. He has expressed ad-

mirably the feelings of an enamoured peasant, who, however refined or eloquent he may be, always approaches his mistress on a footing of equality; but has never caught that tone of chivalrous gallantry which uniformly abases itself in the presence of the object of its devotion. Accordingly, instead of suing for a smile, or melting in a tear, his muse deals in nothing but locked embraces and midnight rencontres; and, even in his complimentary effusions to ladies of the highest rank, is for straining them to the bosom of her impetuous votary. It is easy, accordingly, to see from his correspondence, that many of his female patronesses shrunk from the vehement familiarity of his admiration; and there are even some traits in the volumes before us, from which we can gather that he resented the shyness and estrangement to which those feelings gave rise, with at least as little chivalry as he had shown in producing them.

But the leading vice in Burns's character, and the cardinal deformity, indeed, of all his productions, was his contempt, or affectation of contempt, for prudence, decency, and regularity; and his admiration of thoughtlessness, oddity, and vehement sensibility; — his belief, in short, in *the dispensing power* of genius and social feeling, in all matters of morality and common sense. This is the very slang of the worst German plays, and the lowest of our town-made novels; nor can any thing be more lamentable, than that it should have found a patron in such a man as Burns, and communicated to many of his productions a character of immorality, at once contemptible and hateful. It is but too true, that men of the highest genius have frequently been hurried by their passions into a violation of prudence and duty; and there is something generous, at least, in the apology which their admirers may make for them, on the score of their keener feelings and habitual want of reflection. But this apology, which is quite unsatisfactory in the mouth of another, becomes an insult and an absurdity whenever it proceeds from their own. A man may say of his friend, that he is a noble-hearted fellow — too generous to be just, and with too much spirit to be always prudent and regular. But he cannot be allowed to say even this of himself; and still less to represent himself as a hairbrained sentimental soul, constantly carried away by fine fancies and visions of love and philanthropy, and born to confound and despise the cold-blooded sons of prudence and sobriety. This apology, indeed, evidently destroys itself: for it shows that conduct to be the result of deliberate system, which it affects at the same time to justify as the fruit of mere thoughtlessness and casual impulse. Such protestations, therefore, will always be treated, as they deserve, not only with contempt, but with incredulity; and their magnanimous authors set down as determined profligates, who seek to disguise their selfishness under a name somewhat less revolting. That profligacy is almost always selfishness, and that the excuse of impetuous feeling can hardly ever be justly pleaded for those who neglect the ordinary duties of life, must be apparent, we think, even to the least reflecting of those sons of fancy and song. It requires no habit of deep thinking, nor any thing more, indeed, than the information of an honest heart, to perceive that it is cruel and base to spend, in vain superfluities, that money which belongs of right to the pale industrious tradesman and his famishing infants; or that it is a vile prostitution of language, to talk of that man's generosity or goodness of heart, who sits raving about friendship and philanthropy in a tavern, while his wife's heart is breaking at her cheerless fireside, and his children pining in solitary poverty.

This pitiful cant of careless feeling and eccentric genius, accordingly, has never found much favour in the eyes of English sense and morality. The most signal effect which it ever produced, was on the muddy brains of some German youth, who are said to have left college in a body to rob on the highway! because Schiller had represented the captain of a gang as so very noble a creature. — But in this country, we believe, a predilection for that honourable profession must have preceded this admiration of the character. The style we have been speaking of, accordingly, is now the heroics only of the hulks and the house of correction; and has no chance, we suppose, of being greatly admired, except in the farewell speech of a young gentleman preparing for Botany Bay.

It is humiliating to think how deeply Burns has fallen into this debasing error. He is

perpetually making a parade of his thoughtlessness, inflammability, and imprudence, and talking with much complacency and exultation of the offence he has occasioned to the sober and correct part of mankind. This odious slang infects almost all his prose, and a very great proportion of his poetry; and is, we are persuaded, the chief, if not the only source of the disgust with which, in spite of his genius, we know that he is regarded by many very competent and liberal judges. His apology, too, we are willing to believe, is to be found in the original lowness of his situation, and the slightness of his acquaintance with the world. With his talents and power of observation, he could not have seen much of the beings who echoed this raving, without feeling for them that distrust and contempt which would have made him blush to think he had ever stretched over them the protecting shield of his genius.

Akin to this most lamentable trait of vulgarity, and indeed in some measure arising out of it, is that perpetual boast of his own independence, which is obtruded upon the readers of Burns in almost every page of his writings. The sentiment itself is noble, and it is often finely expressed; — but a gentleman would only have expressed it when he was insulted or provoked; and would never have made it a spontaneous theme to those friends in whose estimation he felt that his honour stood clear. It is mixed up, too, in Burns with too fierce a tone of defiance; and indicates rather the pride of a sturdy peasant, than the calm and natural elevation of a generous mind.

The last of the symptoms of rusticity which we think it necessary to notice in the works of this extraordinary man, is that frequent mistake of mere exaggeration and violence, for force and sublimity, which has defaced so much of his prose composition, and given an air of heaviness and labour to a good deal of his serious poetry. The truth is, that his *forte* was in humour and in pathos — or rather in tenderness of feeling; and that he has very seldom succeeded, either where mere wit and sprightliness, or where great energy and weight of sentiment were requisite. He had evidently a very false and crude notion of what constituted *strength* of writing; and instead of that simple and brief directness which stamps the character of vigour upon every syllable, has generally had recourse to a mere accumulation of hyperbolical expressions, which encumber the diction instead of exalting it, and show the determination to be impressive, without the power of executing it. This error also we are inclined to ascribe entirely to the defects of his education. The value of simplicity in the expression of passion, is a lesson, we believe, of nature and of genius; — but its importance in mere grave and impressive writing, is one of the latest discoveries of rhetorical experience.

With the allowances and exceptions we have now stated, we think Burns entitled to the rank of a great and original genius. He has in all his compositions great force of conception; and great spirit and animation in its expression. He has taken a large range through the region of Fancy, and naturalized himself in almost all her climates. He has great humour — great powers of description — great pathos — and great discrimination of character. Almost every thing that he says has spirit and originality; and every thing that he says well, is characterized by a charming facility, which gives a grace even to occasional rudeness, and communicates to the reader a delightful sympathy with the spontaneous soaring and conscious inspiration of the poet.

Considering the reception which these works have met with from the public, and the long period during which the greater part of them have been in their possession, it may appear superfluous to say any thing as to their characteristic or peculiar merit. Though the ultimate judgment of the public, however, be always sound, or at least decisive as to its general result, it is not always very apparent upon what grounds it has proceeded; nor in consequence of what, or in spite of what, it has been obtained. In Burns's works there is much to censure, as well as much to praise; and as time has not yet separated his ore from its dross, it may be worth while to state, in a very general way, what we presume to anticipate as the result of this separation. Without pretending to enter at all into the comparative merit of particular passages, we may venture to lay it down as our opinion — that his poetry is far superior to his prose; that his Scottish compositions are greatly to be preferred to his

English ones; and that his Songs will probably outlive all his other productions. A very few remarks on each of these subjects will comprehend almost all that we have to say of the volumes now before us.

The prose works of Burns consist almost entirely of his letters. They bear, as well as his poetry, the seal and the impress of his genius; but they contain much more bad taste, and are written with far more apparent labour. His poetry was almost all written primarily from feeling, and only secondarily from ambition. His letters seem to have been nearly all composed as exercises, and for display. There are few of them written with simplicity or plainness; and though natural enough as to the sentiment, they are generally very strained and elaborate in the expression. A very great proportion of them, too, relate neither to facts nor feelings peculiarly connected with the author or his correspondent — but are made up of general declamation, moral reflections, and vague discussions — all evidently composed for the sake of effect, and frequently introduced with long complaints of having nothing to say, and of the necessity and difficulty of letter-writing.

By far the best of those compositions, are such as we should consider as exceptions from this general character — such as contain some specific information as to himself, or are suggested by events or observations directly applicable to his correspondent. One of the best, perhaps, is that addressed to Dr. Moore, containing an account of his early life, of which Dr. Currie has made such a judicious use in his Biography. It is written with great clearness and characteristic effect, and contains many touches of easy humour and natural eloquence. We are struck, as we open the book accidentally, with the following original application of a classical image, by this unlettered rustic. Talking of the first vague aspirations of his own gigantic mind, he says — we think very finely, — "I had felt some early stirrings of ambition; but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclop round the walls of his cave!" Of his other letters, those addressed to Mrs. Dunlop are, in our opinion, by far the best. He appears, from first to last, to have stood somewhat in awe of this excellent lady; and to have been no less sensible of her sound judgment and strict sense of propriety, than of her steady and generous partiality. The following passage we think is striking and characteristic: —

"I own myself so little a Presbyterian, that I approve of set times and seasons of more than ordinary acts of devotion, for breaking in on that habituated routine of life and thought which is so apt to reduce our existence to a kind of instinct, or even sometimes, and with some minds, to a state very little superior to mere machinery.

"This day; the first Sunday of May; a breezy, blue-skyed noon, some time about the beginning, and a hoary morning and calm sunny day about the end, of autumn; — these, time out of mind, have been with me a kind of holiday.

"I believe I owe this to that glorious paper in the Spectator, 'The Vision of Mirza;' a piece that struck my young fancy before I was capable of fixing an idea to a word of three syllables. 'On the 5th day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always *keep holy*, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hill of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer.'

"We know nothing, or next to nothing, of the substance or structure of our souls, so cannot account for those seeming caprices in them, that one should be particularly pleased with this thing, or struck with that, which, on minds of a different cast, makes no extraordinary impression. I have some favourite flowers in spring; among which are the mountain daisy, the hare-bell, the fox-glove, the wild brier rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud, solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of grey plover in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul, like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Eolian harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident? Or do these workings argue something within us above the trodden clod?" — Vol. ii. pp. 195—197.

To this we may add the following passage, as a part, indeed, of the same picture: —

"There is scarcely any earthly object gives me more — I do not know if I should call it pleasure — but something which exalts me, something which enraptures me — than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood, or high plantation, in a cloudy winter-day, and hear the stormy wind howling among the trees, and raving over the plain! It is my best season for devotion: my mind is wrapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to *Him*, who, in the pompous language of the Hebrew bard, 'walks on the wings of the wind.'" — Vol. ii. p. 11.

The following is one of the best and most striking of a whole series of eloquent hypochondriasm.

"After six weeks' confinement, I am beginning to walk across the room. They have been six horrible weeks;—anguish and low spirits made me unfit to read, write, or think.

"I have a hundred times wished that one could resign life as an officer resigns a commission: for I would not *take in* any poor, ignorant wretch, by *selling out*. Lately I was a sixpenny private; and, God knows, a miserable soldier enough: now I march to the campaign, a starving cadet—a little more conspicuously wretched.

"I am ashamed of all this; for though I do want bravery for the warfare of life, I could wish, like some other soldiers, to have as much fortitude or cunning as to dissemble or conceal my cowardice."—Vol. ii. pp. 127, 128.

One of the most striking letters in the collection, and, to us, one of the most interesting, is the earliest of the whole series; being addressed to his father in 1781, six or seven years before his name had been heard of out of his own family. The author was then a common flax-dresser, and his father a poor peasant;—yet there is not one trait of vulgarity, either in the thought or the expression; but, on the contrary, a dignity and elevation of sentiment, which must have been considered as of good omen in a youth of much higher condition. The letter is as follows:—

"Honoured Sir,—I have purposely delayed writing, in the hope that I should have the pleasure of seeing you on New-year's Day; but work comes so hard upon us, that I do not choose to be absent on that account, as well as for some other little reasons, which I shall tell you at meeting. My health is nearly the same as when you were here, only my sleep is a little sounder, and, on the whole, I am rather better than otherwise, though I mend by very slow degrees. The weakness of my nerves has so debilitated my mind, that I dare neither review past wants, nor look forward into futurity; for the least anxiety or perturbation in my breast produces most unhappy effects on my whole frame. Sometimes, indeed, when for an hour or two my spirits are a little lightened, I *glimmer* a little into futurity; but my principal, and indeed my only pleasurable employment, is looking backwards and forwards, in a moral and religious way. I am quite transported at the thought, that ere long, perhaps very soon, I shall bid an eternal adieu to all the pains, and uneasiness, and disquietudes of this weary life; for I assure you I am heartily tired of it; and, if I do not very much deceive myself, I could contentedly and gladly resign it.

"'The soul, uneasy, and confin'd at home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.'

"It is for this reason I am more pleased with the 15th, 16th, and 17th verses of the 7th chapter of the Revelations, than with any ten times as many verses in the whole Bible, and would not exchange the noble enthusiasm with which they inspire me for all that this world has to offer. As for this world, I despair of ever making a figure in it. I am not formed for the bustle of the busy, nor the flutter of the gay. I shall never again be capable of entering into such scenes. Indeed I am altogether unconcerned at the thoughts of this life. I foresee that poverty and obscurity probably await me; and I am in some measure prepared, and daily preparing to meet them. I have but just time and paper to return you my grateful thanks for the lessons of virtue and piety you have given me; which were too much neglected at the time of giving them, but which, I hope, have been remembered ere it is yet too late."—Vol. i. pp. 99—101.

Before proceeding to take any particular notice of his poetical compositions, we must take leave to apprise our Southern readers, that all his best pieces are written in Scotch; and that it is impossible for them to form any adequate judgment of their merits, without a pretty long residence among those who still use that language. To be able to translate the words, is but a small part of the knowledge that is necessary. The whole genius and idiom of the language must be familiar; and the characters, and habits, and associations of those who speak it. We beg leave, too, in passing, to observe, that this Scotch is not to be considered as a provincial dialect — the vehicle only of rustic vulgarity and rude local humour. It is the language of a whole country—long an independent kingdom, and still separate in laws, character, and manners. It is by no means peculiar to the vulgar; but is the common speech of the whole nation in early life — and, with many of its most exalted and accomplished individuals, throughout their whole existence; and, though it be true that, in later times, it has been, in some measure, laid aside by the more ambitious and aspiring of the present generation, it is still recollected, even by them, as the familiar language of their childhood, and of those who were the earliest objects of their love and veneration. It is connected, in their imagination, not only with that olden time which is uniformly conceived as more pure, lofty, and simple than the present, but also with all the

soft and bright colours of remembered childhood and domestic affection. All its phrases conjure up images of schoolday innocence, and sports, and friendships which have no pattern in succeeding years. Add to all this, that it is the language of a great body of poetry, with which almost all Scotchmen are familiar; and, in particular, of a great multitude of songs, written with more tenderness, nature, and feeling, than any other lyric compositions that are extant — and we may perhaps be allowed to say, that the Scotch is, in reality, a highly poetical language; and that it is an ignorant, as well as an illiberal prejudice, which would seek to confound it with the barbarous dialects of Yorkshire or Devon. In composing his Scottish poems, therefore, Burns did not merely make an instinctive and necessary use of the only dialect he could employ. The last letter which we have quoted, proves, that before he had penned a single couplet, he could write in the dialect of England with far greater purity and propriety than nine tenths of those who are called well educated in that country. He wrote in Scotch, because the writings which he most aspired to imitate were composed in that language; and it is evident, from the variations preserved by Dr. Currie, that he took much greater pains with the beauty and purity of his expressions in Scotch than in English; and, every one who understands both, must admit, with infinitely better success.

But though we have ventured to say thus much in praise of the Scottish poetry of Burns, we cannot presume to lay many specimens of it before our readers; and, in the few extracts we may be tempted to make from the volumes before us, shall be guided more by desire to exhibit what may be intelligible to all our readers, than by a feeling of what is in itself of the highest excellence.

We have said that Burns is almost equally distinguished for his tenderness and his humour: — we might have added, for a faculty of combining them both in the same subject, not altogether without parallel in the older poets and ballad-makers, but altogether singular, we think, among modern writers. The passages of pure humour are entirely Scottish — and untranslateable. They consist in the most picturesque representations of life and manners, enlivened, and even exalted by traits of exquisite sagacity, and unexpected reflection. His tenderness is of two sorts; that which is combined with circumstances and characters of humble, and sometimes ludicrous simplicity; and that which is produced by gloomy and distressful impressions acting on a mind of keen sensibility. The passages which belong to the former description are, we think, the most exquisite and original, and, in our estimation, indicate the greatest and most amiable turn of genius; both as being accompanied by fine and feeling pictures of humble life, and as requiring that delicacy, as well as justness of conception, by which alone the fastidiousness of an ordinary reader can be reconciled to such representations. The exquisite description of "The Cotter's Saturday Night" affords, perhaps, the finest example of this sort of pathetic. Its whole beauty cannot, indeed, be discerned but by those whom experience has enabled to judge of the admirable fidelity and completeness of the picture. But, independent altogether of national peculiarities, and even in spite of the obscurity of the language, we think it impossible to peruse the following stanzas without feeling the force of tenderness and truth: —

"November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn *Cotter* frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the *morn* in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

"At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant *wee-things*, toddlin, stacher thro'
To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonnily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie *wifie*'s smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

"Belyve the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A canna errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their *Jenny*, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposite her sair-won penny fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

"But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in *Jenny*'s e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care, inquires his name,
While *Jenny* hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleas'd, the mother hears its nae wild, worthless rake.

"Wi' kindly welcome *Jenny* brings him ben;
A strappan youth; he taks the mother's eye;
Blythe *Jenny* sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows with joy,
But blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel pleas'd to think her *bairn*'s respected like the lave.

"The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big *ha'-Bible*, ance his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin an' bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And '*Let us worship* GOD!' he says, with solemn air.

"They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim," &c.

"Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent pair their *secret homage* pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That *He* who stills the raven's clam'rous rest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts, with *grace divine* preside."
Vol. iii. pp. 174—181.

The charm of the fine lines written on turning up a mouse's nest with the plough, will also be found to consist in the simple tenderness of the delineation.

"Thy wee bit *housie*, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the winds are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell and keen!

"Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel *coulter* past
Out thro' thy cell.

"That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble,
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!"
Vol. iii. p. 147.

The verses to a Mountain Daisy, though more elegant and picturesque, seem to derive their chief beauty from the same tone of sentiment.

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem!

"Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie *Lark*, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet!
Wi' sprinkl'd breast,
When upward-springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.

"Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

"There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the *share* uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!"
Vol. iii. pp. 201, 202.

There are many touches of the same kind in most of the popular and beautiful poems in this collection, especially in the Winter Night — the address to his old Mare — the address to the Devil, &c.; — in all which, though the greater part of the piece be merely ludicrous and picturesque, there are traits of a delicate and tender feeling, indicating that unaffected softness of heart which is always so enchanting. In the humorous address to the Devil, which we have just mentioned, every Scottish reader must have felt the effect of this relenting nature in the following stanzas: —

"Lang syne, in *Eden*'s bonnie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
An' all the soul of love they shared,
The raptur'd hour,
Sweet on the fragrant, flow'ry swaird,
In shady bow'r:

"Then you, ye auld, snic-drawing dog!
Ye came to Paradise incog.,
An' gied the infant warld a shog,
'Maist ruin'd a.

"But, fare you weel, auld *Nickie-ben!*
O wad ye tak a thought an' men'!
Ye aiblins might — I dinna ken —
Still hae a *stake* —
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Ev'n for your sake!"
Vol. iii. pp. 74—76.

The finest examples, however, of this simple and unpretending tenderness is to be found in those Songs which are likely to transmit the name of Burns to all future generations. He found this delightful trait in the old Scottish ballads which he took for his model, and upon which he has improved with a felicity and delicacy of imitation altogether unrivalled in the history of literature. Sometimes it is the brief and simple pathos of the genuine old ballad; as,

"But I look to the West when I lie down to rest,
That happy my dreams and my slumbers may be;
For far in the West lives he I love best,
The lad that is dear to my baby and me."

Or, as in this other specimen —

"Drumossie moor, Drumossie day!
A waefu' day it was to me:
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear, and brethren three.

"Their winding sheet the bluidy clay,
Their graves are growing green to see;
And by them lies the dearest lad
That ever blest a woman's e'e!
Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,
A bluidy man I trow thou be;
For mony a heart thou hast made sair,
That ne'er did wrong to thine or thee."
Vol. iv. p. 337.

Sometimes it is animated with airy narrative, and adorned with images of the utmost elegance and beauty. As a specimen taken at random, we insert the following stanzas: —

"And ay she wrought her mammie's wark;
And ay she sang sae merrilie:
The blythest bird upon the bush
Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

"But hawks will rob the tender joys
That bless the little lintwhite's nest;
And frost will blight the fairest flowers,
And love will break the soundest rest.

"Young Robie was the brawest lad,
The flower and pride of a' the glen;
And he had owsen, sheep, and kye,
And wanton naigies nine or ten.

"He gaed wi' Jeanie to the tryste,
He danc'd wi' Jeanie on the down;
And lang ere witless Jeanie wist,
Her heart was tint, her peace was stown.

"*As in the bosom o' the stream*
The moon-beam dwells at dewy e'en;
So trembling, pure, was infant love
Within the breast o' bonie Jean!"
Vol. iv. p. 80.

Sometimes, again, it is plaintive and mournful — in the same strain of unaffected simplicity.

"O stay, sweet warbling wood-lark, stay,
Nor quit for me the trembling spray!
A hapless lover courts thy lay,
Thy soothing fond complaining.

"Again, again, that tender part,
That I may catch thy melting art;
For surely that would touch her heart,
Wha kills me wi' disdaining.

"Say, was thy little mate unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
Oh, nocht but love and sorrow join'd,
Sic notes o' woe could wauken.

"Thou tells o' never-ending care;
O' speechless grief, and dark despair;
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!
Or my poor heart is broken!"
Vol. iv. pp. 226, 227.

We add the following from Mr. Cromek's new volume; as the original form of the very popular song given at p. 325. of Dr. Currie's 4th volume.

"Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

"Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird
That sings upon the bough:
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause luve was true.

"Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

"Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And sae did I o' mine.

"Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose
Frae aff its thorny tree,
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me."
Vol. v. pp. 17, 18.

Sometimes the rich imagery of the poet's fancy overshadows and almost overcomes the leading sentiment.

"The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,
But life to me's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks.

"The wanton coot the water skims,
Amang the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.

"The sheep-herd steeks his faulding slap,
And owre the moorlands whistles shill:
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step
I meet him on the dewy hill.

"And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on fluttering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide."
Vol. iii. pp. 284, 285.

The sensibility which is thus associated with simple imagery and gentle melancholy, is to us the most winning and attractive. But Burns has also expressed it when it is merely the instrument of torture — of keen remorse, and tender and agonizing regret. There are some strong traits of the former feeling, in the poems entitled the Lament, Despondency, &c.; when, looking back to the times

"When love's luxurious pulse beat high,"

he bewails the consequences of his own irregularities. There is something cumbrous and inflated, however, in the diction of these pieces. We are infinitely more moved with his Elegy upon Highland Mary. Of this first love of the poet, we are indebted to Mr. Cromek for a brief, but very striking account, from the pen of the poet himself. In a note on an early song inscribed to this mistress, he had recorded in a manuscript book —

"My Highland lassie was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met, by appointment, on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the Banks of Ayr, where we spent the day in taking a farewel, before she should embark for the West Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for our projected change of life. At the close of Autumn following, she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock: where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave in a few days! — before I could even hear of her illness." — Vol. v. pp. 237, 238.

Mr. Cromek has added, in a note, the following interesting particulars; though without specifying the authority upon which he details them: —

"This adieu was performed with all those simple and striking ceremonials which rustic sentiment has devised to prolong tender emotions and to inspire awe. The lovers stood on each side of a small purling brook; they laved their hands in its limpid stream, and, holding a Bible between them, pronounced their vows to be faithful to each other. They parted — never to meet again!

"The anniversary of *Mary Campbell*'s death (for that was her name) awakening in the sensitive mind of *Burns* the most lively emotion, he retired from his family, then residing on the farm of Ellisland, and wandered, solitary, on the banks of the Nith, and about the farm yard, in the extremest agitation of mind, nearly the whole of the night: his agitation was so great, that he threw himself on the side of a corn stack, and there conceived his sublime and tender elegy — his address *To Mary in Heaven.*" — Vol. v. p. 238.

The poem itself is as follows: —

"Thou lingering star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn!

"O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

"That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!

"Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace;
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

"Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening, green,
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twin'd amorous round the raptured scene.

"The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of winged day!

"Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care;
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.

"My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?"
Vol. i. pp. 125, 126.

Of his pieces of humour, the tale of Tam O'Shanter is probably the best: though there are traits of infinite merit in Scotch Drink, the Holy Fair, the Hallow E'en, and several of the songs, in all of which, it is very remarkable, that he rises occasionally into a strain of beautiful description or lofty sentiment, far above the pitch of his original conception. The poems of observation on life and characters, are the Twa Dogs and the various Epistles — all of which show very extraordinary sagacity and powers of expression. They are written, however, in so broad a dialect, that we dare not venture to quote any part of them. The only pieces that can be classed under the head of pure fiction, are the Two Bridges of Ayr, and the Vision. In the last, there are some vigorous and striking lines. We select the passage in which the Muse describes the early propensities of her favourite, rather as being more generally intelligible, than as superior to the rest of the poem.

"I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the North his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim Nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

"Or when the deep-green mantl'd earth
Warm cherish'd ev'ry flow'ret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In ev'ry grove,
I saw thee eye the gen'ral mirth
With boundless love.

"When ripen'd fields, and azure skies,
Call'd forth the reapers' rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their ev'ning joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

"When youthful love, warm, blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents grateful to thy tongue,
Th' adored *Name*,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To sooth thy flame.

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
Wild send thee Pleasure's devious way,
Misled by Fancy's meteor-ray,
By Passion driven;
But yet the *light* that led astray
Was *light* from heaven!"
Vol. iii. pp. 109, 110.

There is another fragment, called also a Vision, which belongs to a higher order of poetry. If Burns had never written any thing else, the power of description, and the vigour of the whole composition, would have entitled him to the remembrance of posterity.

"The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot alang the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant-echoing glens reply.

"The stream adown its hazelly path,
Was rushing by the ruin'd wa's,
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,
Whas distant roaring swells an' fa's.

"The cauld blue north was streaming forth
Her lights, wi' hissing eerie din;
Athort the lift they start and shift,
Like fortune's favours, tint as win!

"By heedless chance I turn'd mine eyes,
And by the moon-beam, shook, to see
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,
Attir'd as minstrels wont to be.

"Had I a statue been o' stane,
His darin' look had daunted me;
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain,
The sacred posy — Liberty!

"And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might rous'd the slumbering dead to hear;
But oh, it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear!

"He sang wi' joy the former day,
He weeping wail'd his latter times —
But what he said, it was nae play,
I winna ventur't in my rhymes."
Vol. iv. pp. 344—346.

Some verses, written for a Hermitage, sound like the best parts of Grongar Hill. The reader may take these few lines as a specimen: —

"As thy day grows warm and high,
Life's meridian flaming nigh,
Dost thou spurn the humble vale?
Life's proud summits wouldst thou scale?
Dangers, eagle-pinion'd, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold,
While cheerful peace, with linnet song,
Chants the lowly dells among."
Vol. iii. p. 299.

There is a little copy of Verses upon a Newspaper at p. 355. of Dr. Currie's 4th volume, written in the same condensed style, and only wanting translation into English to be worthy of Swift.

The finest piece, of the strong and nervous sort, however, is undoubtedly the address of Robert Bruce to his army at Bannockburn, beginning, "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled." The Death Song, beginning,

"Farewell, thou fair day, thou green earth, and ye skies,
Now gay with the bright setting sun,"

is to us less pleasing. There are specimens, however, of such vigour and emphasis scattered through his whole works, as are sure to make themselves and their author remembered; for instance, that noble description of a dying soldier.

"Nae cauld, faint-hearted doubtings teaze him:
Death comes! wi' fearless eye he sees him;
Wi' bluidy hand a welcome gi'es him;
An' when he fa's,
His latest draught o' breathing leaves him
In faint huzzas!"
Vol. iii. p. 27.

The whole song of "For a' that," is written with extraordinary spirit. The first stanza ends —

"For rank is but the guinea stamp;
The *man*'s the goud, far a' that."

— All the songs, indeed, abound with traits of this kind. We select the following at random :—

"O woman, lovely woman, fair!
An angel form's faun to thy share:
'Twad been o'er meikle to've gi'en thee mair,
I mean an angel mind." — Vol. iv. p. 330.

We dare not proceed further in specifying the merits of pieces which have been so long published. Before concluding upon this subject, however, we must beg leave to express our dissent from the poet's amiable and judicious biographer, in what he says of the general harshness and rudeness of his versification. Dr. Currie, we are afraid, was scarcely Scotchman enough to comprehend the whole prosody of the verses to which he alluded. Most of the Scottish pieces are, in fact, much more carefully versified than the English; and we appeal to our Southern readers, whether there be any want of harmony in the following stanza : —

"Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old *Scotia*'s bloody lion bore:
Even *I* who sing in rustic lore,
Haply *my sires* have left their shed,
And fac'd grim danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where *your* fathers led!"
Vol. iii. p. 233.

The following is not quite English; but it is intelligible to all readers of English, and may satisfy them that the Scottish song-writer was not habitually negligent of his numbers : —

"Their groves o' sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green breckan,
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom.
Far dearer to me are yon humble broom bowers,
Where the blue bell and gowan lurk lowly unseen:
For there, lightly tripping amang the wild flowers,
A-listening the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

"Tho' rich is the breeze in their gay sunny vallies,
And cauld, Caledonia's blast on the wave;
Their sweet-scented woodlands that skirt the proud palace,
What are they? The haunt o' the tyrant and slave!
The slave's spicy forests, and gold-bubbling fountains,
The brave Caledonian views wi' disdain;
He wanders as free as the winds of his mountains,
Save love's willing fetters, the chains o' his Jean."
Vol. iv. pp. 228, 229.

If we have been able to inspire our readers with any portion of our own admiration for this extraordinary writer, they will readily forgive us for the irregularity of which we have been guilty, in introducing so long an account of his whole works, under colour of the additional volume of which we have prefixed the title to this article. The truth is, however, that unless it be taken in connection with his other works, the present volume has little interest, and could not be made the subject of any intelligible observations. It is made up of some additional letters, of middling merit — of complete copies of others, of which Dr. Currie saw reason to publish only extracts — of a number of remarks, by Burns, on old Scottish songs — and, finally, of a few additional poems and songs, certainly not dis-

graceful to the author, but scarcely fitted to add to his reputation. The world, however, is indebted, we think, to Mr. Cromek's industry for this addition to so popular an author; — and the friends of the poet, we are sure, are indebted to his good taste, moderation, and delicacy, for having confined it to the pieces which are now printed. Burns wrote many rash — many violent, and many indecent things; of which we have no doubt many specimens must have fallen into the hands of so diligent a collector. He has, however, carefully suppressed every thing of this description; and shown that tenderness for his author's memory, which is the best proof of the veneration with which he regards his talents. We shall now see if there be any thing in the volume which deserves to be particularly noticed.

The Preface is very amiable, and well-written. Mr. Cromek speaks with becoming respect and affection of Dr. Currie, the learned biographer and first editor of the poet, and with great modesty of his own qualifications.

"As an apology (he says) for any defects of my own that may appear in this publication, I beg to observe that I am by profession an artist, and not an author. In the manner of laying them before the public, I honestly declare that I have done my best; and I trust I may fairly presume to hope, that the man who has contributed to extend the bounds of literature, by adding another genuine volume to the writings of Robert Burns, has some claim on the gratitude of his countrymen. On this occasion, I certainly feel something of that sublime and heart-swelling gratification, which he experiences who casts another stone on the CAIRN of a great and lamented chief." — Preface, pp. xi. xii.

Of the Letters, which occupy nearly half the volume, we cannot, on the whole, express any more favourable opinion than that which we have already ventured to pronounce on the prose compositions of this author in general. Indeed they abound rather more than those formerly published, in ravings about sensibility and imprudence — in common swearing, and in professions of love for whisky. By far the best are those which are addressed to Miss Chalmers; and that chiefly, because they seem to be written with less effort, and at the same time with more respect for his correspondent. The following was written at a most critical period of his life; and the good feelings and good sense which it displays, only make us regret more deeply that they were not attended with greater firmness.

"Shortly after my last return to Ayrshire, I married 'my Jean.' This was not in consequence of the attachment of romance perhaps; but I had a long and much lov'd fellow-creature's happiness or misery in my determination, and I durst not trifle with so important a deposit. Nor have I any cause to repent it. If I have not got polite tattle, modish manners, and fashionable dress, I am not sickened and disgusted with the multiform curse of boarding-school affectation; and I have got the handsomest figure, the sweetest temper, the soundest constitution, and the kindest heart in the country! Mrs. Burns believes, as firmly as her creed, that I am *le plus bel esprit, et le plus honnête homme* in the universe: although she scarcely ever in her life, except the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and the Psalms of David in metre, spent five minutes together on either prose or verse. I must except also from this last, a certain late publication of Scots Poems, which she has perused very devoutly, and all the ballads in the country, as she has (O the partial lover! you will cry) the finest 'wood-note wild' I ever heard. I am the more particular in this lady's character, as I know she will henceforth have the honour of a share in your best wishes. She is still at Mauchline, as I am building my house: for this hovel that I shelter in while occasionally here, is pervious to every blast that blows, and every shower that falls; and I am only preserved from being chilled to death, by being suffocated with smoke. I do not find my farm that pennyworth I was taught to expect; but I believe, in time, it may be a saving bargain. You will be pleased to hear that I have laid aside idle *éclat*, and bind every day after my reapers.

"To save me from that horrid situation of at any time going down, in a losing bargain of a farm, to misery, I have taken my excise instructions, and have my commission in my pocket for any emergency of fortune! If I could set *all* before your view, whatever disrespect you, in common with the world, have for this business, I know you would approve of my idea." — Vol. v. pp. 74, 75.

We may add the following for the sake of connection.

"I know not how the word exciseman, or still more opprobrious, gauger, will sound in your ears. I too have seen the day when my auditory nerves would have felt very delicately on this subject; but a wife and children are things which have a wonderful power in blunting these kind of sensations. Fifty pounds a year for life, and a provision for widows and orphans, you will allow is no bad settlement for a *poet*. For the ignominy of the profession, I have the encouragement which I once heard a recruiting sergeant give to a numerous, if not a respectable audience, in the streets of Kilmarnock — 'Gentlemen,

for your further and better encouragement, I can assure you that our regiment is the most blackguard corps under the crown, and consequently with us an honest fellow has the surest chance of preferment.'" — Vol. v. pp. 99, 100.

It would have been as well if Mr. Cromek had left out the history of Mr. Hamilton's dissensions with his parish minister, — Burns's apology to a gentleman with whom he had had a drunken squabble, — and the anecdote of his being used to *ask for more liquor*, when visiting in the country, under the pretext of fortifying himself against the terrors of a little wood he had to pass through in going home. The most interesting passages, indeed, in this part of the volume, are those for which we are indebted to Mr. Cromek himself. He informs us, for instance, in a note,

"One of Burns's remarks, when he first came to Edinburgh, was, that between the Men of rustic life and the polite world he observed little difference — that in the former, though unpolished by fashion, and unenlightened by science, he had found much observation and much intelligence; — but a refined and accomplished Woman was a being almost new to him, and of which he had formed but a very inadequate idea." — Vol. v. pp. 68, 69.

He adds also, in another place, that "the poet, when questioned about his habits of composition, replied, — 'All my poetry is the effect of easy composition, but of laborious correction.'" It is pleasing to know those things — even if they were really as trifling as to a superficial observer they may probably appear. There is a very amiable letter from Mr. Murdoch, the poet's early preceptor, at p. 111.; and a very splendid one from Mr. Bloomfield, at p. 135. As nothing is more rare among the minor poets, than a candid acknowledgment of their own inferiority, we think Mr. Bloomfield well entitled to have his magnanimity recorded.

"The illustrious soul that has left amongst us the name of Burns, has often been lowered down to a comparison with me; but the comparison exists more in circumstances than in essentials. That man stood up with the stamp of superior intellect on his brow; a visible greatness; and great and patriotic subjects would only have called into action the powers of his mind, which lay inactive while he played calmly and exquisitely the pastoral pipe.

"The letters to which I have alluded in my preface to the 'Rural Tales,' were friendly warnings, pointed with immediate reference to the fate of that extraordinary man. 'Remember Burns,' has been the watchword of my friends. I do remember Burns; but I *am not* Burns! I have neither his fire to fan, or to quench; nor his passions to control! Where then is my merit, if I make a peaceful voyage on a smooth sea, and with no mutiny on board?" — Vol. v. pp. 135, 136.

The observations on Scottish songs, which fill nearly 150 pages, are, on the whole, minute and trifling; though the exquisite justness of the poet's taste, and his fine relish of simplicity in this species of composition, is no less remarkable here than in his correspondence with Mr. Thomson. Of all other kinds of poetry, he was so indulgent a judge, that he may almost be termed an indiscriminate admirer. We find, too, from these observations, that several songs and pieces of songs, which he printed as genuine antiques, were really of his own composition.

The commonplace book, from which Dr. Currie had formerly selected all that he thought worth publication, is next given entire by Mr. Cromek. We were quite as well, we think, with the extracts; — at all events, there was no need for reprinting what had been given by Dr. Currie; a remark which is equally applicable to the letters of which we had formerly extracts.

Of the additional poems which form the concluding part of the volume, we have but little to say. We have little doubt of their authenticity: for, though the editor has omitted, in almost every instance, to specify the source from which they were derived, they certainly bear the stamp of the author's manner and genius. But they are not of his purest metal, nor marked with his finest die: several of them have appeared in print already; and the songs are, as usual, the best. This little lamentation of a desolate damsel, is tender and pretty.

"My father put me frae his door,
My friends they hae disown'd me a';
But I hae ane will tak my part,
The bonnie lad that's far awa.

"A pair o' gloves he gave to me,
And silken snoods he gave me twa;
And I will wear them for his sake,
The bonnie lad that's far awa.

"The weary winter soon will pass,
And spring will cleed the birken-shaw;
And my sweet babie will be born,
And he'll come hame that's far awa."
Vol. v. pp. 432, 433.

We now reluctantly dismiss this subject. We scarcely hoped, when we began our critical labours, that an opportunity would ever occur of speaking of Burns as we wished to speak of him; and therefore we feel grateful to Mr. Cromek for giving us this opportunity. As we have no means of knowing, with precision, to what extent his writings are known and admired in the southern part of the kingdom, we have perhaps fallen into the error of quoting passages that are familiar to most of our readers, and dealing out praise which every one of them had previously awarded. We felt it impossible, however, to resist the temptation of transcribing a few of the passages which struck us the most, on turning over the volumes; and reckon with confidence on the gratitude of those to whom they are new, — while we are not without hopes of being forgiven by those who have been used to admire them.

We shall conclude with two general remarks — the one national, the other critical. The first is, that it is impossible to read the productions of Burns, along with his history, without forming a higher idea of the intelligence, taste, and accomplishments of our peasantry, than most of those in the higher ranks are disposed to entertain. Without meaning to deny that he himself was endowed with rare and extraordinary gifts of genius and fancy, it is evident, from the whole details of his history, as well as from the letters of his brother, and the testimony of Mr. Murdoch and others, to the character of his father, that the whole family, and many of their associates, who never emerged from the native obscurity of their condition, possessed talents, and taste, and intelligence, which are little suspected to lurk in those humble retreats. His epistles to brother poets, in the rank of small farmers and shopkeepers in the adjoining villages, — the existence of a book-society and debating-club among persons of that description, and many other incidental traits in his sketches of his youthful companions, — all contribute to show, that not only good sense, and enlightened morality, but literature, and talents for speculation, are far more generally diffused in society than is commonly imagined; and that the delights and the benefits of those generous and humanizing pursuits, are by no means confined to those whom leisure and affluence have courted to their enjoyment. That much of this is peculiar to Scotland, and may be properly referred to our excellent institutions for parochial education, and to the natural sobriety and prudence of our nation, may certainly be allowed: but we have no doubt that there is a good deal of the same principle in England, and that the actual intelligence of the lower orders will be found, there also, very far to exceed the ordinary estimates of their superiors. It is pleasing to know, that the sources of rational enjoyment are so widely disseminated; and in a free country, it is comfortable to think, that so great a proportion of the people is able to appreciate the advantages of its condition, and fit to be relied on, in all emergencies where steadiness and intelligence may be required.

Our other remark is of a more limited application; and is addressed chiefly to the followers and patrons of that new school of poetry, against which we have thought it our duty to neglect no opportunity of testifying. Those gentlemen are outrageous for simplicity; and we beg leave to recommend to them the simplicity of Burns. He has copied the spoken language of passion and affection, with infinitely more fidelity than they have ever done, on all occasions which properly admitted of such adaptation: but he has not rejected the helps of elevated language and habitual associations; nor debased his composition by an affectation of babyish interjections, and all the puling expletives of an old nursery-maid's vocabulary. They may look long enough among his nervous and manly lines, before they find any "Good lacks!"—"Dear hearts!" — or "As a body may says," in them; or any stuff about dancing daffodils and sister Emmelines. Let them think, with what infinite contempt the powerful mind of Burns would have perused the story of Alice Fell and her duffle cloak, — of Andrew Jones and the half-crown, — or of Little Dan without breeches, and his thievish grandfather. Let them contrast their own fantastical personages of hysterical school-masters and sententious leech-gatherers, with the authentic rustics of Burns's Cotter's Saturday Night, and his inimitable songs; and reflect on the different reception which those personifications have met with

from the public. Though they will not be reclaimed from their puny affectations by the example of their learned predecessors, they may, perhaps, submit to be admonished by a self-taught and illiterate poet, who drew from Nature far more directly than they can do, and produced something so much liker the admired copies of the masters whom they have abjured.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

(April, 1809.)

Gertrude of Wyoming, a Pensylvanian Tale; and other Poems. By Thomas Campbell, *author of "The Pleasures of Hope," &c.* 4to. pp. 136. London: Longman & Co.: 1809.

We rejoice once more to see a polished and pathetic poem — in the old style of English pathos and poetry. This is of the pitch of the Castle of Indolence, and the finer parts of Spenser; with more feeling, in many places, than the first, and more condensation and diligent finishing than the latter. If the true tone of nature be not everywhere maintained, it gives place, at least, to art only, and not to affectation — and, least of all, to affectation of singularity or rudeness.

Beautiful as the greater part of this volume is, the public taste, we are afraid, has of late been too much accustomed to beauties of a more obtrusive and glaring kind, to be fully sensible of its merit. Without supposing that this taste has been in any great degree vitiated, or even imposed upon, by the babyism or the antiquarianism which have lately been versified for its improvement, we may be allowed to suspect, that it has been somewhat dazzled by the splendour, and bustle, and variety of the most popular of our recent poems; and that the more modest colouring of truth and nature may, at this moment, seem somewhat cold and feeble. We have endeavoured, on former occasions, to do justice to the force and originality of some of those brilliant productions, as well as to the genius (fitted for much higher things) of their authors — and have little doubt of being soon called upon for a renewed tribute of applause. But we cannot help saying, in the mean time, that the work before us belongs to a class which comes nearer to our conception of pure and perfect poetry. Such productions do not, indeed, strike so strong a blow as the vehement effusions of our modern *Trouveurs;* but they are calculated, we think, to please more deeply, and to call out more permanently, those trains of emotion, in which the delight of poetry will probably be found to consist. They may not be so loudly nor so universally applauded; but their fame will probably endure longer, and they will be oftener recalled to mingle with the reveries of solitary leisure, or the consolations of real sorrow.

There is a sort of poetry, no doubt, as there is a sort of flowers, which can bear the broad sun and the ruffling winds of the world, — which thrive under the hands and eyes of indiscriminating multitudes, and please as much in hot and crowded saloons, as in their own sheltered repositories; but the finer and the purer sorts blossom only in the shade; and never give out their sweets but to those who seek them amid the quiet and seclusion of the scenes which gave them birth. There are torrents and cascades which attract the admiration of tittering parties, and of which even the busy must turn aside to catch a transient glance: but "the haunted stream" steals through a still and a solitary landscape; and its beauties are never revealed, but to him who strays, in calm contemplation, by its course, and follows its wanderings with undistracted and unimpatient admiration. There is a reason, too, for all this, which may be made more plain than by metaphors.

The highest delight which poetry produces, does not arise from the mere passive perception of the images or sentiments which it presents to the mind; but from the excitement which is given to its own internal activity, and the character which is impressed on the train of its spontaneous conceptions. Even the dullest reader generally sees more than is directly presented to him by the poet: but a lover of poetry always sees infinitely more; and is often indebted to his author for little more than an impulse, or the key-note of a melody which his fancy makes out for itself. Thus, the effect of poetry depends more on the *fruitfulness* of the impressions to which it gives rise, than on their own individual force or

novelty; and the writers who possess the greatest powers of fascination, are not those who present us with the greatest number of lively images or lofty sentiments, but who most successfully impart their own impulse to the current of our thoughts and feelings, and give the colour of their brighter conceptions to those which they excite in their readers. Now, upon a little consideration, it will probably appear, that the dazzling, and the busy and marvellous scenes which constitute the whole charm of some poems, are not so well calculated to produce this effect, as those more intelligible delineations which are borrowed from ordinary life, and coloured from familiar affections. The object is, to awaken in our minds a train of kindred emotions, and to excite our imaginations to work out for themselves a tissue of pleasing or impressive conceptions. But it seems obvious, that this is more likely to be accomplished by surrounding us gradually with those objects, and involving us in those situations with which we have long been accustomed to associate the feelings of the poet, — than by startling us with some tale of wonder, or attempting to engage our affections for personages, of whose character and condition we are unable to form any distinct conception. These, indeed, are more sure than the other to produce a momentary sensation, by the novelty and exaggeration with which they are commonly attended; but their power is spent at the first impulse: they do not strike root and germinate in the mind, like the seeds of its native feelings; nor propagate throughout the imagination that long series of delightful movements, which is only excited when the song of the poet is the echo of our familiar feelings.

It appears to us, therefore, that by far the most powerful and enchanting poetry is that which depends for its effect upon the just representation of common feelings and common situations; and not on the strangeness of its incidents, or the novelty or exotic splendour of its scenes and characters. The difficulty is, no doubt, to give the requisite force, elegance, and dignity to these ordinary subjects, and to win a way for them to the heart, by that true and concise expression of natural emotion, which is among the rarest gifts of inspiration. To accomplish this, the poet must do much; and the reader something. The one must practise enchantment, and the other submit to it. The one must purify his conceptions from all that is low or artificial; and the other must lend himself gently to the impression, and refrain from disturbing it by any movement of worldly vanity, derision, or hardheartedness. In an advanced state of society, the expression of simple emotion is so obstructed by ceremony, or so distorted by affectation, that though the sentiment itself be still familiar to the greater part of mankind, the verbal representation of it is a task of the utmost difficulty. One set of writers, accordingly, finding the whole language of men and women too sophisticated for this purpose, have been obliged to go to the nursery for a more suitable phraseology; another has adopted the style of courtly Arcadians; and a third, that of mere Bedlamites. So much more difficult is it to express natural feelings, than to narrate battles, or describe prodigies!

But even when the poet has done his part, there are many causes which may obstruct his immediate popularity. In the first place, it requires a certain degree of sensibility to perceive his merit. There are thousands of people who can admire a florid description, or be amused with a wonderful story, to whom a pathetic poem is quite unintelligible. In the second place, it requires a certain degree of leisure and tranquillity in the reader. A picturesque stanza may be well enough relished while the reader is getting his hair combed; but a scene of tenderness or emotion will not do, even for the corner of a crowded drawing-room. Finally, it requires a certain degree of courage to proclaim the merits of such a writer. Those who feel the most deeply, are most given to disguise their feelings; and derision is never so agonizing as when it pounces on the wanderings of misguided sensibility. Considering the habits of the age in which we live, therefore, and the fashion, which, though not immutable, has for some time run steadily in an opposite direction, we should not be much surprised if a poem, whose chief merit consisted in its pathos, and in the softness and exquisite tenderness of its representations of domestic life and romantic seclusion, should meet with less encouragement than it deserves. If the volume before us were the work of an unknown writer, indeed, we should feel no

little apprehension about its success; but Mr. Campbell's name has power, we are persuaded, to insure a very partial and a very general attention to whatever it accompanies, and, we would fain hope, influence enough to reclaim the public taste to a juster standard of excellence. The success of his former work, indeed, goes far to remove our anxiety for the fortune of this. It contained, perhaps, more brilliant and bold passages than are to be found in the poem before us: but it was inferior, we think, in softness and beauty; and, being necessarily of a more desultory and didactic character, had far less pathos and interest than this very simple tale. Those who admired the Pleasures of Hope for the passages about Brama and Kosciusko, may perhaps be somewhat disappointed with the gentler tone of Gertrude; but those who loved that charming work for its pictures of infancy and of maternal and connubial love, may read on here with the assurance of a still higher gratification.

The story is of very little consequence in a poem of this description; and it is here, as we have just hinted, extremely short and simple. Albert, an English gentleman of high character and accomplishment, had emigrated to Pensylvania about the year 1740, and occupied himself, after his wife's death, in doing good to his neighbours, and in educating his infant and only child, Gertrude. He had fixed himself in the pleasant township of Wyoming, on the banks of the Susquehana; a situation which at that time might have passed for an earthly paradise, with very little aid from poetical embellishment. The beauty and fertility of the country, — the simple and unlaborious plenty which reigned among the scattered inhabitants, — but, above all, the singular purity and innocence of their manners, and the tranquil and unenvious equality in which they passed their days, form altogether a scene, on which the eye of philanthropy is never wearied with gazing, and to which, perhaps, no parallel can be found in the annals of the fallen world. The heart turns with delight from the feverish scenes of European history, to the sweet repose of this true Atlantis; but sinks to reflect, that though its reality may still be attested by surviving witnesses, no such spot is *now* left, on the whole face of the earth, as a refuge from corruption and misery!

The poem opens with a fine description of this enchanting retirement. One calm summer morn, a friendly Indian arrives in his canoe, bringing with him a fair boy, who, with his mother, were the sole survivors of an English garrison which had been stormed by a hostile tribe. The dying mother had commended her boy to the care of her wild deliverers; and their chief, in obedience to her solemn bequest, now delivers him into the hands of the most respected of the adjoining settlers. Albert recognizes the unhappy orphan as the son of a beloved friend; and rears young Henry Waldegrave as the happy playmate of Gertrude, and sharer with her in the joys of their romantic solitude, and the lessons of their venerable instructor. When he is scarcely entered upon manhood, Henry is sent for by his friends in England, and roams over Europe in search of improvement for eight or nine years, — while the quiet hours are sliding over the father and daughter in the unbroken tranquillity of their Pensylvanian retreat. At last, Henry, whose heart had found no resting-place in all the world beside, returns in all the mature graces of manhood, and marries his beloved Gertrude. Then there is bliss beyond all that is blissful on earth, — and more feelingly described than mere genius can ever hope to describe any thing. But the war of emancipation begins; and the dream of love and enjoyment is broken by alarms and dismal forebodings. While they are sitting one evening enjoying those tranquil delights, now more endeared by the fears which gather around them, an aged Indian rushes into their habitation, and, after disclosing himself for Henry's ancient guide and preserver, informs them, that a hostile tribe which had exterminated his whole family, is on its march towards their devoted dwellings. With considerable difficulty they effect their escape to a fort at some distance in the woods; and at sunrise, Gertrude, and her father and husband, look from its battlements over the scene of desolation which the murderous Indian had already spread over the pleasant groves and gardens of Wyoming. While they are standing wrapt in this sad contemplation, an Indian marksman fires a mortal shot from his ambush at Albert; and as Gertrude clasps him in agony to her heart, another discharge lays her bleed-

ing by his side! She then takes farewell of her husband, in a speech more sweetly pathetic than any thing ever written in rhyme. Henry prostrates himself on her grave in convulsed and speechless agony; and his Indian deliverer, throwing his mantle over him, watches by him a while in gloomy silence; and at last addresses him in a sort of wild and energetic descant, exciting him, by his example, to be revenged, and to die! The poem closes with this vehement and impassioned exhortation.

Before proceeding to lay any part of the poem itself before our readers, we should try to give them some idea of that delightful harmony of colouring and of expression, which serves to unite every part of it for the production of one effect; and to make the description, narrative, and reflections, conspire to breathe over the whole a certain air of pure and tender enchantment, which is not once dispelled, through the whole length of the poem, by the intrusion of any discordant impression. All that we can now do, however, is, to tell them that this was its effect upon our feelings; and to give them their chance of partaking in it, by a pretty copious selection of extracts.

The descriptive stanzas in the beginning, which set out with an invocation to Wyoming, though in some places a little obscure and overlaboured, are, to our taste, very soft and beautiful.

"On Susquehana's side, fair Wyoming!
Although the wild-flower on thy ruin'd wall
And roofless homes a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall,
Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
That see the Atlantic wave their morn restore.
Sweet land! may I thy lost delights recall,
And paint thy Gertrude in her bowers of yore,
Whose beauty was the love of Pensylvania's shore!

"It was beneath thy skies that, but to prune
His autumn fruits, or skim the light canoe,
Perchance, along thy river calm, at noon,
The happy shepherd swain had nought to do,
From morn till evening's sweeter pastime grew;
Their timbrel, in the dance of forests brown
When lovely maidens prankt in flowrets new;
And aye, those sunny mountains half way down
Would echo flagelet from some romantic town.

"Then, where of Indian hills the daylight takes
His leave, how might you the flamingo see
Disporting like a meteor on the lakes—
And playful squirrel on his nut-grown tree:
And ev'ry sound of life was full of glee,
From merry mock-bird's song, or hum of men;
While heark'ning, fearing nought their revelry,
The wild deer arch'd his neck from glades—and, then
Unhunted, sought his woods and wilderness again.

And scarce had Wyoming of war or crime
Heard but in transatlantic story rung," &c.
Pp. 5—7.

The account of the German, Spanish, Scottish, and English settlers, and of the patriarchal harmony in which they were all united, is likewise given with great spirit and brevity; as well as the portrait of the venerable Albert, their own elected judge and adviser. A sudden transition is then made to Gertrude.

"Young, innocent! on whose sweet forehead mild
The parted ringlet shone in simplest guise,
An inmate in the home of Albert smil'd,
Or blest his noonday walk—she was his only child!

"The rose of England bloom'd on Gertrude's cheek—
What though these shades had seen her birth," &c.
P. 11.

After mentioning that she was left the only child of her mother, the author goes on in these sweet verses.

"A lov'd bequest! and I may half impart,
To them that feel the strong paternal tie,
How like a new existence to his heart
Uprose that living flow'r beneath his eye!
Dear as she was, from cherub infancy,
From hours when she would round his garden play,
To time when, as the rip'ning years went by,
Her lovely mind could culture well repay,
And more engaging grew from pleasing day to day.

"I may not paint those thousand infant charms;
(Unconscious fascination, undesign'd!)
The orison repeated in his arms,
For God to bless her sire and all mankind!
The book, the bosom on his knee reclin'd,
Or how sweet fairy-lore he heard her con,
(The playmate ere the teacher of her mind);
All uncompanion'd else her years had gone
Till now in Gertrude's eyes their ninth blue summer shone.

"And summer was the tide, and sweet the hour,
When sire and daughter saw, with fleet descent,
An Indian from his bark approach their bow'r," &c.
Pp. 12, 13.

This is the guide and preserver of young Henry Waldegrave; who is somewhat fantastically described as appearing

"Led by his dusky guide, like Morning brought by Night."

The Indian tells his story with great animation — the storming and blowing up of the English fort — and the tardy arrival of his friendly and avenging warriors. They found all the soldiers slaughtered.

"And from the tree we with her child unbound
"A lonely mother of the Christian land —
"Her lord — the captain of the British band —
"Amidst the slaughter of his soldiers lay;
"Scarce knew the widow our deliv'ring hand:
"Upon her child she sobb'd, and swoon'd away;
"Or shriek'd unto the Gods to whom the Christians pray. —

"Our virgins fed her with their kindly bowls
"Of fever balm, and sweet sagamité;
"But she was journeying to the land of souls,
"And lifted up her dying head to pray
"That we should bid an ancient friend convey
"Her orphan to his home of England's shore;
"And take, she said, this token far away
"To one that will remember us of yore,
"When he beholds the ring that Waldegrave's Julia wore." — Pp. 16, 17.

Albert recognizes the child of his murdered friend, with great emotion; which the Indian witnesses with characteristic and picturesque composure.

"Far differently the mute Oneyda took
His calumet of peace, and cup of joy;
As monumental bronze unchang'd his look:
A soul that pity touch'd, but never shook:
Train'd from his tree-lock'd cradle to his bier,
The fierce extremes of good and ill to brook
Impassive — fearing but the shame of fear —
A stoic of the woods — a man without a tear.—" P. 20.

This warrior, however, is not without high feelings and tender affections.

"He scorn'd his own, who felt another's woe:
And ere the wolf-skin on his back he flung,
Or laced his mocasins, in act to go,
A song of parting to the boy he sung,
Who slept on Albert's couch, nor heard his friendly tongue.

"Sleep, wearied one! and in the dreaming land,
"Shouldst thou the spirit of thy mother greet,
"Oh! say, to-morrow, that the white man's hand
"Hath pluck'd the thorns of sorrow from thy feet;
"While I in lonely wilderness shall meet
"Thy little foot-prints — or by traces know
"The fountain, where at noon I thought it sweet
"To feed thee with the quarry of my bow,
"And pour'd the lotus horn, or slew the mountain roe.

"Adieu! sweet scion of the rising sun!" &c.
Pp. 21, 22.

The Second Part opens with a fine description of Albert's sequestered dwelling. It reminds us of that enchanted landscape in which Thomson has embosomed his Castle of Indolence. We can make room only for the first stanza:

"A valley from the river shore withdrawn
Was Albert's home two quiet woods between,
Whose lofty verdure overlook'd his lawn,
And waters to their resting-place serene,
Came, fresh'ning and reflecting all the scene:
(A mirror in the depth of flowery shelves;)
So sweet a spot of earth, you might (I ween)
Have guess'd some congregation of the elves,
To sport by summer moons, had shap'd it for themselves." — P. 27.

The effect of this seclusion on Gertrude is beautifully represented.

"It seem'd as if those scenes sweet influence had
On Gertrude's soul, and kindness like their own
Inspir'd those eyes affectionate and glad,
That seem'd to love whate'er they look'd upon!
Whether with Hebe's mirth her features shone,
Or if a shade more pleasing them o'ercast,
(As if for heav'nly musing meant alone);
Yet so becomingly the expression past,
That each succeeding look was lovelier than the last. —

"Nor, guess I, was that Pensylvanian home,
With all its picturesque and balmy grace,
And fields that were a luxury to roam,
Lost on the soul that look'd from such a face!
Enthusiast of the woods! when years apace
Had bound thy lovely waist with woman's zone,
The sunrise path, at morn, I see thee trace
To hills with high magnolia overgrown;
And joy to breathe the groves, romantic and alone."
Pp. 29, 30.

The morning scenery, too, is touched with a delicate and masterly hand.

"While yet the wild deer trod in spangling dew,
While boatman caroll'd to the fresh-blown air,
And woods a horizontal shadow threw,
And early fox appear'd in momentary view."—P. 32.

The reader is left rather too much in the dark as to Henry's departure for Europe; — nor, indeed, are we apprised of his absence, till we come to the scene of his unexpected return. Gertrude was used to spend the hot part of the day in reading in a lonely and rocky recess in those safe woods; which is described with Mr. Campbell's usual felicity.

——— "Rocks sublime
To human art a sportive semblance wore;

And yellow lichens colour'd all the clime,
Like moonlight battlements, and towers decay'd by time.

"But high, in amphitheatre above,
His arms the everlasting aloes threw:
Breath'd but an air of heaven, and all the grove
As if instinct with living spirit grew,
Rolling its verdant gulfs of every hue;
And now suspended was the pleasing din,
Now from a murmur faint it swell'd anew,
Like the first note of organ heard within
Cathedral aisles — ere yet its symphony begin."
P. 33.

In this retreat, which is represented as so solitary, that, except her own,

——— "scarce an ear had heard
The stock-dove plaining through its gloom profound,
Or winglet of the fairy humming bird,
Like atoms of the rainbow fluttering round"—P. 34.

— a stranger of lofty port and gentle manners surprises her, one morning, and is conducted to her father. They enter into conversation on the subject of his travels.

—— "And much they lov'd his fervid strain —
While he each fair variety retrac'd
Of climes and manners, o'er the eastern main.
Now happy Switzer's hills — romantic Spain —
Gay lilied fields of France — or, more refin'd,
The soft Ausonia's monumental reign;
Nor less each rural image he design'd
Than all the city's pomp and home of human kind.

"Anon some wilder portraiture he draws!
Of Nature's savage glories he would speak —
The loneliness of earth that overawes! —
Where, resting by some tomb of old cacique,
The lama-driver on Peruvia's peak
Nor voice nor living motion marks around;
But storks that to the boundless forest shriek;
Or wild-cane arch high flung o'er gulf profound,
That fluctuates when the storms of El Dorado sound." — Pp. 36, 37.

Albert, at last, bethinks him of inquiring after his stray ward young Henry; and entertains his guest with a short summary of his history.

"His face the wand'rer hid; — but could not hide
A tear, a smile upon his cheek that dwell! —
'And speak, mysterious stranger!' (Gertrude cried)
'It is! — it is! — I knew — I knew him well!
'Tis Waldegrave's self, of Waldegrave come to tell!'
A burst of joy the father's lips declare;
But Gertrude speechless on his bosom fell:
At once his open arms embrac'd the pair;
Was never group more blest, in this wide world of care!" — P. 39.

The first overflowing of their joy and artless love is represented with all the fine colours of truth and poetry; but we cannot now make room for it. The Second Part ends with this stanza: —

"Then would that home admit them — happier far
Than grandeur's most magnificent saloon —
While here and there, a solitary star
Flush'd in the dark'ning firmament of June;
And silence brought the soul-felt hour full soon,
Ineffable — which I may not pourtray!
For never did the Hymenean moon
A paradise of hearts more sacred sway,
In all that slept beneath her soft voluptuous ray."
P. 43.

The Last Part sets out with a soft but spirited sketch of their short-lived felicity.

"Three little moons, how short! amidst the grove,
And pastoral savannas they consume!
While she, beside her buskin'd youth to rove,
Delights, in fancifully wild costume,
Her lovely brow to shade with Indian plume;
And forth in hunter-seeming vest they fare;
But not to chase the deer in forest gloom!
'Tis but the breath of heav'n — the blessed air —
And interchange of hearts, unknown, unseen to share.

"What though the sportive dog oft round them note,
Or fawn, or wild bird bursting on the wing;
Yet who, in love's own presence, would devote
To death those gentle throats that wake the spring?
Or writhing from the brook its victim bring?
No! — nor let fear one little warbler rouse;
But, fed by Gertrude's hand, still let them sing,
Acquaintance of her path, amidst the boughs,
That shade ev'n now her love, and witness'd first her vows!" — Pp. 48, 49.

The transition to the melancholy part of the story is introduced with great tenderness and dignity.

"But mortal pleasure, what art thou in truth?
The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below!
And must I change my song? and must I show,
Sweet Wyoming! the day, when thou wert doom'd,
Guiltless, to mourn thy loveliest bow'rs laid low!
When, where of yesterday a garden bloom'd,
Death overspread his pall, and black'ning ashes gloom'd? —

"Sad was the year, by proud Oppression driv'n,
When Transatlantic Liberty arose;
Not in the sunshine, and the smile of heav'n,
But wrapt in whirlwinds, and begirt with woes:
Amidst the strife of fratricidal foes,
Her birth star was the light of burning plains;
Her baptism is the weight of blood that flows
From kindred hearts — the blood of British veins! —
And famine tracks her steps, and pestilential pains."
Pp. 50, 51.

Gertrude's alarm and dejection at the prospect of hostilities are well described:

"O, meet not thou," she cries, "thy kindred foe!
But peaceful let us seek fair England's strand," &c.

— as well as the arguments and generous sentiments by which her husband labours to reconcile her to a necessary evil. The nocturnal irruption of the old Indian is given with great spirit: — Age and misery had so changed his appearance, that he was not at first recognized by any of the party.

"'And hast thou then forgot'—(he cried forlorn,
And ey'd the group with half indignant air),
'Oh! hast thou, Christian chief, forgot the morn
When I with thee the cup of peace did share?
Then stately was this head, and dark this hair,
That now is white as Appalachia's snow!
But, if the weight of fifteen years' despair,
And age hath bow'd me, and the tort'ring foe,
Bring me my Boy — and he will his deliverer know!'—

"It was not long, with eyes and heart of flame,
Ere Henry to his lov'd Oneyda flew:
'Bless thee, my guide!'— but, backward as he came,
The chief his old bewilder'd head withdrew,
And grasp'd his arm, and look'd and look'd him through.
'Twas strange — nor could the group a smile control —
The long, the doubtful scrutiny to view: —
At last delight o'er all his features stole,
'It is — my own!' he cried, and clasp'd him to his soul. —

"'Yes! thou recall'st my pride of years; for then
The bowstring of my spirit was not slack,
When, spite of woods, and floods, and ambush'd men,
I bore thee like the quiver on my back,
Fleet as the whirlwind hurries on the rack;
Nor foeman then, nor cougar's crouch I fear'd,
For I was strong as mountain cataract;
And dost thou not remember how we cheer'd
Upon the last hill-top, when white men's huts appear'd?'" — Pp. 45, 46.

After warning them of the approach of their terrible foe, the conflagration is seen, and the whoops and scattering shot of the enemy heard at a distance. The motley militia of the neighbourhood flock to the defence of Albert: the effect of their shouts and music on the old Indian is fine and striking.

"Rous'd by their warlike pomp, and mirth, and cheer,
Old Outalissi woke his battle song,
And, beating with his war-club cadence strong,
Tells how his deep stung indignation smarts," &c.
P. 61.

Nor is the contrast of this savage enthusiasm with the venerable composure of Albert less beautifully represented.

"Calm, opposite the Christian Father rose,
Pale on his venerable brow its rays
Of martyr light the conflagration throws;
One hand upon his lovely child he lays,
And one th' uncovered crowd to silence sways;
While, though the battle flash is faster driv'n —
Unaw'd, with eye unstartled by the blaze,
He for his bleeding country prays to Heav'n —
Prays that the men of blood themselves may be forgiven."—P. 62.

They then speed their night march to the distant fort, whose wedged ravelins and redoubts

"Wove like a diadem its tracery round
The lofty summit of that mountain green" —

and look back from its lofty height on the desolated scenes around them. We will not separate, nor apologize for the length of the fine passage that follows; which alone, we think, might justify all we have said in praise of the poem.

"A scene of death! where fires beneath the sun,
And blended arms, and white pavilions glow;
And for the business of destruction done,
Its requiem the war-horn seem'd to blow.
There, sad spectatress of her country's woe!
The lovely Gertrude, safe from present harm,
Had laid her cheek, and clasp'd her hands of snow
On Waldegrave's shoulder, half within his arm
Enclos'd, that felt her heart, and hush'd its wild alarm!

"But short that contemplation! sad and short
The pause to bid each much-lov'd scene adieu!
Beneath the very shadow of the fort,
Where friendly swords were drawn, and banners flew,
Ah! who could deem that foot of Indian crew
Was near?—Yet there, with lust of murd'rous deeds,
Gleam'd like a basilisk, from woods in view,
The ambush'd foeman's eye — his volley speeds!
And Albert — Albert — falls! the dear old father bleeds!

"And tranc'd in giddy horror Gertrude swoon'd!
Yet, while she clasps him lifeless to her zone,
Say, burst they, borrow'd from her father's wound,
Those drops? — O God! the life-blood is her own!
And falt'ring, on her Waldegrave's bosom thrown —
'Weep not, O Love!' — she cries, 'to see me bleed—
Thee, Gertrude's sad survivor, thee alone —
Heaven's peace commiserate! for scarce I heed
These wounds!—Yet thee to leave is death, is death indeed.

"'Clasp me a little longer, on the brink
Of fate! while I can feel thy dear caress;
And, when this heart hath ceas'd to beat—oh! think,
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess,
That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
And friend to more than human friendship just.
Oh! by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs — when I am laid in dust!

"'Go, Henry, go not back, when I depart!
The scene thy bursting tears too deep will move,
Where my dear father took thee to his heart,
And Gertrude thought it ecstasy to rove
With thee, as with an angel, through the grove
Of peace — imagining her lot was cast
In heav'n! for ours was not like earthly love!
And must this parting be our very last?
No! I shall love thee still, when death itself is past.—

"'Half could I bear, methinks, to leave this earth —
And thee, more lov'd than aught beneath the sun!
Could I have liv'd to smile but on the birth
Of one dear pledge! — But shall there then be none,
In future times — no gentle little one,
To clasp thy neck, and look, resembling me!
Yet seems it, ev'n while life's last pulses run,
A sweetness in the cup of death to be,
Lord of my bosom's love! to die beholding thee!'

"Hush'd were his Gertrude's lips! but still their bland
And beautiful expression seem'd to melt
With love that could not die! and still his hand
She presses to the heart no more that felt.
Ah heart! where once each fond affection dwelt,
And features yet that spoke a soul more fair!"
Pp. 64—68.

The funeral is hurried over with pathetic brevity; and the desolated and all-enduring Indian brought in again with peculiar beauty.

"Touch'd by the music, and the melting scene,
Was scarce one tearless eye amidst the crowd:—
Stern warriors, resting on their swords, were seen
To veil their eyes, as pass'd each much-lov'd shroud—
While woman's softer soul in woe dissolv'd aloud.

"Then mournfully the parting bugle bid
Its farewell o'er the grave of worth and truth.
Prone to the dust, afflicted Waldegrave hid
His face on earth! — Him watch'd in gloomy ruth,
His woodland guide; but words had none to sooth
The grief that knew not consolation's name!
Casting his Indian mantle o'er the youth,
He watch'd beneath its folds, each burst that came
Convulsive, ague-like, across his shuddering frame!"
P. 69.

After some time spent in this mute and awful pause, this stern and heart-struck comforter breaks out into the following touching and energetic address, with which the poem closes with great spirit and abruptness: —

"'And *I* could weep;' — th' Oneyda chief
His descant wildly thus began;
'But that I may not stain with grief
The death-song of my father's son!
Or bow his head in woe;
For by my wrongs, and by my wrath!
To-morrow Areouski's breath
(That fires yon heaven with storms of death)
Shall light us to the foe:
And we shall share, my Christian boy!
The foeman's blood, the avenger's joy! —

"'But thee, my flow'r! whose breath was giv'n
By milder genii o'er the deep,
The spirits of the white man's heav'n
Forbid not *thee* to weep! —
Nor will the Christian host,
Nor will thy father's spirit grieve
To see thee, on the battle's eve,
Lamenting take a mournful leave
Of her who lov'd thee most:
She was the rainbow to thy sight!
Thy sun — thy heav'n — of lost delight! —

"'To-morrow let us do or die!
But when the bolt of death is hurl'd,
Ah! whither then with thee to fly,
Shall Outalissi roam the world?
Seek we thy once-lov'd home?—
The hand is gone that cropt its flowers!
Unheard their clock repeats its hours! —
Cold is the hearth within their bow'rs!
And should we thither roam,
Its echoes, and its empty tread,
Would sound like voices from the dead!

"'But hark, the trump! — to-morrow thou
In glory's fires shalt dry thy tears:
Ev'n from the land of shadows now
My father's awful ghost appears,
Amidst the clouds that round us roll!
He bids my soul for battle thirst —
He bids me dry the last — the first —
The *only* tears that ever burst —
From Outalissi's soul! —
Because I may not stain with grief
The death-song of an Indian chief!" — Pp. 70—73.

It is needless, after these extracts, to enlarge upon the beauties of this poem. They consist chiefly in the feeling and tenderness of the whole delineation, and the taste and delicacy with which all the subordinate parts are made to contribute to the general effect. Before dismissing it, however, we must say a little of its faults, which are sufficiently obvious and undeniable. In the first place, the narrative is extremely obscure and imperfect; and has

greater blanks in it than could be tolerated even in lyric poetry. We hear absolutely nothing of Henry, from the day the Indian first brings him from the back country, till he returns from Europe fifteen years thereafter. It is likewise a great oversight in Mr. Campbell to separate his lovers, when only *twelve* years of age — a period at which it is utterly inconceivable that any permanent attachment could have been formed. The greatest fault, however, of the work is the occasional constraint and obscurity of the diction, proceeding apparently from too laborious an effort at emphasis or condensation. The metal seems in several places to have been so much overworked, as to have lost not only its ductility, but its lustre: and, while there are passages which can scarcely be at all understood after the most careful consideration, there are others which have an air so elaborate and artificial, as to destroy all appearance of nature in the sentiment. Our readers may have remarked something of this sort, in the first extracts with which we have presented them; but there are specimens still more exceptionable. In order to inform us that Albert had lost his wife, Mr. Campbell is pleased to say, that

——— "Fate had reft his mutual heart;"

and in order to tell us something else — though what, we are utterly unable to conjecture — he concludes a stanza on the delights of mutual love, with these three lines: —

"'Roll on, ye days of raptur'd influence, shine!
Nor, blind with ecstasy's celestial fire,
Shall love behold the spark of earth-born time expire!'"

The whole twenty-second stanza of the first part is extremely incorrect; and the three concluding lines are almost unintelligible.

"'But where was I when Waldegrave was no more?
And thou didst pale thy gentle head extend,
In woes, that ev'n the tribe of deserts was thy friend!'"

If Mr. Campbell had duly considered the primary necessity of perspicuity — especially in compositions which aim only at pleasing — we are persuaded that he would never have left these and some other passages in so very questionable a state. There is still a good deal for him to do, indeed, in a new edition: and working — as he must work — in the true spirit and pattern of what is before him, we hope he will yet be induced to make considerable additions to a work, which will please those most who are most worthy to be pleased; and always seem most beautiful to those who give it the greatest share of their attention.

Of the smaller pieces which fill up the volume, we have scarce left ourselves room to say any thing. The greater part of them have been printed before; and there are probably few readers of English poetry who are not already familiar with the Lochiel and the Hohenlinden — the one by far the most spirited and poetical denunciation of coming woe, since the days of Cassandra; the other the only representation of a modern battle, which possesses either interest or sublimity. The song to "the Mariners of England," is also very generally known. It is a splendid instance of the most magnificent diction, adapted to a familiar and even trivial metre. Nothing can be finer than the first and the last stanzas.

"Ye mariners of England!
That guard our native seas;
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle, and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep," &c. — P. 101.

"The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceas'd to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceas'd to blow."—Pp. 103, 104.

"The Battle of the Baltic," though we think it has been printed before, is much less known. Though written in a strange, and we think an unfortunate metre, it has great force and grandeur, both of conception and expression — that sort of force and grandeur which results from the simple and concise expression of great events and natural emotions, altogether unassisted by any splendour or amplification of expression. The characteristic merit, indeed, both of this piece and of Hohenlinden, is, that, by the forcible delineation of one or two great circumstances, they give a clear and most energetic representation of events as

complicated as they are impressive — and thus impress the mind of the reader with all the terror and sublimity of the subject, while they rescue him from the fatigue and perplexity of its details. Nothing in our judgment can be more impressive than the following very short and simple description of the British fleet bearing up to close action: —

"As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death!
And the boldest held his breath
For a time. —"—P. 109.

The description of the battle itself (though it begins with a tremendous line) is in the same spirit of homely sublimity; and worth a thousand stanzas of thunder, shrieks, shouts, tridents, and heroes.

"'Hearts of oak,' our captains cried! when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships!
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.—

"Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feebler cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then cease! — and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail;
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.—"

There are two little ballad pieces, published for the first time, in this collection, which have both very considerable merit, and afford a favourable specimen of Mr. Campbell's powers in this new line of exertion. The longest is the most beautiful; but we give our readers the shortest, because we can give it entire.

"O heard ye yon pibrach sound sad in the gale,
Where a band cometh slowly with weeping and wail?
'T is the chief of Glenara laments for his dear;
And her sire, and the people, are called to her bier.

"Glenara came first with the mourners and shroud;
Her kinsmen they follow'd, but mourn'd not aloud:
Their plaids all their bosoms were folded around?
They march'd all in silence — they look'd on the ground.

"In silence they reach'd over mountain and moor,
To a heath, where the oak-tree grew lonely and hoar:
Now here let us place the grey stone of her cairn:
'Why speak ye no word?'—said Glenara the stern.

"'And tell me, I charge you! ye clan of my spouse,
Why fold you your mantles, why cloud ye your brows?'
So spake the rude chieftain: — no answer is made,
But each mantle unfolding, a dagger display'd.

"'I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her shroud,'
Cried a voice from the kinsmen, all wrathful and loud;
'And empty that shroud, and that coffin did seem;
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!'

"O! pale grew the cheek of that chieftain, I ween,
When the shroud was unclos'd, and no lady was seen;
When a voice from the kinsmen spoke louder in scorn
'Twas the youth who had lov'd the fair Ellen of Lorn:

"'I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her grief,
I dreamt that her lord was a barbarous chief;
On a rock of the ocean fair Ellen did seem;
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!'

"In dust low the traitor has knelt to the ground,
And the desert reveal'd where his lady was found;
From a rock of the ocean that beauty is borne,
Now joy to the house of fair Ellen of Lorn!"
Pp. 105—107.

We close this volume, on the whole, with feelings of regret for its shortness, and of admiration for the genius of its author. There are but two noble sorts of poetry — the pathetic and the sublime; and we think he has given very extraordinary proofs of his talents for both. There is something, too, we will venture to add, in the style of many of his conceptions, which irresistibly impresses us with the conviction, that he can do much greater things than he has hitherto accomplished; and leads us to regard him, even yet, as a poet of still greater promise than performance. It seems to us, as if the natural force and boldness of his ideas were habitually checked by a certain fastidious timidity, and an anxiety about the minor graces of correct and chastened composition. Certain it is, at least, that his greatest and most lofty flights have been made in those smaller pieces, about which, it is natural to think, he must have felt least solicitude; and that he has succeeded most splendidly where he must have been most free from the fear of failure. We wish any praises or exhortations of ours had the power to give him confidence in his own great talents; and hope earnestly, that he will now meet with such encouragement, as may set him above all restraints that proceed from apprehension; and induce him to give free scope to that genius, of which we are persuaded that the world has hitherto seen rather the grace than the richness.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

(JANUARY, 1825.)

Theodric, a Domestic Tale: with other Poems. By THOMAS CAMPBELL. 12mo. pp. 150. London: 1824.

IF Mr. Campbell's poetry was of a kind that could be forgotten, his long fits of silence would put him fairly in the way of that misfortune. But, in truth, he is safe enough; — and has even acquired, by virtue of his exemplary laziness, an assurance and pledge of immortality which he could scarcely have obtained without it. A writer who is still fresh in the mind and favour of the public, after twenty years' intermission, may reasonably expect to be remembered when death shall have finally sealed up the fountains of his inspiration, imposed silence on the cavils of envious rivals, and enhanced the value of those relics to which it excludes the possibility of any future addition. At all events, he has better proof of the permanent interest the public take in his productions, than those ever can have who are more diligent in their multiplication, and keep themselves in the recollection of their great patron by more frequent intimations of their existence. The experiment, too, though not without its hazards, is advantageous in another respect; — for the reappearance of such an author, after those long periods of occultation, is naturally hailed as a novelty — and he receives the double welcome, of a celebrated stranger, and a remembered friend. There is, accordingly, no living poet, we believe, whose advertisement excites greater expectation than Mr. Campbell's: — and a new poem from him is waited for with even more eagerness (as it is certainly for a much longer time) than a new novel from the author of Waverley. Like all other human felicities, however, this high expectation and prepared homage has its drawbacks and its dangers. A popular author, as we have been led to remark on former occasions, has no rival so formidable as his former self — and no comparison to sustain half so dangerous as that which is always made between the average merit of his new work, and the remembered beauties — for little else is ever remembered — of his old ones.

How this comparison will result in the present instance, we do not presume to predict with confidence — but we doubt whether it will be, at least in the beginning, altogether in favour of the volume before us. The poems of this author, indeed, are generally more admired the more they are studied, and rise in our estimation in proportion as they become familiar. Their novelty, therefore, is always rather an obstruction than a help to their popularity; — and it may well be questioned, whether there be any thing in the novelties now before us that can rival in our affections the long-remembered beauties of the Pleasures of Hope — of Gertrude — of O'Connor's Child — the Song of Linden — The Mariners of England — and the many other enchanting melodies that are ever present to the minds of all lovers of poetry.

The leading piece in the present volume is an attempt at a very difficult kind of poetry; and one in which the most complete success can hardly ever be so splendid and striking as to make amends for the difficulty. It is entitled "a Domestic Story" — and it is so; — turning upon few incidents — embracing few characters — dealing in no marvels and no terrors — displaying no stormy passions. Without complication of plot, in short, or hurry of action — with no atrocities to shudder at, or feats of noble daring to stir the spirits of the ambitious — it passes quietly on, through the shaded paths of private life, conversing with gentle natures and patient sufferings — and unfolding, with serene pity and sober triumph, the pangs which are fated at times to wring the breast of innocence and generosity, and the courage and comfort which generosity and innocence can never fail to bestow. The taste and the feeling which led to the selection of such topics, could not but impress their character on the style in which they are treated. It is distinguished accordingly by a fine and tender finish, both of thought and of diction — by a chastened elegance of words and images — a mild dignity and tempered pathos in the sentiments, and a general tone of simplicity and directness in the conduct of the story, which, joined to its great brevity, tends at first perhaps to disguise both the richness and the force of the genius required for its production. But though not calculated to strike at once on the dull palled ear of an idle and occupied world, it is of all

others perhaps the kind of poetry best fitted to win on our softer hours, and to sink deep into vacant bosoms — unlocking all the sources of fond recollection, and leading us gently on through the mazes of deep and engrossing meditation — and thus ministering to a deeper enchantment and more lasting delight than can ever be inspired by the more importunate strains of more ambitious authors.

There are no doubt peculiar and perhaps insuperable difficulties in the management of themes so delicate, and requiring so fine and so restrained a hand — nor are we prepared to say that Mr. Campbell has on this occasion entirely escaped them. There are passages that are somewhat *rude*: — there are expressions that are trivial: — but the prevailing character is sweetness and beauty; and it prevails over all that is opposed to it. The story, though abundantly simple, as our readers will immediately see, has two distinct compartments — one relating to the Swiss maiden, the other to the English wife. The former, with all its accompaniments, we think nearly perfect. It is full of tenderness, purity, and pity; and finished with the most exquisite elegance, in few and simple touches. The other, which is the least considerable, has more decided blemishes. The diction is in many places too familiar, and the incidents too common — and the cause of distress has the double misfortune of being unpoetical in its nature, and improbable in its result. But the shortest way is to give our readers a slight account of the poem, with such specimens as may enable them to judge fairly of it for themselves.

It opens, poetically, with the description of a fine scene in Switzerland, and of a rustic church-yard; where the friend of the author points out to him the flowery grave of a maiden, who, though gentle and fair, had died of unrequited love: — and so they proceed between them, for the matter is left poetically obscure, to her history. Her fancy had been early captivated by the tales of heroic daring and chivalric pride, with which her country's annals abounded — and she disdained to give her love to any one who was not graced with the virtues and glories of those heroic times. This exalted mood was unluckily fostered by her brother's youthful ardour in praise of the commander under whom he was serving abroad — by whom he was kindly tended when wounded, and whose picture he brought back with him on his return to his paternal home, to renew, and seemingly to realize, the day-dreams of his romantic sister. This picture, and the stories her brother told of the noble Theodric, completed the poor girl's fascination. Her heart was kindled by her fancy; and her love was already fixed on a being she had never seen! In the mean time, Theodric, who had promised a visit to his young *protégé*, passes over to England, and is betrothed to a lady of that country of infinite worth and amiableness. He then repairs to Switzerland, where, after a little time, he discovers the love of Julia, which he gently, but firmly, rebukes — returns to England, and is married. His wife has uncomfortable relations — quarrelsome, selfish, and envious; and her peace is sometimes wounded by their dissensions and unkindness. War breaks out anew, too, in Theodric's country; and as he is meditating a journey to that quarter, he is surprised by a visit from Julia's brother, who informs him that, after a long struggle with her cherished love, her health had at last sunk under it, and that she now prayed only to see him once more before she died! His wife generously urges him to comply with this piteous request. He does so; and arrives, in the midst of wintry tempests, to see this pure victim of too warm an imagination expire, in smiles of speechless gratitude and love. While mourning over her, he is appalled by tidings of the dangerous illness of his beloved Constance — hurries to England — and finds her dead! — her fate having been precipitated, if not occasioned, by the harsh and violent treatment she had met with from her heartless relations. The piece closes with a very touching letter she had left for her husband — and an account of its soothing effects on his mind.

This, we confess, is slight enough, in the way of fable and incident: but it is not in those things that the merit of such poems consists; and what we have given is of course a mere naked outline, or argument rather, the intended only to explain and connect our extracts.

For these, we cannot possibly do better than begin with the beginning.

"'Twas sunset, and the Ranz des Vaches was sung,
And lights were o'er th' Helvetian mountains flung,

That gave the glacier tops their richest glow,
And ting'd the lakes like molten gold below.
Warmth flush'd the wonted regions of the storm,
Where, Phœnix-like, you saw the eagle's form,
That high in Heav'n's vermilion wheel'd and soar'd!
Woods nearer frown'd; and cataracts dash'd and roar'd,
From heights brouzed by the bounding bouquetin;
Herds tinkling roam'd the long-drawn vales between,
And hamlets glitter'd white, and gardens flourish'd green.
'Twas transport to inhale the bright sweet air!
The mountain-bee was revelling in its glare,
And roving with his minstrelsy across
The scented wild weeds, and enamell'd moss.
Earth's features so harmoniously were link'd,
She seem'd one great glad form, with life instinct,
That felt Heav'n's ardent breath, and smil'd below
Its flush of love, with consentaneous glow.
A Gothic church was near; the spot around
Was beautiful, ev'n though sepulchral ground;
For there nor yew nor cypress spread their gloom,
But roses blossom'd by each rustic tomb.
Amidst them one of spotless marble shone—
A maiden's grave—and 't was inscrib'd thereon,
That young and lov'd she died whose dust was there:

"'Yes,' said my comrade, 'young she died, and fair!
Grace form'd her, and the soul of gladness play'd
Once in the blue eyes of that mountain-maid!
Her fingers witch'd the chords they pass'd along,
And her lips seem'd to kiss the soul in song:
Yet woo'd, and worshipp'd as she was, till few
Aspir'd to hope, 't was sadly, strangely true,
That heart, the martyr of its fondness, burn'd
And died of love that could not be return'd.

"'Her father dwelt where yonder Castle shines
O'er clust'ring trees and terrace-mantling vines.
As gay as ever, the laburnum's pride
Waves o'er each walk where she was wont to glide—
And still the garden whence she grac'd her brow,
As lovely blooms, though trode by strangers now.
How oft from yonder window o'er the lake,
Her song, of wild Helvetian swell and shake,
Has made the rudest fisher bend his ear,
And rest enchanted on his oar to hear!
Thus bright, accomplish'd, spirited, and bland,
Well-born, and wealthy for that simple land,
Why had no gallant native youth the art
To win so warm—so exquisite a heart?
She, midst these rocks inspir'd with feeling strong
By mountain-freedom—music—fancy—song,
Herself descended from the brave in arms,
And conscious of romance-inspiring charms,
Dreamt of Heroic beings; hoped to find
Some extant spirit of chivalric kind;
And scorning wealth, look'd cold ev'n on the claim
Of manly worth, that lack'd the wreath of Fame.'"

Pp. 3—7.

We pass over the animated picture of the brother's campaigns, and of the fame of Theodric, and the affectionate gratitude of parents and sister for his care and praises of their noble boy. We must make room, however, for this beautiful sketch of his return.

"In time, the stripling, vigorous and heal'd,
Resum'd his barb and banner in the field,
And bore himself right soldier-like, till now
The third campaign had manlier bronz'd his brow;
When peace, though but a scanty pause for breath—
A curtain-drop between the acts of death—
A check in frantic war's unfinish'd game,
Yet dearly bought, and direly welcome, came.
The camp broke up, and Udolph left his chief
As with a son's or younger brother's grief:
But journeying home, how rapt his spirits rose!
How light his footsteps crush'd St. Gothard's snows!
How dear seem'd ev'n the waste and wild Shreckhorn,
Though wrapt in clouds, and frowning as in scorn
Upon a downward world of pastoral charms;
Where, by the very smell of dairy-farms,
And fragrance from the mountain herbage blown,
Blindfold his native hills he could have known!

"His coming down yon lake—his boat in view,
Of windows where love's flutt'ring kerchief flew,—
The arms spread out for him—the tears that burst—
('Twas Julia's, 't was his sister's met him first;)
Their pride to see war's medal at his breast,
And all their rapture's greeting, may be guess'd."

Pp. 12, 13.

At last the generous warrior appears in person among those innocent beings, to whom he had so long furnished the grand theme of discourse and meditation.

"The boy was half beside himself—the sire,
All frankness, honour, and Helvetian fire,
Of speedy parting would not hear him speak;
And tears bedew'd and brighten'd Julia's cheek.

"Thus, loth to wound their hospitable pride,
A month he promis'd with them to abide;
As blithe he trode the mountain-sward as they,
And felt his joy make ev'n the young more gay.
How jocund was their breakfast-parlour, fann'd
By yon blue water's breath!—their walks how bland!
Fair Julia seem'd her brother's soften'd sprite—
A gem reflecting Nature's purest light—
And with her graceful wit there was inwrought
A wildly sweet unworldliness of thought,
That almost child-like to his kindness drew,
And twin with Udolph in his friendship grew.
But did his thoughts to love one moment range?—
No! he who had lov'd Constance could not change!
Besides, till grief betray'd her undesign'd,
Th' unlikely thought could scarcely reach his mind,
That eyes so young on years like his should beam
Unwoo'd devotion back for pure esteem."—Pp. 17, 18.

Symptoms still more unequivocal, however, at last make explanation necessary; for he is

obliged to disclose to her the secret of his love and engagement in England. The effects of this disclosure, and all the intermediate events, are described with the same grace and delicacy. But we pass at once to the close of poor Julia's pure-hearted romance.

"That winter's eve how darkly Nature's brow
Scowl'd on the scenes it lights so lovely now!
The tempest, raging o'er the realms of ice,
Shook fragments from the rifted precipice;
And whilst their falling echoed to the wind,
The wolf's long howl in dismal discord join'd,
While white yon water's foam was rais'd in clouds
That whirl'd like spirits wailing in their shrouds:
Without was Nature's elemental din —
And Beauty died, and Friendship wept within!

"Sweet Julia, though her fate was finish'd half,
Still knew him—smil'd on him with feeble laugh—
And blest him, till she drew her latest sigh!

"But lo! while Udolph's bursts of agony,
And age's tremulous wailings, round him rose,
What accents pierced him deeper yet than those!
'Twas tidings—by his English messenger
Of Constance—brief and terrible they were," &c.
Pp. 35, 36.

These must suffice as specimens of the Swiss part of the poem, which we have already said we consider as on the whole the most perfect. The English portion is undoubtedly liable to the imputation of being occupied with scenes too familiar, and events too trivial, to admit of the higher embellishments of poetry. The occasion of Theodric's first seeing Constance—in the streets of London on a night of public rejoicing — certainly trespasses on the borders of this wilful stooping of the Muses' flight — though the scene itself is described with great force and beauty.

"'Twas a glorious sight!
At eve stupendous London, clad in light,
Pour'd out triumphant multitudes to gaze;
Youth, age, wealth, penury, smiling in the blaze!
Th' illumin'd atmosphere was warm and bland,
And Beauty's groups the fairest of the land,
Conspicuous, as in some wide festive room,
In open chariots pass'd, with pearl and plume.
Amidst them he remark'd a lovelier mien," &c.
P. 15.

The description of Constance herself, however, is not liable to this, or to any other objection.

—— "And to know her well
Prolong'd, exalted, bound, enchantment's spell;
For with affections warm, intense, refin'd,
She mix'd such calm and holy strength of mind,
That, like Heav'n's image in the smiling brook,
Celestial peace was pictur'd in her look.
Hers was the brow, in trials unperplex'd,
That cheer'd the sad and tranquilliz'd the vex'd.
She studied not the meanest to eclipse,
And yet the wisest listen'd to her lips;
She sang not, knew not Music's magic skill,
But yet her voice had tones that sway'd the will."
P. 16.

"To paint that being to a grov'lling mind
Were like pourtraying pictures to the blind.
'Twas needful ev'n infectiously to feel
Her temper's fond, and firm, and gladsome zeal,
To share existence with her, and to gain
Sparks from her love's electrifying chain,
Of that pure pride, which, less'ning to her breast
Life's ills, gave all its joys a treble zest,
Before the mind completely understood
That mighty truth—how happy are the good!"
P. 25.

All this, we think, is dignified enough for poetry of any description; but we really cannot extend the same indulgence to the small *tracasseries* of this noble creature's unworthy relations — their peevish quarrels, and her painful attempts to reconcile them — her husband's grudges at her absence on those errands — their teazing visits to him — and his vexation at their false reports that she was to spend "yet a fortnight" away from him. We object equally to the substance and the diction of the passages to which we now refer. There is something questionable even in the fatal indications by which, on approaching his home, he was first made aware of the calamity which had befallen him — though undoubtedly there is a terrible truth and impressive brevity in the passage.

"Nor hope left utterly his breast,
Till reaching home, terrific omen! there
The straw-laid street preluded his despair—
The servant's look—the table that reveal'd
His letter sent to Constance last, still seal'd,
Though speech and hearing left him, told too clear
That he had now to suffer—not to fear!"—P. 37.

We shall only add the pathetic letter in which this noble spirit sought, from her death-bed, to soothe the beloved husband she was leaving with so much reluctance.

"'Theodric! this is destiny above
Our power to baffle! Bear it then, my love,
Your soul, I know, as firm is knit to mine
As these clasp'd hands in blessing you now join:

Shape not imagin'd horrors in my fate—
Ev'n now my suff'rings are not very great;
And when your grief's first transports shall subside,
I call upon your strength of soul and pride
To pay my memory, if 't is worth the debt,
Love's glorying tribute—not forlorn regret:
I charge my name with power to conjure up
Reflection's balmy, not its bitter cup.
My pard'ning angel, at the gates of Heav'n,
Shall look not more regard than you have given
To me: and our life's union has been clad
In smiles of bliss as sweet as life e'er had.
Shall gloom be from such bright remembrance cast?
Shall bitterness outflow from sweetness past?
No! imaged in the sanctuary of your breast,
There let me smile, amidst high thoughts at rest;
And let contentment on your spirit shine,
As if its peace were still a part of mine:
For if you war not proudly with your pain,
For you I shall have worse than liv'd in vain.
But I conjure your manliness to bear
My loss with noble spirit—not despair:
I ask you by our love to promise this!
And kiss these words, where I have left a kiss—
The latest from my living lips for yours?'"

Pp. 39—41.

The tone of this tender farewell must remind all our readers of the catastrophe of Gertrude; and certainly exposes the author to the charge of some poverty of invention in the structure of his pathetic narratives—a charge from which we are not at this moment particularly solicitous to defend him.

The minor poems which occupy the rest of the volume are of various character, and of course of unequal merit; though all of them are marked by that exquisite melody of versification, and general felicity of diction, which makes the mere recitation of their words a luxury to readers of taste, even when they pay but little attention to their sense. Most of them, we believe, have already appeared in occasional publications, though it is quite time that they should be collected and engrossed in a less perishable record. If they are less brilliant, on the whole, than the most exquisite productions of the author's earlier days, they are generally marked, we think, by greater solemnity and depth of thought, a vein of deeper reflection, and more intense sympathy with human feelings, and, if possible, by a more resolute and entire devotion to the cause of liberty. Mr. Campbell, we rejoice to say, is not among those poets whose hatred of oppression has been chilled by the lapse of years, or allayed by the suggestions of a base self-interest. He has held on his course through good and through bad report, unseduced, unterrified; and is now found in his duty, testifying as fearlessly against the invaders of Spain, in the volume before us, as he did against the spoilers of Poland in the very first of his publications. It is a proud thing indeed for England, for poetry, and for mankind, that all the illustrious poets of the present day—Byron, Moore, Rogers, Campbell—are distinguished by their zeal for freedom, and their scorn for courtly adulation; while those who have deserted that manly and holy cause have, from that hour, felt their inspiration withdrawn, their harp-strings broken, and the fire quenched in their censors! Even the Laureate, since his unhappy Vision of Judgment, has ceased to sing; and fallen into undutiful as well as ignoble silence, even on court festivals. As a specimen of the tone in which an unbought Muse can yet address herself to public themes, we subjoin a few stanzas of a noble ode to the Memory of the Spanish Patriots who died in resisting the late atrocious invasion.

"Brave men who at the Trocadero fell
Beside your cannons—conquer'd not, though slain!
There is a victory in dying well
For Freedom—and ye have not died in vain;
For come what may, there shall be hearts in Spain
To honour, ay, embrace your martyr'd lot,
Cursing the Bigot's and the Bourbon's chain,
And looking on your graves, though trophied not,
As holier, hallow'd ground than priests could make the spot!"

"Yet laugh not in your carnival of crime
Too proudly, ye oppressors!—Spain *was* free:
Her soil *has* felt the foot-prints, and her clime
Been winnow'd by the wings of Liberty!
And these, even parting, scatter as they flee
Thoughts—influences, to live in hearts unborn,
Opinions that shall wrench the prison-key
From Persecution—show her mask off-torn.
And tramp her bloated head beneath the foot of scorn.

"Glory to them that die in this great cause!
Kings, Bigots, can inflict no brand of shame,
Or shape of death, to shroud them from applause:—
No!—manglers of the martyr's earthly frame!
Your hangman fingers cannot touch his fame,
Still in your prostrate land there shall be some
Proud hearts, the shrines of Freedom's vestal flame.
Long trains of ill may pass unheeded, dumb,
But Vengeance is behind, and Justice is to come."

Pp. 78—81.

Mr. Campbell's muse, however, is by no means habitually political; and the greater part of the pieces in this volume have a purely moral or poetical character. The exquisite stanzas to the Rainbow, we believe, are in every body's hands; but we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing the latter part of them.

"When o'er the green undelug'd earth
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's grey fathers forth
To watch thy sacred sign?

"And when its yellow lustre smil'd
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
To bless the bow of God!

"Methinks, thy jubilee to keep,
The first-made anthem rang
On earth deliver'd from the deep,
And the first poet sang.

"Nor ever shall the Muse's eye
Unraptur'd greet thy beam
Theme of primeval prophecy,
Be still the poet's theme!

"The earth to thee her incense yields,
The lark thy welcome sings,
When glitt'ring in the freshen'd fields
The snowy mushroom springs!

"How glorious is thy girdle cast
O'er mountain, tower, and town,
Or mirror'd in the ocean vast,
A thousand fathoms down!

"As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam.

"For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age
That first spoke peace to man."—Pp. 52—55.

The beautiful verses on Mr. Kemble's retirement from the stage afford a very remarkable illustration of the tendency of Mr. Campbell's genius to raise ordinary themes into occasions of pathetic poetry, and to invest trivial occurrences with the mantle of solemn thought. We add a few of the stanzas.

"His was the spell o'er hearts
Which only acting lends—
The youngest of the sister Arts,
Where all their beauty blends:
For ill can Poetry express,
Full many a tone of thought sublime,
And Painting, mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance of time.
But by the mighty Actor brought,
Illusion's perfect triumphs come—
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And Sculpture to be dumb."

"High were the task—too high
Ye conscious bosoms here!
In words to paint your memory
Of Kemble and of Lear!
But who forgets that white discrowned head,
Those bursts of Reason's half-extinguish'd glare—
Those tears upon Cordelia's bosom shed,
In doubt more touching than despair,
If 'twas reality he felt?"

"And there was many an hour
Of blended kindred fame,
When Siddons's auxiliar power
And sister magic came.
Together at the Muse's side
The tragic paragons had grown—
They were the children of her pride,
The columns of her throne!
And undivided favour ran
From heart to heart in their applause,
Save for the gallantry of man,
In lovelier woman's cause."—Pp. 64—67.

We have great difficulty in resisting the temptation to go on: but in conscience we must stop here. We are ashamed, indeed, to think how considerable a proportion of this little volume we have already transferred into our extracts. Nor have we much to say of the poems we have not extracted. "The Ritter Bann" and "Reullura" are the two longest pieces, after Theodric—but we think not the most successful. Some of the songs are exquisite—and most of the occasional poems too good for occasions.

The volume is very small—and it contains all that the distinguished author has written for many years. We regret this certainly:—but we do not presume to complain of it. The service of the Muses is a free service—and all that we receive from their votaries is a free gift, for which we are bound to them in gratitude—not a tribute, for the tardy rendering of which they are to be threatened or distrained. They stand to the public in the relation of benefactors, not of debtors. They shower their largesses on unthankful heads; and disclaim the trammels of any sordid contract. They are not articled clerks, in short, whom we are entitled to scold for their idleness, but the liberal donors of immortal possessions; for which they require only the easy

quit-rent of our praise. If Mr. Campbell is lazy, therefore, he has a right to enjoy his laziness, unmolested by our importunities. If, as we rather presume is the case, he prefer other employments to the feverish occupation of poetry, he has a right surely to choose his employments — and is more likely to choose well, than the herd of his officious advisers. For our own parts, we are ready at all time to hail his appearances with delight — but we wait for them with respect and patience; and conceive that we have no title to accelerate them by our reproaches.

Before concluding, we would wish also to protect him against another kind of injustice. Comparing the small bulk of his publications with the length of time that elapses between them, people are apt to wonder that so little has been produced after so long an incubation, and that poems are not better which are the work of so many years — absurdly supposing that the ingenious author is actually labouring all the while at what he at last produces, and has been diligently at work during the whole interval in perfecting that which is at last discovered to fall short of perfection! To those who know the habits of literary men, nothing, however, can be more ridiculous than this supposition. Your true drudges, with whom all that is intellectual moves most wretchedly slow, are the quickest and most regular with their publications; while men of genius, whose thoughts play with the ease and rapidity of lightning, often seem tardy to the public, because there are long intervals between the flashes! We are far from undervaluing that care and labour without which no finished performance can ever be produced by mortals; and still farther from thinking it a reproach to any author, that he takes pains to render his works worthy of his fame. But when the slowness and the size of his publications are invidiously put together in order to depreciate their merits, or to raise a doubt as to the force of the genius that produced them, we think it right to enter our caveat against a conclusion, which is as rash as it is ungenerous; and indicates a spirit rather of detraction than of reasonable judgment.

WALTER SCOTT.

(April, 1805.)

The Lay of the Last Minstrel: a Poem. By Walter Scott, Esq. 4to. pp. 318. Edinburgh, Constable and Co.: London, Longman and Co.: 1805.*

We consider this poem as an attempt to transfer the refinements of modern poetry to the matter and the manner of the ancient metrical romance. The author, enamoured of the lofty visions of chivalry, and partial to the strains in which they were formerly embodied, seems to have employed all the resources of his genius in endeavouring to recall them to the favour and admiration of the public; and in adapting to the taste of modern readers a species of poetry which was once the delight of the courtly, but has long ceased to gladden any other eyes than those of the scholar and the antiquary. This is a romance, therefore, composed by a minstrel of the present day; or such a romance as we may suppose would have been written in modern times, if that style of composition had continued to be cultivated, and partaken consequently of the improvements which every branch of literature has received since the time of its desertion.

Upon this supposition, it was evidently Mr. Scott's business to retain all that was good, and to reject all that was bad in the models upon which he was to form himself; adding, at the same time, all the interest and beauty which could possibly be assimilated to the manner and spirit of his originals. It was his duty, therefore, to reform the rambling, ob-

* The Novels of Sir Walter Scott have, no doubt, cast his Poetry into the shade: and it is beyond question that *they* must always occupy the highest and most conspicuous place in that splendid trophy which his genius has reared to his memory. Yet, when I recollect the vehement admiration it once excited, I cannot part with the belief that there is much in his poetry also, which our age should not allow to be forgotten. And it is under this impression that I now venture to reprint my contemporary notices of the two poems which I think produced the greatest effect at the time: the one as *the first* and most strikingly original of the whole series; the other as being on the whole the best, and also as having led me to make some remarks, not only on the general character of the author's genius, but on the peculiar perils of *very popular* poetry — of which the time that has since elapsed has afforded some curious illustrations.

scure, and interminable narratives of the ancient romancers — to moderate their digressions — to abridge or retrench their unmerciful or needless descriptions — and to expunge altogether those feeble and prosaic passages, the rude stupidity of which is so apt to excite the derision of a modern reader. At the same time, he was to rival, if he could, the force and vivacity of their minute and varied representations — the characteristic simplicity of their pictures of manners — the energy and conciseness with which they frequently describe great events — and the lively colouring and accurate drawing by which they give the effect of reality to every scene they undertake to delineate. In executing this arduous task, he was permitted to avail himself of all that variety of style and manner which had been sanctioned by the ancient practice; and bound to embellish his performance with all the graces of diction and versification which could be reconciled to the simplicity and familiarity of the minstrel's song.

With what success Mr. Scott's efforts have been attended in the execution of this adventurous undertaking, our readers will be better able to judge in the sequel: but, in the mean time, we may safely venture to assert, that he has produced a very beautiful and entertaining poem, in a style which may fairly be considered as original; and which will be allowed to afford satisfactory evidence of the genius of the author, even though he should not succeed in converting the public to his own opinion as to the interest or dignity of the subject. We are ourselves inclined indeed to suspect that his partiality for the strains of antiquity has imposed a little upon the severity of his judgment, and impaired the beauty of the present imitation, by directing his attention rather to what was characteristic, than to what was unexceptionable in his originals. Though he has spared too many of their faults, however, he has certainly improved upon their beauties: and while we can scarcely help regretting, that the feuds of border chieftains should have monopolized as much poetry as might have served to immortalize the whole baronage of the empire, we are the more inclined to admire the interest and magnificence which he has contrived to communicate to a subject so unpromising.

Whatever may be thought of the conduct of the main story, the manner of introducing it must be allowed to be extremely poetical. An aged minstrel who had "harped to King Charles the Good," and learned to love his art at a time when it was honoured by all that was distinguished in rank or in genius, having fallen into neglect and misery in the evil days of the usurpation, and the more frivolous gaieties or bitter contentions of the succeeding reigns, is represented as wandering about the Border in poverty and solitude, a few years after the Revolution. In this situation he is driven, by want and weariness, to seek shelter in the Border castle of the Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth: and being cheered by the hospitality of his reception, offers to sing "an ancient strain," relating to the old warriors of her family; and after some fruitless attempts to recall the long-forgotten melody, pours forth " The Lay of the Last Minstrel," in six cantos, very skilfully divided by some recurrence to his own situation, and some complimentary interruptions from his noble auditors.

The construction of a fable seems by no means the *forte* of our modern poetical writers; and no great artifice, in that respect, was to be expected, perhaps, from an imitator of the ancient romancers. Mr. Scott, indeed, has himself insinuated, that he considered the story as an object of very subordinate importance; and that he was less solicitous to deliver a regular narrative, than to connect such a series of incidents as might enable him to introduce the manners he had undertaken to delineate, and the imagery with which they were associated. Though the conception of the fable is, probably from these causes, exceedingly defective, it is proper to lay a short sketch of it before our readers, both for the gratification of their curiosity, and to facilitate the application of the remarks we may be afterwards tempted to offer.

Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, the Lord of Branksome, was slain in a skirmish with the Cars, about the middle of the sixteenth century. He left a daughter of matchless beauty, an infant son, and a high-minded widow, who, though a very virtuous and devout person, was privately addicted to the study of Magic, in which she had been initiated by her father.

Lord Cranstoun their neighbour was at feud with the whole clan of Scott; but had fallen desperately in love with the daughter, who returned his passion with equal sincerity and ardour, though withheld, by her duty to her mother, from uniting her destiny with his. The poem opens with a description of the warlike establishment of Branksome-hall; and the first incident which occurs is a dialogue between the *Spirits* of the adjoining mountain and river, who, after consulting the stars, declare that no good fortune can ever bless the mansion "till pride be quelled, and love be free." The lady, whose forbidden studies had taught her to understand the language of such speakers, overhears this conversation; and vows, if possible, to retain her purpose in spite of it. She calls a gallant knight of her train, therefore, and directs him to ride immediately to the abbey of Melrose, and there to ask, from the monk of St. Mary's aisle, the mighty book that was hid in the tomb of the wizard Michael Scott. The remainder of the first canto is occupied with the night journey of the warrior. When he delivers his message, the monk appears filled with consternation and terror, but leads him at last through many galleries and chapels to the spot where the wizard was interred; and, after some account of his life and character, the warrior heaves up the tomb-stone, and is dazzled by the streaming splendour of an ever-burning lamp, which illuminates the sepulchre of the enchanter. With trembling hand he takes the book from the side of the deceased, and hurries home with it in his bosom.

In the mean time, Lord Cranstoun and the lovely Margaret have met at dawn in the woods adjacent to the castle, and are repeating their vows of true love, when they are startled by the approach of a horseman. The lady retreats; and the lover advancing, finds it to be the messenger from Branksome, with whom, as an hereditary enemy, he thinks it necessary to enter immediately into combat. The poor knight, fatigued with his nocturnal adventures, is dismounted at the first shock, and falls desperately wounded to the ground; while Lord Cranstoun, relenting towards the kinsman of his beloved, directs his page to attend him to the castle, and gallops home before any alarm can be given. Lord Cranstoun's page is something unearthly. It is a little misshapen dwarf, whom he found one day when he was hunting in a solitary glen, and took home with him. It never speaks, except now and then to cry, "Lost! lost! lost!" and is, on the whole, a hateful, malicious little urchin, with no one good quality but his unaccountable attachment and fidelity to his master. This personage, on approaching the wounded Borderer, discovers the mighty book in his bosom, which he finds some difficulty in opening, and has scarcely had time to read a single spell in it, when he is struck down by an invisible hand, and the clasps of the magic volume shut suddenly more closely than ever. This one spell, however, enables him to practise every kind of illusion. He lays the wounded knight on his horse, and leads him into the castle, while the warders see nothing but a wain of hay. He throws him down, unperceived, at the door of the lady's chamber, and turns to make good his retreat. In passing through the court, however, he sees the young heir of Buccleuch at play, and, assuming the form of one of his companions, tempts him to go out with him to the woods, where, as soon as they pass a rivulet, he resumes his own shape, and bounds away. The bewildered child is met by two English archers, who make prize of him, and carry him off, while the goblin page returns to the castle, where he personates the young baron, to the great annoyance of the whole inhabitants.

The lady finds the wounded knight, and eagerly employs charms for his recovery, that she may learn the story of his disaster. The lovely Margaret, in the mean time, is sitting in her turret, gazing on the western star, and musing on the scenes of the morning, when she discovers the blazing beacons, that announce the approach of an English enemy. The alarm is immediately given, and bustling preparation made throughout the mansion for defence. The English force under the command of the Lords Howard and Dacre speedily appears before the castle, leading with them the young Buccleuch; and propose that the lady should either give up Sir William of Deloraine (who had been her messenger to Melrose), as having incurred the guilt of march treason, or receive an English garrison within her walls. She answers, with much spirit

that her kinsman will clear himself of the imputation of treason by single combat, and that no foe shall ever get admittance into her fortress. The English Lords, being secretly apprised of the approach of powerful succours to the besieged, agree to the proposal of the combat; and stipulate that the boy shall be restored to liberty or detained in bondage, according to the issue of the battle. The lists are appointed for the ensuing day; and a truce being proclaimed in the mean time, the opposite bands mingle in hospitality and friendship.

Deloraine being wounded, was expected to appear by a champion; and some contention arises for the honour of that substitution. This, however, is speedily terminated by a person in the armour of the warrior himself, who encounters the English champion, slays him, and leads his captive young chieftain to the embraces of his mother. At this moment Deloraine himself appears, half-clothed and unarmed, to claim the combat which has been terminated in his absence! and all flock around the stranger who had personated himself so successfully. He unclasps his helmet; and behold! Lord Cranstoun of Teviotside! The lady, overcome with gratitude, and the remembrance of the spirits' prophecy, consents to forego the feud, and to give the fair hand of Margaret to that of the enamoured Baron. The rites of betrothment are then celebrated with great magnificence; and a splendid entertainment given to all the English and Scottish chieftains whom the alarm had assembled at Branksome. Lord Cranstoun's page plays several unlucky tricks during the festival, and breeds some dissension among the warriors. To soothe their ireful mood, the minstrels are introduced, who recite three ballad pieces of considerable merit. Just as their songs are ended, a supernatural darkness spreads itself through the hall; a tremendous flash of lightning and peal of thunder ensue, which break just on the spot where the goblin page had been seated, who is heard to cry "Found! found! found!" and is no more to be seen, when the darkness clears away. The whole party is chilled with terror at this extraordinary incident; and Deloraine protests that he distinctly saw the figure of the ancient wizard Michael Scott in the middle of the lightning. The lady renounces for ever the unhallowed study of magic; and all the chieftains, struck with awe and consternation, vow to make a pilgrimage to Melrose, to implore rest and forgiveness for the spirit of the departed sorcerer. With the description of this ceremony the minstrel closes his "Lay."

From this little sketch of the story, our readers will easily perceive, that, however well calculated it may be for the introduction of picturesque imagery, or the display of extraordinary incident, it has but little pretension to the praise of a regular or coherent narrative. The magic of the lady, the midnight visit to Melrose, and the mighty book of the enchanter, which occupy nearly one-third of the whole poem, and engross the attention of the reader for a long time after the commencement of the narrative, are of no use whatsoever in the subsequent development of the fable, and do not contribute, in any degree, either to the production or explanation of the incidents that follow. The whole character and proceedings of the goblin page, in like manner, may be considered as merely episodical; for though he is employed in some of the subordinate incidents, it is remarkable that no material part of the fable requires the intervention of supernatural agency. The young Buccleuch might have wandered into the wood, although he had not been decoyed by a goblin; and the dame might have given her daughter to the deliverer of her son, although she had never listened to the prattlement of the river and mountain spirits. There is, besides all this, a great deal of gratuitous and digressive description, and the whole sixth canto may be said to be redundant. The story should naturally end with the union of the lovers; and the account of the feast, and the minstrelsy that solemnized their betrothment, is a sort of epilogue, superadded after the catastrophe is complete.

But though we feel it to be our duty to point out these obvious defects in the structure of the fable, we have no hesitation in conceding to the author, that the fable is but a secondary consideration in performances of this nature. A poem is intended to please by the images it suggests, and the feelings it inspires; and if it contain delightful images and affecting sentiments, our pleasure will not be materially impaired by some slight want of probability or

coherence in the narrative by which they are connected. The *callida junctura* of its members is a grace, no doubt, which ought always to be aimed at; but the quality of the members themselves is a consideration of far higher importance; and that by which alone the success and character of the work must be ultimately decided. The adjustment of a fable may indicate the industry or the judgment of the writer; but the Genius of the poet can only be shown in his management of its successive incidents. In these more essential particulars, Mr. Scott's merits, we think, are unequivocal. He writes throughout with the spirit and the force of a poet; and though he occasionally discovers a little too much, perhaps, of the "brave neglect," and is frequently inattentive to the delicate propriety and scrupulous correctness of his diction, he compensates for those defects by the fire and animation of his whole composition, and the brilliant colouring and prominent features of the figures with which he has enlivened it. We shall now proceed to lay before our readers some of the passages which have made the greatest impression on our own minds; subjoining, at the same time, such observations as they have most forcibly suggested.

In the very first rank of poetical excellence, we are inclined to place the introductory and concluding lines of every canto; in which the ancient strain is suspended, and the feelings and situation of the Minstrel himself described in the words of the author. The elegance and the beauty of this *setting*, if we may so call it, though entirely of modern workmanship, appears to us to be fully more worthy of admiration than the bolder relief of the antiques which it encloses; and leads us to regret that the author should have wasted, in imitation and antiquarian researches, so much of those powers which seem fully equal to the task of raising him an independent reputation. In confirmation of these remarks, we give a considerable part of the introduction to the whole poem: —

"The way was long, the wind was cold,
The minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses gray,
Seem'd to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the Bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, well-a-day! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppress'd,
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest!
No more, on prancing palfrey borne,
He caroll'd, light as lark at morn:
No longer, courted and caress'd,
High plac'd in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd, to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay!
Old times were chang'd, old manners gone!
A stranger fill'd the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
A wand'ring harper, scorn'd and poor,
He begg'd his bread from door to door;
And tun'd, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp, a King had lov'd to hear."—Pp. 3, 4.

After describing his introduction to the presence of the Duchess, and his offer to entertain her with his music, the description proceeds:

"The humble boon was soon obtain'd;
The aged Minstrel audience gain'd.
But, when he reach'd the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
Perchance he wish'd his boon denied!
For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease
Which marks security to please;
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wild'ring o'er his aged brain—

"Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
And an uncertain warbling made—
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man rais'd his face and smil'd:
And lighten'd up his faded eye,
With all the poet's ecstasy!
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along;
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot;
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost.
Each blank, in faithless mem'ry void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And while his harp responsive rung,
'T was thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung."
Pp. 6—8.

We add, chiefly on account of their brevity, the following lines, which immediately succeed the description of the funeral rites of the English champion: —

"The harp's wild notes, though hush'd the song,
The mimic march of death prolong;

Now seems it far, and now a-near,
Now meets, and now eludes the ear;
Now seems some mountain's side to sweep,
Now faintly dies in valley deep;
Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail,
Now the sad requiem loads the gale;
Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
Rings the full choir in choral stave."

Pp. 155, 156.

The close of the poem is as follows: —

"Hush'd is the harp — the Minstrel gone.
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No; — close beneath proud Newark's tower,
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower;
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden hedg'd with green,
The cheerful hearth and lattice clean.
There, shelter'd wand'rers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he lov'd to ope his door,
And give the aid he begg'd before.
So pass'd the winter's day — but still
When summer smil'd on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Wav'd the blue-bells on Newark's heath!
And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of Chivalry;
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song."

Pp. 193, 194.

Besides these, which are altogether detached from the lyric effusions of the minstrel, some of the most interesting passages of the poem are those in which he drops the business of the story, to moralize, and apply to his own situation the images and reflections it has suggested. After concluding one canto with an account of the warlike array prepared for the reception of the English invaders, he opens the succeeding one with the following beautiful verses:

"Sweet Teviot! by thy silver tide,
The glaring bale-fires blaze no more!
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willow'd shore;
Where'er thou windst, by dale or hill,
All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves, since time was born,
Since first they roll'd their way to Tweed,
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor started at the bugle-horn!
Unlike the tide of human time,
Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,
Retains each grief, retains each crime,
Its earliest course was doom'd to know;
And, darker as it downward bears,
Is stain'd with past and present tears!
Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,
It still reflects to Mem'ry's eye
The hour, my brave, my only boy,
Fell by the side of great Dundee.
Why, when the volleying musket play'd
Against the bloody Highland blade,
Why was not I beside him laid! —
Enough — he died the death of fame;
Enough — he died with conquering Græme."

Pp. 93, 94.

There are several other detached passages of equal beauty, which might be quoted in proof of the effect which is produced by this dramatic interference of the narrator; but we hasten to lay before our readers some of the more characteristic parts of the performance.

The ancient romance owes much of its interest to the lively picture which it affords of the times of chivalry, and of those usages, manners, and institutions which we have been accustomed to associate in our minds, with a certain combination of magnificence with simplicity, and ferocity with romantic honour. The representations contained in those performances, however, are for the most part too rude and naked to give complete satisfaction. The execution is always extremely unequal; and though the writer sometimes touches upon the appropriate feeling with great effect and felicity, still this appears to be done more by accident than design; and he wanders away immediately into all sorts of ludicrous or uninteresting details, without any apparent consciousness of incongruity. These defects Mr. Scott has corrected with admirable address and judgment in the greater part of the work now before us; and while he has exhibited a very striking and impressive picture of the old feudal usages and institutions, he has shown still greater talent in engrafting upon those descriptions all the tender or magnanimous emotions to which the circumstances of the story naturally give rise. Without impairing the antique air of the whole piece, or violating the simplicity of the ballad style, he has contrived in this way to impart a much greater dignity, and more powerful interest to his production, than could ever be attained by the

unskilful and unsteady delineations of the old romancers. Nothing, we think, can afford a finer illustration of this remark, than the opening stanzas of the whole poem; they transport us at once into the days of knightly daring and feudal hostility; at the same time that they suggest, and in a very interesting way, all those softer sentiments which arise out of some parts of the description.

" The feast was over in Branksome tower;
And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower;
Her bower, that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell —
Jesu Maria, shield us well!
No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
Had dar'd to cross the threshold stone.

" The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
Knight, and page, and household squire,
Loiter'd through the lofty hall,
Or crowded round the ample fire.
The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,
And urg'd in dreams the forest race,
From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor." — Pp. 9, 10.

After a very picturesque representation of the military etablishment of this old baronial fortress, the minstrel proceeds.

" Many a valiant knight is here;
But he, the Chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the wall,
Beside his broken spear!
Bards long shall tell,
How Lord Walter fell!
When startled burghers fled, afar,
The furies of the Border war;
When the streets of high Dunedin
Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
And heard the slogan's deadly yell —
Then the Chief of Branksome fell!

" Can piety the discord heal,
Or staunch the death-feud's enmity?
Can Christian love, can patriot zeal,
Can love of blessed charity?
No! vainly to each holy shrine,
In mutual pilgrimage, they drew;
Implor'd, in vain, the grace divine
For chiefs, their own red falchions slew.
While Cessford owns the rule of Car,
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot!

" In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier,
The warlike foresters had bent;
And many a flower and many a tear,
Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent:
But, o'er her warrior's bloody bier,
The Ladye dropp'd nor sigh nor tear!
Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,
Had lock'd the source of softer woe;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow;
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee —
'And if I live to be a man,
My father's death reveng'd shall be!'
Then fast the mother's tears did seek
To dew the infant's kindling cheek." — Pp. 12—15.

There are not many passages in English poetry more impressive than some parts of this extract. As another illustration of the prodigious improvement which the style of the old romance is capable of receiving from a more liberal admixture of pathetic sentiments and gentle affections, we insert the following passage; where the effect of the picture is finely assisted by the contrast of its two compartments.

" So pass'd the day — the ev'ning fell,
'Twas near the time of curfew bell:
The air was mild, the wind was calm,
The stream was smooth, the dew was balm;
Ev'n the rude watchman, on the tower,
Enjoy'd and bless'd the lovely hour.
Far more fair Margaret lov'd and bless'd
The hour of silence and of rest.
On the high turret, sitting lone,
She wak'd at times the lute's soft tone;
Touch'd a wild note, and all between
Thought of the bower of hawthorns green;
Her golden hair stream'd free from band,
Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
Her blue eye sought the west afar,
For lovers love the western star.

" Is yon the star o'er Penchryst-Pen,
That rises slowly to her ken,
And, spreading broad its wav'ring light,
Shakes its loose tresses on the night?
Is yon red glare the western star? —
Ah! 'tis the beacon-blaze of war!
Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath;
For well she knew the fire of death!

" The warder view'd it blazing strong,
And blew his war-note loud and long,
Till, at the high and haughty sound,
Rock, wood, and river, rung around;
The blast alarm'd the festal hall,
And startled forth the warriors all!
Far downward in the castle-yard,
Full many a torch and cresset glar'd;
And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,
Were in the blaze half seen, half lost;
And spears in wild disorder shook,
Like reeds beside a frozen brook.

"The Seneschal, whose silver hair
Was redden'd by the torches' glare,
Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,
And issued forth his mandates loud—
'On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
And three are kindling on Priesthaughswire,'" &c.
Pp. 83—85.

In these passages, the poetry of Mr. Scott is entitled to a decided preference over that of the earlier minstrels; not only from the greater consistency and condensation of his imagery, but from an intrinsic superiority in the nature of his materials. From the improvement of taste, and the cultivation of the finer feelings of the heart, poetry acquires, in a refined age, many new and invaluable elements, which are necessarily unknown in a period of greater simplicity. The description of external objects, however, is at all times equally inviting, and equally easy; and many of the pictures which have been left by the ancient romancers must be admitted to possess, along with great diffuseness and homeliness of diction, an exactness and vivacity which cannot be easily exceeded. In this part of his undertaking, Mr. Scott therefore had fewer advantages; but we do not think that his success has been less remarkable. In the following description of Melrose, which introduces the second canto, the reader will observe how skilfully he calls in the aid of sentimental associations to heighten the effect of the picture which he presents to the eye:

"If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruin'd central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem fram'd of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave;
Then go!—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruined pile!
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!"—Pp. 35, 36.

In the following passage he is less ambitious; and confines himself, as an ancient minstrel would have done on the occasion, to a minute and picturesque representation of the visible object before him:—

"When for the lists they sought the plain,
The stately Ladye's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold;
Unarmed by her side he walk'd,
And much, in courteous phrase, they talk'd
Of feats of arms of old.
Costly his garb—his Flemish ruff
Fell o'er his doublet shap'd of buff,
With satin slash'd, and lined;
Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,
His cloak was all of Poland fur,
His hose with silver twin'd;
His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt;
Hence, in rude phrase, the Bord'rers still
Call'd noble Howard, Belted Will."—P. 141.

The same scrupulous adherence to the style of the old romance, though greatly improved in point of brevity and selection, is discernible in the following animated description of the feast, which terminates the poem:—

"The spousal rites were ended soon;
'Twas now the merry hour of noon,
And in the lofty-arched hall
Was spread the gorgeous festival:
Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
Marshall'd the rank of every guest;
Pages, with ready blade were there,
The mighty meal to carve and share.
O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
And princely peacock's gilded train,
And o'er the boar's head, garnish'd brave,
And cygnet from St. Mary's wave;
O'er ptarmigan and venison,
The priest had spoke his benison.
Then rose the riot and the din,
Above, beneath, without, within
For, from the lofty balcony,
Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery;
Their clanging bowls old warriors quaff'd,
Loudly they spoke, and loudly laugh'd;
Whisper'd young knights in tones more mild,
To ladies fair, and ladies smil'd.
The hooded hawks, high perch'd on beam,
The clamour join'd with whistling scream,
And flapp'd their wings, and shook their bells,
In concert with the staghounds' yells.
Round go the flasks of Ruddy wine,
From Bourdeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine;
Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
And all is mirth and revelry."—Pp. 166, 167.

The following picture is sufficiently antique in its conception, though the execution is evidently modern:—

"Ten of them were sheath'd in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel:
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest
With corslet laced,
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard;
They carv'd at the meal
With gloves of steel,.
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd."

The whole scene of the duel, or judicial combat, is conducted according to the strict ordinances of chivalry, and delineated with all the minuteness of an ancient romancer. The modern reader will probably find it rather tedious; all but the concluding stanzas, which are in a loftier measure.

"'Tis done, 'tis done! that fatal blow
Has stretch'd him on the bloody plain:
He strives to rise — brave Musgrave, no!
Thence never shalt thou rise again!
He chokes in blood — some friendly hand
Undo the visor's barred band,
Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
And give him room for life to gasp! —
In vain, in vain — haste, holy friar,
Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
And smooth his path from earth to heaven!

"In haste the holy friar sped;
His naked foot was dyed with red,
As through the lists he ran;
Unmindful of the shouts on high,
That hail'd the conqueror's victory,
He rais'd the dying man;
Loose wav'd his silver beard and hair,
As o'er him he kneel'd down in prayer.
And still the crucifix on high,
He holds before his dark'ning eye,
And still he bends an anxious ear,
His falt'ring penitence to hear:
Still props him from the bloody sod,
Still, even when soul and body part,
Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
And bids him trust in God!
Unheard he prays; 'tis o'er, 'tis o'er!
Richard of Musgrave breathes no more."

Pp. 145—147.

We have already made so many extracts from this poem, that we can now only afford to present our readers with one specimen of the songs which Mr. Scott has introduced in the mouths of the minstrels in the concluding canto. It is his object, in those pieces, to exemplify the different styles of ballad narrative which prevailed in this island at different periods, or in different conditions of society. The first is constructed upon the rude and simple model of the old Border ditties, and produces its effect by the direct and concise narrative of a tragical occurrence. The second, sung by Fitztraver, the bard of the accomplished Surrey, has more of the richness and polish of the Italian poetry, and is very beautifully written, in a stanza resembling that of Spenser. The third is intended to represent that wild style of composition which prevailed among the bards of the northern continent, somewhat softened and adorned by the minstrel's residence in the south. We prefer it, upon the whole, to either of the two former, and shall give it entire to our readers; who will probably be struck with the poetical effect of the dramatic form into which it is thrown, and of the indirect description by which every thing is most expressively told, without one word of distinct narrative.

"O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feats of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

"— Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle Ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy frith to-day.

"The black'ning wave is edg'd with white;
To inch* and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the Water-sprite,
Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted seer did view
A wet shroud roll'd round Ladye gay:
Then stay thee, fair, in Ravensheuch:
Why cross the gloomy frith to-day?"

"— 'Tis not because Lord Lind'say's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my Ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lind'say at the ring rides well;
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."—

"O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire light,
And brighter than the bright moonbeam.

* Isle.

"It glar'd on Roslin's castled rock,
It redden'd all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

"Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie;
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheath'd in his iron panoply.

"Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Both vaulted crypt and altars pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead-men's mail.

"Blaz'd battlement and pinnet high,
Blaz'd every rose-carv'd buttress fair —
So still they blaze when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair!

"There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold —
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

"And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the Kelpy rung, and the Mermaid sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle!"

Pp. 181—184.

From the various extracts we have now given, our readers will be enabled to form a tolerably correct judgment of this poem; and if they are pleased with these portions of it which have now been exhibited, we may venture to assure them that they will not be disappointed by the perusal of the whole. The whole night-journey of Deloraine — the opening of the wizard's tomb — the march of the English battle — and the parley before the walls of the castle, are all executed with the same spirit and poetical energy, which we think is conspicuous in the specimens we have already extracted; and a great variety of short passages occur in every part of the poem, which are still more striking and meritorious, though it is impossible to detach them, without injury, in the form of a quotation. It is but fair to apprise the reader, on the other hand, that he will meet with very heavy passages, and with a variety of details which are not likely to interest any one but a Borderer or an antiquary. We like very well to hear "of the Gallant Chief of Otterburne," or "the Dark Knight of Liddisdale," and feel the elevating power of great names, when we read of the tribes that mustered to the war, "beneath the crest of old Dunbar, and Hepburn's mingled banners." But we really cannot so far sympathize with the local partialities of the author, as to feel any glow of patriotism or ancient virtue in hearing of the *Todrig* or *Johnston* clans, or of *Elliots*, *Armstrongs*, and *Tinlinns*; still less can we relish the introduction of *Black John of Athelstane*, *Whitslade the Hawk*, *Arthur-fire-the-braes*, *Red Roland Forster*, or any other of those worthies who

"Sought the beeves that made their broth,
In Scotland and in England both,"

into a poem which has any pretensions to seriousness or dignity. The ancient metrical romance might have admitted those homely personalities; but the present age will not endure them: and Mr. Scott must either sacrifice his Border prejudices, or offend all his readers in the other parts of the empire.

There are many passages, as we have already insinuated, which have the general character of heaviness; such as the minstrel's account of his preceptor, and Deloraine's lamentation over the dead body of Musgrave: but the goblin page is, in our opinion, the capital deformity of the poem. We have already said that the whole machinery is useless: but the magic studies of the lady, and the rifled tomb of Michael Scott, give occasion to so much admirable poetry, that we can on no account consent to part with them. The page, on the other hand, is a perpetual burden to the poet, and to the reader: it is an undignified and improbable fiction, which excites neither terror, admiration, nor astonishment; but needlessly debases the strain of the whole work, and excites at once our incredulity and contempt. He is not a "tricksy spirit," like Ariel, with whom the imagination is irresistibly enamoured; nor a tiny monarch, like Oberon, disposing of the destinies of mortals: he rather appears to us to be an awkward sort of a mongrel between Puck and Caliban; of a servile and brutal nature; and limited in his powers to the indulgence of petty malignity, and the infliction of despicable injuries. Besides this objection to his character, his existence has no support from any general or established superstition. Fairies and devils, ghosts, angels, and witches, are creatures with whom we are all familiar, and who excite in all classes of mankind emotions with which we can easily be made to sympathize. But the story of Gilpin

Horner can never have been believed out of the village where he is said to have made his appearance; and has no claims upon the credulity of those who were not originally of his acquaintance. There is nothing at all interesting or elegant in the scenes of which he is the hero; and in reading those passages, we really could not help suspecting that they did not stand in the romance when the aged minstrel recited it to the Royal Charles and his mighty earls, but were inserted afterwards to suit the taste of the cottagers among whom he begged his bread on the Border. We entreat Mr. Scott to inquire into the grounds of this suspicion; and to take advantage of any decent pretext he can lay hold of for purging "The Lay" of this ungraceful intruder. We would also move for a *Quo Warranto* against the spirits of the river and the mountain; for though they are come of a very high lineage, we do not know what lawful business they could have at Branksome castle in the year 1550.

Of the diction of this poem we have but little to say. From the extracts we have already given, our readers will perceive that the versification is in the highest degree irregular and capricious. The nature of the work entitled Mr. Scott to some licence in this respect, and he often employs it with a very pleasing effect; but he has frequently exceeded its just limits, and presented us with such combinations of metre, as must put the teeth of his readers, we think, into some jeopardy. He has, when he pleases, a very melodious and sonorous style of versification, but often composes with inexcusable negligence and rudeness. There is a great number of lines in which the verse can only be made out by running the words together in a very unusual manner; and some appear to us to have no pretension to the name of verses at all. What apology, for instance, will Mr. Scott make for the last of these two lines? —

"For when in studious mood he pac'd
St. Kentigern's hall;"

or for these? —

"How the brave boy, in future war,
Should tame the unicorn's pride."

We have called the negligence which could leave such lines as these in a poem of this nature inexcusable; because it is perfectly evident, from the general strain of his composition, that Mr. Scott has a very accurate ear for the harmony of versification, and that he composes with a facility which must lighten the labour of correction. There are some smaller faults in the diction which might have been as well corrected also: there is too much alliteration; and he reduplicates his words too often. We have "never, never," several times; besides "'tis o'er, 'tis o'er" — "in vain, in vain" — "'tis done, 'tis done;" and several other echoes as ungraceful.

We will not be tempted to say any thing more of this poem. Although it does not contain any great display of what is properly called invention, it indicates perhaps as much vigour and originality of poetical genius as any performance which has been lately offered to the public. The locality of the subject is likely to obstruct its popularity; and the author, by confining himself in a great measure to the description of manners and personal adventures, has forfeited the attraction which might have been derived from the delineation of rural scenery. But he has manifested a degree of genius which cannot be overlooked, and given indication of talents that seem well worthy of being enlisted in the service of the epic muse.

The notes, which contain a great treasure of Border history and antiquarian learning, are too long, we think, for the general reader. The form of the publication is also too expensive; and we hope soon to see a smaller edition, with an abridgment of the notes, for the use of the mere lovers of poetry.

WALTER SCOTT.

(August, 1810.)

The Lady of the Lake: a Poem. By Walter Scott. Second Edition. 8vo. pp. 434.: 1810.

Mr. Scott, though living in an age unusually prolific of original poetry, has manifestly outstripped all his competitors in the race of popularity; and stands already upon a height to which no other writer has attained in the memory of any one now alive. We doubt, indeed, whether any English poet *ever* had so many of his books sold, or so many of his verses

read and admired by such a multitude of persons in so short a time. We are credibly informed that nearly thirty thousand copies of "The Lay" have been already disposed of in this country; and that the demand for Marmion, and the poem now before us, has been still more considerable, — a circulation, we believe, altogether without example, in the case of a bulky work, not addressed to the bigotry of the mere mob, either religious or political.

A popularity so universal is a pretty sure proof of extraordinary merit, — a far surer one, we readily admit, than would be afforded by any praises of ours: and, therefore, though we pretend to be privileged, in ordinary cases, to foretel the ultimate reception of all claims on public admiration, our function may be thought to cease, where the event is already so certain and conspicuous. As it is a sore thing, however, to be deprived of our privileges on so important an occasion, we hope to be pardoned for insinuating, that, even in such a case, the office of the critic may not be altogether superfluous. Though the success of the author be decisive, and even likely to be permanent, it still may not be without its use to point out, in consequence of what, and in spite of what, he has succeeded; nor altogether uninstructive to trace the precise limits of the connection, which, even in this dull world, indisputably subsists between success and desert, and to ascertain how far unexampled popularity does really imply unrivalled talent.

As it is the object of poetry to give pleasure, it would seem to be a pretty safe conclusion, that that poetry must be the best which gives the greatest pleasure to the greatest number of persons. Yet we must pause a little, before we give our assent to so plausible a proposition. It would not be quite correct, we fear, to say that those are invariably the best judges who are the most easily pleased. The great multitude, even of the reading world, must necessarily be uninstructed and injudicious; and will frequently be found, not only to derive pleasure from what is worthless in finer eyes, but to be quite insensible to those beauties which afford the most exquisite delight to more cultivated understandings. True pathos and sublimity will indeed charm every one: but, out of this lofty sphere, we are pretty well convinced, that the poetry which appears most perfect to a very refined taste, will not often turn out to be very popular poetry.

This, indeed, is saying nothing more, than that the ordinary readers of poetry have not a very refined taste; and that they are often insensible to many of its highest beauties, while they still more frequently mistake its imperfections for excellence. The fact, when stated in this simple way, commonly excites neither opposition nor surprise: and yet, if it be asked, why the taste of a few individuals, who do not perceive beauty where many others perceive it, should be exclusively dignified with the name of a good taste; or why poetry, which gives pleasure to a very great number of readers, should be thought inferior to that which pleases a much smaller number, — the answer, perhaps, may not be quite so ready as might have been expected, from the alacrity of our assent to the first proposition. That there is a good answer to be given, however, we entertain no doubt. and if that which we are about to offer should not appear very clear or satisfactory, we must submit to have it thought, that the fault is not altogether in the subject.

In the first place, then, it should be remembered, that though the taste of very good judges is necessarily the taste of a few, it is implied, in their description, that they are persons eminently qualified, by natural sensibility, and long experience and reflection, to perceive all beauties that really exist, as well as to settle the relative value and importance of all the different sorts of beauty; — they are in that very state, in short, to which all who are in any degree capable of tasting those refined pleasures would certainly arrive, if their sensibility were increased, and their experience and reflection enlarged. It is difficult, therefore, in following out the ordinary analogies of language, to avoid considering them as in the right, and calling their taste the true and the just one; when it appears that it is such as is uniformly produced by the cultivation of those faculties upon which all our perceptions of taste so obviously depend.

It is to be considered also, that though it be the end of poetry to please, one of the parties whose pleasure, and whose notions of excellence, will always be primarily consulted in its composition, is the poet himself; and as he must necessarily be more cultivated than the

great body of his readers, the presumption is, that he will always belong, comparatively speaking, to the class of good judges, and endeavour, consequently, to produce that sort of excellence which is likely to meet with *their* approbation. When authors, therefore, and those of whose suffrages authors are most ambitious, thus conspire to fix upon the same standard of what is good in taste and composition, it is easy to see how it should come to bear this name in society, in preference to what might afford more pleasure to individuals of less influence. Besides all this, it is obvious that it must be infinitely more *difficult* to produce any thing conformable to this exalted standard, than merely to fall in with the current of popular taste. To attain the former object, it is necessary, for the most part, to understand thoroughly all the feelings and associations that are modified or created by cultivation: — To accomplish the latter, it will often be sufficient merely to have observed the course of familiar preferences. Success, however, is rare, in proportion as it is difficult; and it is needless to say, what a vast addition rarity makes to value, —or how exactly our admiration at success is proportioned to our sense of the difficulty of the undertaking.

Such seem to be the most general and immediate causes of the apparent paradox, of reckoning that which pleases the greatest number as inferior to that which pleases the few; and such the leading grounds for fixing the standard of excellence, in a question of mere feeling and gratification, by a different rule than that of the quantity of gratification produced. With regard to some of the fine arts — for the distinction between popular and actual merit obtains in them all — there are no other reasons, perhaps, to be assigned; and, in Music, for example, when we have said that it is the *authority* of those who are best qualified by nature and study, and the *difficulty* and *rarity* of the attainment, that entitles certain exquisite performances to rank higher than others that give far more general delight, we have probably said all that can be said in explanation of this mode of speaking and judging. In poetry, however, and in some other departments, this familiar, though somewhat extraordinary rule of estimation, is justified by other considerations.

As it is the cultivation of natural and perhaps universal capacities, that produces that refined taste which takes away our pleasure in vulgar excellence, so, it is to be considered, that there is an universal tendency to the propagation of such a taste; and that, in times tolerably favourable to human happiness, there is a continual progress and improvement in this, as in the other faculties of nations and large assemblages of men. The number of intelligent judges may therefore be regarded as perpetually on the increase. The inner circle, to which the poet delights chiefly to pitch his voice, is perpetually enlarging; and, looking to that great futurity to which his ambition is constantly directed, it may be found, that the most refined style of composition to which he can attain, will be, at the last, the most extensively and permanently popular. This holds true, we think, with regard to all the productions of art that are open to the inspection of any considerable part of the community; but, with regard to poetry in particular, there is one circumstance to be attended to, that renders this conclusion peculiarly safe, and goes far indeed to reconcile the taste of the multitude with that of more cultivated judges.

As it seems difficult to conceive that mere cultivation should either absolutely create or utterly destroy any natural capacity of enjoyment, it is not easy to suppose, that the qualities which delight the uninstructed should be *substantially* different from those which give pleasure to the enlightened. They may be arranged according to a different scale, — and certain shades and accompaniments may be more or less indispensable; but the qualities in a poem that give most pleasure to the refined and fastidious critic, are in substance, we believe, the very same that delight the most injudicious of its admirers: — and the very wide difference which exists between their usual estimates, may be in a great degree accounted for, by considering, that the one judges absolutely, and the other relatively — that the one attends only to the intrinsic qualities of the *work*, while the other refers more immediately to the merit of the *author*. The most popular passages in popular poetry, are, in fact, for the most part, very beautiful and striking; yet they are very often such passages as could never be very

tured on by any writer who aimed at the praise of the judicious; and this, for the obvious reason, that they are trite and hackneyed, — that they have been repeated till they have lost all grace and propriety, — and, instead of exalting the imagination by the impression of original genius or creative fancy, only nauseate and offend, by the association of paltry plagiarism and impudent inanity. It is only, however, on those who have read and remembered the original passages, and their better imitations, that this effect is produced. To the ignorant and the careless, the twentieth imitation has all the charm of an original; and that which oppresses the more experienced reader with weariness and disgust, rouses them with all the force and vivacity of novelty. It is not, then, because the ornaments of popular poetry are deficient in intrinsic worth and beauty, that they are slighted by the critical reader, but because he at once recognizes them to be stolen, and perceives that they are arranged without taste or congruity. In his indignation at the dishonesty, and his contempt for the poverty of the collector, he overlooks altogether the value of what he has collected, or remembers it only as an aggravation of his offence, — as converting larceny into sacrilege, and adding the guilt of profanation to the folly of unsuitable finery. There are other features, no doubt, that distinguish the idols of vulgar admiration from the beautiful exemplars of pure taste; but this is so much the most characteristic and remarkable, that we know no way in which we could so shortly describe the poetry that pleases the multitude, and displeases the select few, as by saying that it consisted of all the most known and most brilliant parts of the most celebrated authors, — of a splendid and unmeaning accumulation of those images and phrases which had long charmed every reader in the works of their original inventors.

The justice of these remarks will probably be at once admitted by all who have attended to the history and effects of what may be called *Poetical diction* in general, or even of such particular phrases and epithets as have been indebted to their beauty for too great a notoriety. Our associations with all this class of expressions, which have become trite only in consequence of their intrinsic excellence, now suggest to us no ideas but those of schoolboy imbecility and childish affectation. We look upon them merely as the common, hired, and tawdry trappings of all who wish to put on, for the hour, the masquerade habit of poetry; and, instead of receiving from them any kind of delight or emotion, do not even distinguish or attend to the signification of the words of which they consist. The ear is so palled with their repetition, and so accustomed to meet with them as the habitual expletives of the lowest class of versifiers, that they come at last to pass over it without exciting any sort of conception whatever, and are not even so much attended to as to expose their most gross incoherence or inconsistency to detection. It is of this quality that Swift has availed himself in so remarkable a manner in his famous "Song by a person of quality," which consists entirely in a selection of some of the most trite and well-sounding phrases and epithets in the poetical lexicon of the time, strung together without any kind of meaning or consistency, and yet so disposed, as to have been perused, perhaps by one half of their readers, without any suspicion of the deception. Most of those phrases, however, which had thus become sickening, and almost insignificant, to the intelligent readers of poetry in the days of Queen Anne, are in themselves beautiful and expressive, and, no doubt, retain much of their native grace in those ears that have not been alienated by their repetition.

But it is not merely from the use of much excellent diction, that a modern poet is thus debarred by the lavishness of his predecessors. There is a certain range of subjects and characters, and a certain manner and tone, which were probably, in their origin, as graceful and attractive, which have been proscribed by the same dread of imitation. It would be too long to enter, in this place, into any detailed examination of the peculiarities — originating chiefly in this source — which distinguish ancient from modern poetry. It may be enough just to remark, that, as the elements of poetical emotion are necessarily limited, so it was natural for those who first sought to excite it, to avail themselves of those subjects, situations, and images, that were most obviously calculated to produce that effect; and to assist them by the use of all those aggravating circum-

stances that most readily occurred as likely to heighten their operation. In this way they may be said to have got possession of all the choice materials of their art; and, working without fear of comparisons, fell naturally into a free and graceful style of execution, at the same time that the profusion of their resources made them somewhat careless and inexpert in their application. After-poets were in a very different situation. They could neither take the most natural and general topics of interest, nor treat them with the ease and indifference of those who had the whole store at their command — because this was precisely what had been already done by those who had gone before them. and they were therefore put upon various expedients for attaining their object, and yet preserving their claim to originality. Some of them accordingly set themselves to observe and delineate both characters and external objects with greater minuteness and fidelity, — and others to analyse more carefully the mingling passions of the heart, and to feed and cherish a more limited train of emotion, through a longer and more artful succession of incidents, — while a third sort distorted both nature and passion, according to some fantastical theory of their own; or took such a narrow corner of each, and dissected it with such curious and microscopic accuracy, that its original form was no longer discernible by the eyes of the uninstructed. In this way we think that modern poetry has both been enriched with more exquisite pictures, and deeper and more sustained strains of pathetic, than were known to the less elaborate artists of antiquity; at the same time that it has been defaced with more affectation, and loaded with far more intricacy. But whether they failed or succeeded, — and whether they distinguished themselves from their predecessors by faults or by excellences, the later poets, we conceive, must be admitted to have almost always written in a more constrained and narrow manner than their originals, and to have departed farther from what was obvious, easy, and natural. Modern poetry, in this respect, may be compared, perhaps, without any great impropriety, to modern sculpture. It is greatly inferior to the ancient in freedom, grace, and simplicity; but, in return, it frequently possesses a more decided expression, and more fine finishing of less suitable embellishments.

Whatever may be gained or lost, however, by this change of manner, it is obvious, that poetry must become less popular by means of it: for the most natural and obvious manner is always the most taking; — and whatever costs the author much pains and labour, is usually found to require a corresponding effort on the part of the reader, — which all readers are not disposed to make. That they who seek to be original by means of affectation, should revolt more by their affectation than they attract by their originality, is just and natural; but even the nobler devices that win the suffrages of the judicious by their intrinsic beauty, as well as their novelty, are apt to repel the multitude, and to obstruct the popularity of some of the most exquisite productions of genius. The beautiful but minute delineations of such admirable observers as Crabbe or Cowper, are apt to appear tedious to those who take little interest in their subjects, and have no concern about their art; — and the refined, deep, and sustained pathetic of Campbell, is still more apt to be mistaken for monotony and languor, by those who are either devoid of sensibility, or impatient of quiet reflection. The most popular style undoubtedly is that which has great variety and brilliancy, rather than exquisite finish in its images and descriptions; and which touches lightly on many passions, without raising any so high as to transcend the comprehension of ordinary mortals — or dwelling on it so long as to exhaust their patience.

Whether Mr. Scott holds the same opinion with us upon these matters, and has intentionally conformed his practice to this theory, — or whether the peculiarities in his compositions have been produced merely by following out the natural bent of his genius, we do not presume to determine: but, that he has actually made use of all our recipes for popularity, we think very evident; and conceive, that few things are more curious than the singular skill, or good fortune, with which he has reconciled his claims on the favour of the multitude, with his pretensions to more select admiration. Confident in the force and originality of his own genius, he has not been afraid to avail himself of common-places both of diction and of senti-

ment, whenever they appeared to be beautiful or impressive, — using them, however, at all times, with the skill and spirit of an inventor; and, quite certain that he could not be mistaken for a plagiarist or imitator, he has made free use of that great treasury of characters, images, and expressions, which had been accumulated by the most celebrated of his predecessors, — at the same time that the rapidity of his transitions, the novelty of his combinations, and the spirit and variety of his own thoughts and inventions, show plainly that he was a borrower from any thing but poverty, and *took* only what he would have *given*, if he had been born in an earlier generation. The great secret of his popularity, however, and the leading characteristic of his poetry, appear to us to consist evidently in this, that he has made more use of common topics, images, and expressions, than any original poet of later times; and, at the same time, displayed more genius and originality than any recent author who has worked in the same materials. By the latter peculiarity, he has entitled himself to the admiration of every description of readers; — by the former, he is recommended in an especial manner to the inexperienced — at the hazard of some little offence to the more cultivated and fastidious.

In the choice of his subjects, for example, he does not attempt to interest merely by fine observation or pathetic sentiment, but takes the assistance of a story, and enlists the reader's curiosity among his motives for attention. Then his characters are all selected from the most common *dramatis personæ* of poetry; — kings, warriors, knights, outlaws, nuns, minstrels, secluded damsels, wizards, and true lovers. He never ventures to carry us into the cottage of the modern peasant, like Crabbe or Cowper; nor into the bosom of domestic privacy, like Campbell; nor among creatures of the imagination, like Southey or Darwin. Such personages, we readily admit, are not in themselves so interesting or striking as those to whom Mr. Scott has devoted himself; but they are far less familiar in poetry — and are therefore more likely, perhaps, to engage the attention of those to whom poetry is familiar. In the management of the passions, again, Mr. Scott appears to us to have pursued the same popular, and comparatively easy course. He has raised all the most familiar and poetical emotions, by the most obvious aggravations, and in the most compendious and judicious ways. He has dazzled the reader with the splendour, and even warmed him with the transient heat of various affections; but he has nowhere fairly kindled him with enthusiasm, or melted him into tenderness. Writing for the world at large, he has wisely abstained from attempting to raise any passion to a height to which worldly people could not be transported; and contented himself with giving his reader the chance of feeling, as a brave, kind, and affectionate gentleman must often feel in the ordinary course of his existence, without trying to breathe into him either that lofty enthusiasm which disdains the ordinary business and amusements of life, or that quiet and deep sensibility which unfits for most of its pursuits. With regard to diction and imagery, too, it is quite obvious that Mr. Scott has not aimed at writing either in a very pure or a very consistent style. He seems to have been anxious only to strike, and to be easily and universally understood; and, for this purpose, to have culled the most glittering and conspicuous expressions of the most popular authors, and to have interwoven them in splendid confusion with his own nervous diction and irregular versification. Indifferent whether he coins or borrows, and drawing with equal freedom on his memory and his imagination, he goes boldly forward, in full reliance on a never-failing abundance; and dazzles, with his richness and variety, even those who are most apt to be offended with his glare and irregularity. There is nothing, in Mr. Scott, of the severe and majestic style of Milton — or of the terse and fine composition of Pope — or of the elaborate elegance and melody of Campbell — or even of the flowing and redundant diction of Southey. — But there is a medley of bright images and glowing words, set carelessly and loosely together — a diction, tinged successively with the careless richness of Shakspeare, the harshness and antique simplicity of the old romances, the homeliness of vulgar ballads and anecdotes, and the sentimental glitter of the most modern poetry — passing from the borders of the ludicrous to those of the sublime — alternately minute and energetic — sometimes artificial, and frequently negligent — but al-

ways full of spirit and vivacity,—abounding in images that are striking, at first sight, to minds of every contexture — and never expressing a sentiment which it can cost the most ordinary reader any exertion to comprehend.

Such seem to be the leading qualities that have contributed to Mr. Scott's popularity; and as some of them are obviously of a kind to diminish his merit in the eyes of more fastidious judges, it is but fair to complete this view of his peculiarities by a hasty notice of such of them as entitle him to unqualified admiration; — and here it is impossible not to be struck with that vivifying spirit of strength and animation which pervades all the inequalities of his composition, and keeps constantly on the mind of the reader the impression of great power, spirit, and intrepidity. There is nothing cold, creeping, or feeble, in all Mr. Scott's poetry; — no laborious littleness, or puling classical affectation. He has his failures, indeed, like other people; but he always attempts vigorously: and never fails in his immediate object, without accomplishing something far beyond the reach of an ordinary writer. Even when he wanders from the paths of pure taste, he leaves behind him the footsteps of a powerful genius; and moulds the most humble of his materials into a form worthy of a nobler substance. Allied to this inherent vigour and animation, and in a great degree derived from it, is that air of facility and freedom which adds so peculiar a grace to most of Mr. Scott's compositions. There is certainly no living poet whose works seem to come from him with so much ease, or who so seldom appears to labour, even in the most burdensome parts of his performance. He seems, indeed, never to think either of himself or his reader, but to be completely identified and lost in the personages with whom he is occupied; and the attention of the reader is consequently either transferred, unbroken, to their adventures, or, if it glance back for a moment to the author, it is only to think how much more might be done, by putting forth that strength at full, which has, without effort, accomplished so many wonders. It is owing partly to these qualities, and partly to the great variety of his style, that Mr. Scott is much less frequently tedious than any other bulky poet with whom we are acquainted. His store of images is so copious, that he never dwells upon one long enough to produce weariness in the reader; and, even where he deals in borrowed or in tawdry wares, the rapidity of his transitions, and the transient glance with which he is satisfied as to each, leave the critic no time to be offended, and hurry him forward, along with the multitude, enchanted with the brilliancy of the exhibition. Thus, the very frequency of his deviations from pure taste, comes, in some sort, to constitute their apology; and the profusion and variety of his faults to afford a new proof of his genius.

These, we think, are the general characteristics of Mr. Scott's poetry. Among his minor peculiarities, we might notice his singular talent for description, and especially for the description of scenes abounding in *motion* or *action* of any kind. In this department, indeed, we conceive him to be almost without a rival, either among modern or ancient poets; and the character and process of his descriptions are as extraordinary as their effect is astonishing. He places before the eyes of his readers a more distinct and complete picture, perhaps, than any other artist ever presented by mere words; and yet he does not (like Crabbe) enumerate all the visible parts of the subject with any degree of minuteness, nor confine himself, by any means, to what is visible. The singular merit of his delineations, on the contrary, consists in this, that, with a few bold and abrupt strokes, he finishes a most spirited outline, — and then instantly kindles it by the sudden light and colour of some moral affection. There are none of his fine descriptions, accordingly, which do not derive a great part of their clearness and picturesque effect, as well as their interest, from the quantity of character and moral expression which is thus blended with their details, and which, so far from interrupting the conception of the external object, very powerfully stimulate the fancy of the reader to complete it; and give a grace and a spirit to the whole representation, of which we do not know where to look for any other example.

Another very striking peculiarity in Mr. Scott's poetry, is the air of freedom and nature which he has contrived to impart to most of his distinguished characters; and with which no poet more modern than Shakspeare has

ventured to represent personages of such dignity. We do not allude here merely to the genuine familiarity and homeliness of many of his scenes and dialogues, but to that air of gaiety and playfulness in which persons of high rank seem, from time immemorial, to have thought it necessary to array, not their courtesy only, but their generosity and their hostility. This tone of good society, Mr. Scott has shed over his higher characters with great grace and effect; and has, in this way, not only made his representations much more faithful and true to nature, but has very agreeably relieved the monotony of that tragic solemnity which ordinary writers appear to think indispensable to the dignity of poetical heroes and heroines. We are not sure, however, whether he has not occasionally exceeded a little in the use of this ornament; and given, now and then, too coquetish and trifling a tone to discussions of weight and moment.

Mr. Scott has many other characteristic excellences: — but we have already detained our readers too long with this imperfect sketch of his poetical character, and must proceed, without further delay, to give them some account of the work which is now before us. Of this, upon the whole, we are inclined to think more highly than of either of his former publications. We are more sure, however, that it has fewer faults, than that it has greater beauties; and as its beauties bear a strong resemblance to those with which the public has already been made familiar in those celebrated works, we should not be surprised if its popularity were less splendid and remarkable. For our own parts, however, we are of opinion, that it will be oftener read hereafter than either of them; and that, if it had appeared first in the series, *their* reception would have been less favourable than that which it has experienced. It is more polished in its diction, and more regular in its versification; the story is constructed with infinitely more skill and address; there is a greater proportion of pleasing and tender passages, with much less antiquarian detail; and, upon the whole, a larger variety of characters, more artfully and judiciously contrasted. There is nothing so fine, perhaps, as the battle in Marmion — or so picturesque as some of the scattered sketches in the Lay; but there is a richness and a spirit in the whole piece, which does not pervade either of these poems — a profusion of incident and a shifting brilliancy of colouring, that reminds us of the witchery of Ariosto — and a constant elasticity, and occasional energy, which seem to belong more peculiarly to the author now before us.

It may appear superfluous, perhaps, for us to present our readers with any analysis of a work, which is probably, by this time, in the hands of as many persons as are likely to see our account of it. As these, however, may not be the same persons, and as, without making some such abstract, we could not easily render the few remarks we have to offer intelligible, we shall take the liberty of beginning with a short summary of the fable.

The first canto, which is entitled The Chase, begins with a pretty long description of a stag-hunt in the Highlands of Perthshire. As the chase lengthens, the sportsmen drop off; till at last the foremost huntsman is left alone; and his horse, overcome with fatigue, stumbles, and dies in a rocky valley. The adventurer pursues a little wild path, through a deep ravine; and at last, climbing up a craggy eminence, discovers, by the light of the evening sun, Loch Katrine, with all its woody islands and rocky shores, spread out in glory before him. After gazing with admiration on this beautiful scene, which is described with greater spirit than accuracy, the huntsman winds his horn, in the hope of being heard by some of his attendants; and sees, to his infinite surprise, a little skiff, guided by a lovely woman, glide from beneath the trees that overhang the water, and approach the shore at his feet. The lady calls to her father; and, upon the stranger's approach, pushes her shallop from the shore in alarm. After holding a short parley with him, however, from the water, she takes him into the boat, and carries him to a woody island; where she leads him into a sort of sylvan mansion, rudely constructed of trunks of trees, moss, and thatch, and hung round, within, with trophies of war, and of the chase. An elderly lady is introduced at supper; and the stranger, after disclosing himself to be "James Fitz-James, the knight of Snowdoun," tries in vain to discover the name and history of the ladies, whose manners discover them to be of high rank and quality. He then retires to sleep, and is disturbed with distressful visions — rises and

tranquillizes himself, by looking out on the lovely moonlight landscape — says his prayers, and sleeps till the heathcock crows on the mountains behind him: — and thus closes the first canto.

The second opens with a fine picture of the aged Harper, Allan-bane, sitting on the island beach with the damsel, watching the skiff which carries the stranger back again to land. The minstrel sings a sweet song; and a conversation ensues, from which the reader gathers, that the lady is a daughter of the house of Douglas, and that her father, having been exiled by royal displeasure from the court, had been fain to accept of this asylum from Sir Roderick Dhu, a Highland chieftain who had long been outlawed for deeds of blood, but still maintained his feudal sovereignty in the fastnesses of his native mountains. It appears also, that this dark chief is in love with his fair *protégée*; but that her affections are engaged to Malcolm Græme, a younger and more amiable mountaineer, the companion and guide of her father in his hunting excursions. As they are engaged in this discourse, the sound of distant music is heard on the lake; and the barges of Sir Roderick are discovered, proceeding in triumph to the island. Her mother calls Ellen to go down with her to receive him; but she, hearing her father's horn at that instant on the opposite shore, flies to meet him and Malcolm Græme, who is received with cold and stately civility by the lord of the isle. After some time, Sir Roderick informs the Douglas, that his retreat has been discovered by the royal spies, and that he has great reason to believe that the King (James V.), who, under pretence of hunting, had assembled a large force in the neighbourhood, was bent upon their destruction. He then proposes, somewhat impetuously, that they should unite their fortunes indissolubly by his marriage with Ellen, and rouse the whole Western Highlands to repress the invasion. The Douglas, with many expressions of gratitude, declines both the war and the alliance; and, intimating that his daughter has repugnances which she cannot overcome, and that he, though ungratefully used by his sovereign, will never lift his arm against him, declares that he will retire to a cave in the neighbouring mountains, till the issue of the threat is seen. The strong heart of Roderick is wrung with agony at this rejection; and when Malcolm advances to offer his services, as Ellen rises to retire, he pushes him violently back — and a scuffle ensues, of no very dignified character, which is with difficulty appeased by the giant arm of Douglas. Malcolm then withdraws in proud resentment; and, refusing to be indebted to the surly chief even for the use of his boat, plunges into the water, and swims over by moonlight to the mainland. — And, with the description of this feat, the second canto concludes.

The third canto, which is entitled "The Gathering," opens with a long and rather tedious account of the ceremonies employed by Sir Roderick, in preparing for the summoning or gathering of his clan. This is accomplished by the consecration of a small wooden cross, which, with its points scorched and dipped in blood, is circulated with incredible celerity through the whole territory of the chieftain. The eager fidelity with which this fatal signal is hurried on and obeyed, is represented with great spirit and felicity. A youth starts from the side of his father's coffin, to bear it forward; and having run his stage, delivers it into the hands of a young bridegroom returning from church; who instantly binds his plaid around him, and rushes onward from his bride. In the mean time, Douglas and his daughter had taken refuge in the mountain cave; and Sir Roderick, passing near their retreat in his way to the muster, hears Ellen's voice singing her evening hymn to the Virgin. He does not obtrude on her devotions, but hurries to the place of rendezvous, where his clan receive him with a shout of acclamation, and then couch on the bare heath for the night. — This terminates the third canto.

The fourth begins with more incantations. Some absurd and disgusting ceremonies are gone through, by a wild hermit of the clan, with a view to ascertain the issue of the impending war; — and this oracular response is obtained — "that the party shall prevail which first sheds the blood of its adversary." We are then introduced to the minstrel and Ellen, whom he strives to comfort for the alarming disappearance of her father, by singing a long fairy ballad to her; and just as the song is ended, the knight of Snowdoun again appears before her, declares his love, and urges her to

to put herself under his protection. Ellen, alarmed, throws herself on his generosity — confesses her attachment to Græme — and with difficulty prevails on him to seek his own safety by a speedy retreat from those dangerous confines. The gallant stranger at last complies; but, before he goes, presents her with a ring, which he says he had received from the hand of King James, with a promise to grant any boon that should be asked by the person producing it. As he is pursuing his way through the wild, his suspicions are excited by the conduct of his guide, and confirmed by the musical warnings of a mad woman, who sings to him about the toils that are set, and the knives that are whetted against him. He then threatens his false guide, who discharges an arrow at him, which kills the maniac. The knight slays the murderer, and learning from the expiring victim that her brain had been turned by the cruelty of Sir Roderick, he vows vengeance on his head; and proceeds with grief and apprehension along his dangerous way. When chilled with the midnight cold, and exhausted with want and fatigue, he suddenly comes upon a chief reposing by a lonely watch-fire; and, though challenged in the name of Roderick Dhu, boldly avows himself his enemy. The clansman, however, disdains to take advantage of a worn-out wanderer; and pledges himself to escort him safe out of Sir Roderick's territory; after which, he tells him he must answer with his sword for the defiance he had uttered against the chieftain. The stranger accepts his courtesy upon those chivalrous terms; and the warriors sup, and sleep together on the plaid of the mountaineer.

They rouse themselves by dawn, at the opening of the fifth canto, entitled "The Combat," and proceed towards the Lowland frontier; the Highland warrior seeking, by the way, at once to vindicate the character of Sir Roderick, and to justify the predatory habits of his clan. Fitz-James expresses freely his detestation of both; and the dispute growing warm, he says, that never lover longed so to see the lady of his heart, as he to see before him his murderous chief and his myrmidons. "Have then thy wish!" answers his guide; and giving a loud whistle, a whole legion of armed men start up at once from their mountain ambush in the heath; while the chief turns proudly, and says, those are the warriors of Clan-Alpine — and "I am Roderick Dhu!"— The Lowland knight, though startled, repeats his defiance; and Sir Roderick, respecting his valour, by a signal dismisses his men to their concealment, and assures him anew of his safety till they pass his frontier. Arrived on this equal ground, the chief now demands satisfaction; and forces the knight, who tries all honourable means of avoiding the combat with so generous an adversary, to stand upon his defence. Roderick, after a tough combat, is laid wounded on the ground; and Fitz-James, sounding his bugle, brings four squires to his side; and after giving the wounded chief into their charge, gallops rapidly on towards Stirling. As he ascends the hill to the castle, he descries the giant form of Douglas approaching to the same place; and the reader is then told, that this generous lord had taken the resolution of delivering himself up voluntarily, with a view to save Malcolm Græme, and if possible Sir Roderick also, from the impending danger. As he draws near to the castle, he sees the King and his train descending to grace the holyday sports of the commonality, and resolves to mingle in them, and present himself to the eye of his alienated sovereign as victor in those humbler contentions. He wins the prize accordingly, in archery, wrestling, and pitching the bar; and receives his reward from the hand of the prince; who does not condescend to recognize his former favourite by one glance of affection. Roused at last by an insult from one of the royal grooms, he proclaims himself aloud; is ordered into custody by the King, and represses a tumult of the populace which is excited for his rescue. At this instant, a messenger arrives with tidings of an approaching battle between the clan of Roderick and the King's lieutenant, the Earl of Mar; and is ordered back to prevent the combat, by announcing that both Sir Roderick and Lord Douglas are in the hands of their sovereign.

The sixth and last canto, entitled "The Guard Room," opens with a very animated description of the motley mercenaries that formed the royal guard, as they appeared at early dawn, after a night of stern debauch. While they are quarrelling and singing, the

sentinels introduce an old minstrel and a veiled maiden, who had been forwarded by Mar to the royal presence; and Ellen, disclosing her countenance, awes the ruffian soldiery into respect and pity, by her grace and liberality. She is then conducted to a more seemly waiting-place, till the king should be visible; and Allan-bane, asking to be taken to the prison of his captive lord, is led, by mistake, to the sick chamber of Roderick Dhu, who is dying of his wounds in a gloomy apartment of the castle. The high-souled chieftain inquires eagerly after the fortunes of his clan, the Douglas, and Ellen; and, when he learns that a battle has been fought with doubtful success, entreats the minstrel to sooth his parting spirit with a description of it, and with the victor song of his clan. Allan-bane complies; and the battle is told in very animated and irregular verse. When the vehement strain is closed, Roderick is found cold; and Allan mourns him in a pathetic lament. In the mean time, Ellen hears the voice of Malcolm Græme lamenting his captivity from an adjoining turret of the palace; and, before she has recovered from her agitation, is startled by the appearance of Fitz-James, who comes to inform her that the court is assembled, and the king at leisure to receive her suit. He conducts her trembling steps to the hall of presence, round which Ellen casts a timid and eager glance for the monarch; but all the glittering figures are uncovered, and James Fitz-James alone wears his cap and plume in the brilliant assembly! The truth immediately rushes on her imagination; the knight of Snowdoun is the king of [illegible]nd! and, struck with awe and terror, she [illegible] speechless at his feet, clasping her hand[illegible]d pointing to the ring in breathless agita[illegible]The prince raises her with eager kindn[illegible]eclares aloud that her father is forgiv[illegible]stored to favour — and bids her a[illegible]or some other person. The name [illegible]rembles on her lips; but she cannot [illegible]elf to utter it, and begs the peace of [illegible] Dhu. The king answers, that he [illegible]e his best earldom to restore him to life, [illegible]esses her to name some other boon. She [illegible]shes, and hesitates; and the king, in playf[illegible] vengeance, condemns Malcolm Græme to fetters — takes a chain of gold from his own neck, and throwing it over that of the young chief, puts the clasp into the hand of Ellen!

Such is the brief and naked outline of the story, which Mr. Scott has embellished with such exquisite imagery, and enlarged by so many characteristic incidents, as to have rendered it one of the most attractive poems in the language. That the story, upon the whole, is well digested and happily carried on, is evident from the hold it keeps of the reader's attention through every part of its progress. It has the fault, indeed, of all stories that turn upon an *anagnorisis* or recognition, that the curiosity which is excited during the first reading is extinguished for ever when we arrive at the discovery. This, however, is an objection which may be made, in some degree, to almost every story of interest; and we must say for Mr. Scott, that his secret is very discreetly kept, and most felicitously revealed. If we were to scrutinize the fable with malicious severity, we might also remark, that Malcolm Græme has too insignificant a part assigned him, considering the favour in which he is held both by Ellen and the author; and that, in bringing out the shaded and imperfect character of Roderick Dhu, as a contrast to the purer virtue of his rival, Mr. Scott seems to have fallen into the common error, of making him more interesting than him whose virtues he was intended to set off, and converted the villain of the piece in some measure into its hero. A modern poet, however, may perhaps be pardoned for an error, of which Milton himself is thought not to have kept clear; and for which there seems so natural a cause, in the difference between poetical and amiable characters. There are several improbabilities, too, in the story, which might disturb a scrupulous reader. Allowing that the king of Scotland might have twice disappeared for several days, without exciting any disturbance or alarm in his court, it is certainly rather extraordinary, that neither the Lady Margaret, nor old Allan-bane, nor any of the attendants at the isle, should have recognized his person; and almost as wonderful, that he should have found any difficulty in discovering the family of his entertainers. There is something rather awkward, too, in the sort of blunder, or misunderstanding (for it is no more) which gives occasion to Sir Roderick's Gathering and all its

consequences; nor can any machinery be conceived more clumsy for effecting the deliverance of a distressed hero, than the introduction of a mad woman, who, without knowing or caring about the wanderer, warns him, *by a song*, to take care of the ambush that was set for him. The Maniacs of poetry have indeed had a prescriptive right to be musical, since the days of Ophelia downwards; but it is rather a rash extension of this privilege, to make them sing good sense, and to make sensible people be guided by them.

Before taking leave of the fable, we must be permitted to express our disappointment and regret at finding the general cast of the characters and incidents so much akin to those of Mr. Scott's former publications. When we heard that the author of the Lay and of Marmion was employed upon a *Highland* story, we certainly expected to be introduced to a new creation: and to bid farewell, for awhile, to the knights, squires, courtiers, and chivalry of the low country: — but here they are all upon us again, in their old characters, and nearly in their old costume. The same age — the same sovereign — the same manners — the same ranks of society — the same tone, both for courtesy and for defiance. Loch Katrine, indeed, is more picturesque than St Mary's Loch; and Roderick Dhu and his clan have some features of novelty: — but the Douglas and the King are the leading personages; and the whole interest of the story turns upon persons and events having precisely the same character and general aspect with those which gave their peculiar colour to the former poems. It is honourable to Mr. Scott's genius, no doubt, that he has been able to interest the public so deeply with this third presentment of the same chivalrous scenes; but we cannot help thinking, that both his glory and our gratification would have been greater, if he had changed his hand more completely, and actually given us a true Celtic story, with all its drapery and accompaniments in a corresponding style of decoration.

Such a subject, we are persuaded, has very great capabilities, and only wants to be introduced to public notice by such a hand as Mr. Scott's, to make a still more powerful impression than he has already effected by the resurrection of the tales of romance. There are few persons, we believe, of any degree of poetical susceptibility, who have wandered among the secluded valleys of the Highlands, and contemplated the singular people by whom they are still tenanted — with their love of music and of song — their hardy and irregular life, so unlike the unvarying toils of the Saxon mechanic — their devotion to their chiefs — their wild and lofty traditions — their national enthusiasm — the melancholy grandeur of the scenes they inhabit — and the multiplied superstitions which still linger among them, — without feeling, that there is no existing people so well adapted for the purposes of poetry, or so capable of furnishing the occasions of new and striking inventions.* The great and continued popularity of Macpherson's Ossian (though discredited as a memorial of antiquity, at least as much as is warranted by any evidence yet before the public,) proves how very fascinating a fabric might be raised upon that foundation by a more powerful or judicious hand. That celebrated translation, though defaced with the most childish and offensive affectations, still charms with occasional gleams of a tenderness beyond all other tenderness, and a sublimity of a new character of dreariness and elevation; and, though patched with pieces of the most barefaced plagiarism, still maintains a tone of originality which has recommended it in every nation of the civilized world. The cultivated literati of England, indeed, are struck with the affectation and the plagiarism, and renounce the whole work as tawdry and factitious; but the multitude at home, and almost all classes of readers abroad, to whom those defects are less perceptible, still continue to admire; and few of our classical poets have so sure and regular a sale, both in our own and in other languages, as the singular collection to which we have just alluded. A great part of its charm, we think, consists in the novelty of its Celtic characters and scenery, and their singular aptitude for poetic combinations; and therefore it is that we are persuaded, that if Mr. Scott's powerful and creative genius were to be turned in good earnest to such a subject, something might be produced

* *The Tartan fever* excited in the South (and not yet eradicated) by the Highland scenes and characters of Waverley, seems fully to justify this suggestion; and makes it rather surprising that no other great writer has since repeated the experiment.

still more impressive and original than even this age has yet witnessed.

It is now time, however, that we should lay before our readers some of the passages in the present poem which appear to us most characteristic of the peculiar genius of the author;—and the first that strikes us, in turning over the leaves, is the following fine description of Sir Roderick's approach to the isle, as descried by the aged minstrel, at the close of his conversation with Ellen. The moving picture — the effect of the sounds — and the wild character and strong and peculiar nationality of the whole procession, are given with inimitable spirit and power of expression.

—— "But hark, what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no falt'ring breeze,
No weeping birch nor aspens' wake;
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake;
Still is the canna's hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar."—

"Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
Four dark'ning specks upon the tide,
That, slow, enlarging on the view,
Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
And bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steer'd full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they pass'd,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Rod'rick's banner'd Pine!
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave;
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See flashing at each sturdy stroke
The wave ascending into smoke!
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters down, and sweep
The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

"Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sounds, by distance tame,
Mellow'd along the waters came,
And, ling'r'ng long by cape and bay,
Wail'd every harsher note away;
Then, bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gath'ring they could hear;
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The must'ring hundreds shake the glen,
And, hurrying at the signal dread,
The batter'd earth returns their tread!
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Express'd their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broad-sword upon target jarr'd;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condens'd, the battle yell'd amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest — all were there!
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow
Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low.
And chang'd the conquering clarion swell
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

"The war-pipes ceas'd; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.
Each boatman bending to his oar,
With measur'd sweep the burthen bore,
In such wild cadence, as the breeze
Make's through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
'Rod'righ Vich Alpine, ho! ieroe!'
And near, and nearer as they row'd,
Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

"BOAT SONG.

"Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine!
Long may the Tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!"—

"Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripp'd ev'ry leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moor'd in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
'Rod'righ Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

"Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreath'd in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,

"Honour'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow!
    Loud should Clan-Alpine then
    Ring from her deepmost glen,
'Rod'rich Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'"

Pp. 65—71.

The reader may take next the following general sketch of Loch Katrine:—

"One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd;
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light;
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Ben-venue
Down to the lake in masses threw
Craggs, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
The fragments of an earlier world!
A wild'ring forest feather'd o'er
His ruin'd sides and summit hoar:
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heav'd high his forehead bare!"

Pp. 18, 19.

The next is a more minute view of the same scenery in a summer dawn—closed with a fine picture of its dark lord.

"The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees;
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy!
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye!
The water lily to the light
Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemm'd with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain side,
The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The black-bird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer coo'd the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

"No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Rod'rick's breast.
With sheathed broad-sword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand;
The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As from the cliffs of Ben-venue
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenc'd the warblers of the brake."—Pp. 98—100.

The following description of the starting of "the fiery cross," bears more marks of labour than most of Mr. Scott's poetry, and borders, perhaps, upon straining and exaggeration; yet it shows great power.

"Then Rod'rick with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
'Speed, Malise, speed!' he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.
'The muster-place be Lanric mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!'
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
The barge across Lock Katrine flew;
High stood the henchman on the prow;
So rapidly the bargemen row,
The bubbles, where they launch'd the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had near'd the mainland hill!
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathoms wide,
When lightly bounded to the land,
The messenger of blood and brand.
'Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roe-buck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap;
Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Are in thy course—Speed, Malise, speed!'"—

Pp. 112—114.

The following reflections on an ancient field of battle afford one of the most remarkable instances of false taste in all Mr. Scott's writings. Yet the brevity and variety of the images serve well to show, as we have formerly hinted, that even in his errors there are traces of a powerful genius.

——— " a dreary glen,
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart, to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest!
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreath'd with chaplet flush'd and full,
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume."—Pp. 102, 103.

But one of the most striking passages in the poem, certainly, is that in which Sir Roderick is represented as calling up his men suddenly from their ambush, when Fitz-James expressed his impatience to meet, face to face, that murderous chieftain and his clan.

"'Have then, thy wish!'—He whistled shrill:
And he was answer'd from the hill!
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows!
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And ev'ry tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
That whistle garrison'd the glen
At once with full five hundred men!
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood and still.
Like the loose crags whose threat'ning mass
Lay tott'ring o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
The headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side;
Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—*I* am Rhoderic Dhu!"—

"Fitz-James was brave:—Though to his heart
The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,
He mann'd himself with dauntless air,
Return'd the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:—
'Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.'—
Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then wav'd his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band!
Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low:
It seem'd as if their mother Earth
Had swallow'd up her warlike birth!
The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair—
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide;
The sun's last glance was glinted back,
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold grey stone."
Pp. 202—205.

The following picture is of a very different character; but touched also with the hand of a true poet:—

"Yet ere his onward way he took,
The Stranger cast a ling'ring look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The Harper on the islet beach,
Reclin'd against a blighted tree,
As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His rev'rend brow was rais'd to heaven.
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclin'd upon the wire,
Seem'd watching the awak'ning fire;
So still he sate, as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;
So still, as life itself were fled,
In the last sound his harp had sped.
Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sate and smil'd," &c.—Pp. 50, 51.

Though these extracts have already extended this article beyond all reasonable bounds, we cannot omit Ellen's introduction to the court, and the transformation of Fitz-James into the King of Scotland. The unknown prince, it will be recollected, himself conducts her into the royal presence:—

"With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
Her falt'ring steps half led, half staid,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

"Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And from their tissue fancy frames
Aërial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she rais'd,
And fearful round the presence gaz'd;
For him she sought, who own'd this state,
The dreaded prince, whose will was fate!
She gaz'd on many a princely port,
Might well have rul'd a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gaz'd —
Then turn'd bewildered and amaz'd,
For all stood bare: and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume!
To him each lady's look was lent,
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glitt'ring ring!
And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King!

"As wreath of snow on mountain breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands —
She show'd the ring — she clasp'd her hands
O! not a moment could he brook,
The gen'rous prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he rais'd her — and the while
Check'd with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
And bade her terrors be dismiss'd: —
'Yes Fair; the wand'ring poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring,'" &c.
Pp. 281—284.

We cannot resist adding the graceful winding up of the whole story: —

"'Malcolm, come forth!' — And, at the word,
Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
'For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtur'd underneath our smile,
Has paid our care by treach'rous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name. —
Fetters and warder for the Græme!'
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glitt'ring band:
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand!" — P. 278.

There are no separate introductions to the cantos of this poem; but each of them begins with one or two stanzas in the measure of Spenser, usually containing some reflections connected with the subject about to be entered on; and written, for the most part, with great tenderness and beauty. The following, we think, is among the most striking: —

"Time rolls his ceaseless course! The race of yore
Who danc'd our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force
Wait, on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks — the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course!

"Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew," &c.
Pp. 97, 98.

There is an invocation to the Harp of the North, prefixed to the poem; and a farewell subjoined to it in the same measure, written and versified, it appears to us, with more than Mr. Scott's usual care. We give two of the three stanzas that compose the last: —

"Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark;
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweep with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

"Hark! as my ling'ring footsteps slow retire,
Some Spirit of the Air has wak'd thy string!
'Tis now a Seraph bold, with touch of fire;
'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell!
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wand'ring witch-note of the distant spell —
And now, 'tis silent all! — Enchantress, fare thee well!" — Pp. 289, 290.

These passages, though taken with very little selection, are favourable specimens, we think on the whole, of the execution of the work before us. We had marked several of an opposite character; but, fortunately for Mr Scott, we have already extracted so much, that we shall scarcely have room to take any notice of them; and must condense all our vituperation into a very insignificant compass. One or two things, however, we think it our duty to point out. Though great pains have evidently been taken with Brian the Hermit, we think his whole character a failure, and mere deformity — hurting the interest of the story by its improbability, and rather heavy and disagreeable, than sublime and terrible in its details. The quarrel between Malcolm and Roderick, in the second canto, is also ungraceful and offensive. There is something foppish, and out of character, in Malcolm's rising to lead out Ellen from her own parlour; and the sort of wrestling match that takes place between the rival chieftains on the occasion is humiliating and indecorous. The greatest blemish in the poem, however, is the ribaldry and dull vulgarity which is put into the mouths of the soldiery in the guard-room. Mr. Scott has condescended to write a song for them, which will be read with pain, we are persuaded, even by his warmest admirers: and his whole genius, and even his power of versification, seems to desert him when he attempts to repeat their conversation. Here is some of the stuff which has dropped, in this inauspicious attempt, from the pen of one of the first poets of his age or country: —

"'Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp,
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band.' —

"'No, comrade! — no such fortune mine.
After the fight, these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl;
And, having audience of the Earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm.' —
'Hear ye his boast,' cried John of Brent,
Ever to strife and jangling bent:
'Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee?
I'll have my share, howe'er it be.'" — Pp. 250, 251.

His Highland freebooters, indeed, do not use a much nobler style. For example: —

"'It is, because last evening tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity.
The Taghairm call'd; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the event of war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew.' —
'Ah! well the gallant brute I knew;
The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
Sore did he cumber our retreat;
And kept our sternest kerns in awe,
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.'" — Pp. 146, 147.

Scarcely more tolerable are such expressions as —

"For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;" —

Or that unhappy couplet, where the King himself is in such distress for a rhyme, as to be obliged to apply to one of the most obscure saints on the calendar:

"'Tis James of Douglas, *by Saint Serle;*
The uncle of the banish'd Earl."

We would object, too, to such an accumulation of strange words as occurs in these three lines: —

"'Fleet foot on the *correi;*
Sage counsel in *Cumber;*
Red hand in the *foray,*'" &c.

Nor can we relish such babyish verses as

"'He will return: — dear lady, trust: —
With joy, return. He will — he must.'"
"'Nay, lovely Ellen! Dearest! nay.'"

These, however, and several others that might be mentioned, are blemishes which may well be excused in a poem of more than five thousand lines, produced so soon after another still longer: and though they are blemishes which it is proper to notice, because they are evidently of a kind that may be corrected, it would be absurd, as well as unfair, to give them any considerable weight in our general estimate of the work, or of the powers of the author. Of these, we have already spoken at sufficient length; and must now take an abrupt leave of Mr. Scott, by expressing our hope, and tolerably confident expectation, of soon meeting with him again. That he may injure his popularity by the mere profusion of his publications, is no doubt possible; though

many of the most celebrated poets have been among the most voluminous: but, that the public may gain by this liberality, does not seem to admit of any question. If our poetical treasures were increased by the publication of Marmion and the Lady of the Lake, notwithstanding the existence of great faults in both those works, it is evident that we should be still richer if we possessed fifty poems of the same merit; and, therefore, it is for our interest, whatever it may be as to his, that their author's muse should continue as prolific as she has hitherto been. If Mr. Scott will only vary his subjects a little more, indeed, we think we might engage to insure his own reputation against any material injury from their rapid parturition; and, as we entertain very great doubts whether much greater pains would enable him to write much better poetry, we would rather have two beautiful poems, with the present *quantum* of faults — than one, with only one tenth part less alloy. He will always be a poet, we fear, to whom the fastidious will make great objections; but he may easily find, in his popularity, a compensation for their scruples. He has *the jury* hollow in his favour; and though *the court* may think that its directions have not been sufficiently attended to, it will not quarrel with the verdict.

GEORGE CRABBE.

(April, 1808.)

Poems. By the Reverend George Crabbe. 8vo. pp. 260. London, 1807.*

We receive the proofs of Mr. Crabbe's poetical existence, which are contained in this volume, with the same sort of feeling that would be excited by tidings of an ancient friend, whom we no longer expected to hear of in this world. We rejoice in his resurrection, both for his sake and for our own: but we feel also a certain movement of self-condemnation, for having been remiss in our inquiries after him, and somewhat too negligent of the honours which ought, at any rate, to have been paid to his memory.

It is now, we are afraid, upwards of twenty years since we were first struck with the vigour, originality, and truth of description of "The Village;" and since, we regretted that an author, who could write so well, should have written so little. From that time to the present, we have heard little of Mr. Crabbe; and fear that he has been in a great measure lost sight of by the public, as well as by us. With a singular, and scarcely pardonable indifference to fame, he has remained, during this long interval, in patient or indolent repose; and, without making a single movement to maintain or advance the reputation he had acquired, has permitted others to usurp the attention which he was sure of commanding, and allowed himself to be nearly forgotten by a public, which reckons upon being reminded of all the claims which the living have on its favour. His former publications, though of distinguished merit, were perhaps too small in volume to remain long the objects of general

* I have given a larger space to Crabbe in this republication than to any of his contemporary poets; not merely because I think more highly of him than most of them, but also because I fancy that he has had less justice done him. The nature of his subjects was not such as to attract either imitators or admirers, from among the ambitious or fanciful lovers of poetry, or, consequently, to set him at the head of a School, or let him surround himself with the zealots of a Sect: and it must also be admitted, that his claims to distinction depend fully as much on his great powers of observation, his skill in touching the deeper sympathies of our nature, and his power of inculcating, by their means, the most impressive lessons of humanity, as on any fine play of fancy, or grace and beauty in his delineations. I have great faith, however, in the intrinsic worth and ultimate success of those more substantial attributes; and have, accordingly, the strongest impressions that the citations I have here given from Crabbe, will strike more, and sink deeper into the minds of readers to whom they are new (or by whom they may have been partially forgotten), than any I have been able to present from other writers. It probably is idle enough (as well as a little presumptuous) to suppose that a publication like this will afford many opportunities of testing the truth of this prediction. But, as the experiment is to be made, there can be no harm in mentioning this as one of its objects.

It is but candid, however, after all, to add, that my concern for Mr. Crabbe's reputation would scarcely have led me to devote near one hundred pages to the estimate of his poetical merits, had I not set some value on the speculations as to the elements of poetical excellence in general, and its moral bearings and affinities — for the introduction of which this estimate seemed to present an occasion, or apology.

attention, and seem, by some accident, to have been jostled aside in the crowd of more clamorous competitors.

Yet, though the name of Crabbe has not hitherto been very common in the mouths of our poetical critics, we believe there are few real lovers of poetry to whom some of his sentiments and descriptions are not secretly familiar. There is a truth and a force in many of his delineations of rustic life, which is calculated to sink deep into the memory; and, being confirmed by daily observation, they are recalled upon innumerable occasions — when the ideal pictures of more fanciful authors have lost all their interest. For ourselves at least, we profess to be indebted to Mr. Crabbe for many of these strong impressions; and have known more than one of our unpoetical acquaintances, who declared they could never pass by a parish workhouse, without thinking of the description of it they had read at school in the Poetical Extracts. The volume before us will renew, we trust, and extend many such impressions. It contains all the former productions of the author, with about double their bulk of new matter; most of it in the same taste and manner of composition with the former; and some of a kind, of which we have had no previous example in this author. The whole, however, is of no ordinary merit, and will be found, we have little doubt, a sufficient warrant for Mr. Crabbe to take his place as one of the most original, nervous, and pathetic poets of the present century.

His characteristic, certainly, is force and truth of description, joined for the most part to great selection and condensation of expression; — that kind of strength and originality which we meet with in Cowper, and that sort of diction and versification which we admire in "The Deserted Village" of Goldsmith, or "The Vanity of Human Wishes" of Johnson. If he can be said to have imitated the manner of any author, it is Goldsmith, indeed, who has been the object of his imitation; and yet his general train of thinking, and his views of society, are so extremely opposite, that, when "The Village" was first published, it was commonly considered as an antidote or an answer to the more captivating representations of "The Deserted Village." Compared with this celebrated author, he will be found, we think, to have more vigour and less delicacy; and while he must be admitted to be inferior in the fine finish and uniform beauty of his composition, we cannot help considering him as superior, both in the variety and the truth of his pictures. Instead of that uniform tint of pensive tenderness which overspreads the whole poetry of Goldsmith, we find in Mr. Crabbe many gleams of gaiety and humour. Though his habitual views of life are more gloomy than those of his rival, his poetical temperament seems far more cheerful; and when the occasions of sorrow and rebuke are gone by, he can collect himself for sarcastic pleasantry, or unbend in innocent playfulness. His diction, though generally pure and powerful, is sometimes harsh, and sometimes quaint; and he has occasionally admitted a couplet or two in a state so unfinished, as to give a character of inelegance to the passages in which they occur. With a taste less disciplined and less fastidious than that of Goldsmith, he has, in our apprehension, a keener eye for observation, and a readier hand for the delineation of what he has observed. There is less poetical keeping in his whole performance; but the groups of which it consists are conceived, we think, with equal genius, and drawn with greater spirit as well as far greater fidelity.

It is not quite fair, perhaps, thus to draw a detailed parallel between a living poet, and one whose reputation has been sealed by death, and by the immutable sentence of a surviving generation. Yet there are so few of his contemporaries to whom Mr. Crabbe bears any resemblance, that we can scarcely explain our opinion of his merit, without comparing him to some of his predecessors. There is one set of writers, indeed, from whose works those of Mr. Crabbe might receive all that elucidation which results from contrast, and from an entire opposition in all points of taste and opinion. We allude now to the Wordsworths, and the Southeys, and Coleridges, and all that ambitious fraternity, that, with good intentions and extraordinary talents, are labouring to bring back our poetry to the fantastical oddity and puling childishness of Withers, Quarles, or Marvel. These gentlemen write a great deal about rustic life, as well as Mr. Crabbe; and they even agree with him in dwelling much on its discomforts; but nothing can be more

opposite than the views they take of the subject, or the manner in which they execute their representation of them.

Mr. Crabbe exhibits the common people of England pretty much as they are, and as they must appear to every one who will take the trouble of examining into their condition; at the same time that he renders his sketches in a very high degree interesting and beautiful—by selecting what is most fit for description—by grouping them into such forms as must catch the attention or awake the memory—and by scattering over the whole such traits of moral sensibility, of sarcasm, and of deep reflection, as every one must feel to be natural, and own to be powerful. The gentlemen of the new school, on the other hand, scarcely ever condescend to take their subjects from any description of persons at all known to the common inhabitants of the world; but invent for themselves certain whimsical and unheard-of beings, to whom they impute some fantastical combination of feelings, and then labour to excite our sympathy for them, either by placing them in incredible situations, or by some strained and exaggerated moralisation of a vague and tragical description. Mr. Crabbe, in short, shows us something which we have all seen, or may see, in real life; and draws from it such feelings and such reflections as every human being must acknowledge that it is calculated to excite. He delights us by the truth, and vivid and picturesque beauty of his representations, and by the force and pathos of the sensations with which we feel that they are connected. Mr. Wordsworth and his associates, on the other hand, introduce us to beings whose existence was not previously suspected by the acutest observers of nature; and excite an interest for them—where they do excite any interest—more by an eloquent and refined analysis of their own capricious feelings, than by any obvious or intelligible ground ot sympathy in their situation.

Those who are acquainted with the Lyrical Ballads, or the more recent publications of Mr. Wordsworth, will scarcely deny the justice of this representation; but in order to vindicate it to such as do not enjoy that advantage, we must beg leave to make a few hasty references to the former, and by far the least exceptional of those productions.

A village schoolmaster, for instance, is a pretty common poetical character. Goldsmith has drawn him inimitably; so has Shenstone, with the slight change of sex; and Mr. Crabbe, in two passages, has followed their footsteps. Now, Mr. Wordsworth has a village schoolmaster also—a personage who makes no small figure in three or four of his poems. But by what traits is this worthy old gentleman delineated by the new poet? No pedantry—no innocent vanity of learning—no mixture of indulgence with the pride of power, and of poverty with the consciousness of rare acquirements. Every feature which belongs to the situation, or marks the character in common apprehension, is scornfully discarded by Mr. Wordsworth; who represents his grey-haired rustic pedagogue as a sort of half crazy, sentimental person, overrun with fine feelings, constitutional merriment, and a most humorous melancholy. Here are the two stanzas in which this consistent and intelligible character is portrayed. The diction is at least as new as the conception.

> " The sighs which Matthew heav'd were sighs
> Of one tir'd out with *fun and madness;*
> The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
> Were tears of light—*the oil of gladness.*
>
> " Yet sometimes, when the secret cup
> Of still and serious thought went round,
> He seem'd as if he *drank it up,*
> He felt with spirit so profound.
> Thou *soul* of God's best *earthly mould,*" &c.

A frail damsel again is a character common enough in all poems; and one upon which many fine and pathetic lines have been expended. Mr. Wordsworth has written more than three hundred on the subject: but, instead of new images of tenderness, or delicate representation of intelligible feelings, he has contrived to tell us nothing whatever of the unfortunate fair one, but that her name is Martha Ray; and that she goes up to the top of a hill, in a red cloak, and cries "O misery!" All the rest of the poem is filled with a description of an old thorn and a pond, and of the silly stories which the neighbouring old women told about them.

The sports of childhood, and the untimely death of promising youth, is also a common topic for poetry. Mr. Wordsworth has made some blank verse about it; but, instead of the

delightful and picturesque sketches with which so many authors of moderate talent have presented us on this inviting subject, all that he is pleased to communicate of *his* rustic child, is, that he used to amuse himself with shouting to the owls, and hearing them answer. To make amends for this brevity, the process of his mimicry is most accurately described.

—— "With fingers interwoven, both hands
Press'd closely palm to palm, and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him."—

This is all we hear of him; and for the sake of this one accomplishment, we are told, that the author has frequently stood mute, and gazed on his grave for half an hour together!

Love, and the fantasies of lovers, have afforded an ample theme to poets of all ages. Mr. Wordsworth, however, has thought fit to compose a piece, illustrating this copious subject by one single thought. A lover trots away to see his mistress one fine evening, gazing all the way on the moon; when he comes to her door,

"O mercy! to myself I cried,
If Lucy should be dead."

And there the poem ends!

Now, we leave it to any reader of common candour and discernment to say, whether these representations of character and sentiment are drawn from that eternal and universal standard of truth and nature, which every one is knowing enough to recognize, and no one great enough to depart from with impunity; or whether they are not formed, as we have ventured to allege, upon certain fantastic and affected peculiarities in the mind or fancy of the author, into which it is most improbable that many of his readers will enter, and which cannot, in some cases, be comprehended without much effort and explanation. Instead of multiplying instances of these wide and wilful aberrations from ordinary nature, it may be more satisfactory to produce the author's own admission of the narrowness of the plan upon which he writes, and of the very extraordinary circumstances which he himself sometimes thinks it necessary for his readers to keep in view, if they would wish to understand the beauty or propriety of his delineations.

A pathetic tale of guilt or superstition may be told, we are apt to fancy, by the poet himself, in his general character of poet, with full as much effect as by any other person. An old nurse, at any rate, or a monk or parish clerk, is always at hand to give grace to such a narration. None of these, however, would satisfy Mr. Wordsworth. He has written a long poem of this sort, in which he thinks it indispensably necessary to apprise the reader, that he has endeavoured to represent the language and sentiments of a particular character — of which character he adds, "the reader will have a general notion, if he has ever known a man, *a captain of a small trading vessel*, for example, who, being *past the middle age of life*, has retired upon an *annuity*, or *small independent income*, to some *village* or country town to which he was not *a native*, or in which he had not been accustomed to live!"

Now, we must be permitted to doubt, whether, among all the readers of Mr. Wordsworth (few or many), there is a single individual who has had the happiness of knowing a person of this very peculiar description; or who is capable of forming any sort of conjecture of the particular disposition and turn of thinking which such a combination of attributes would be apt to produce. To us, we will confess, the *annonce* appears as ludicrous and absurd as it would be in the author of an ode or an epic to say, "Of this piece the reader will necessarily form a very erroneous judgment, unless he is apprised, that it was written by a pale man in a green coat — sitting cross-legged on an oaken stool — with a scratch on his nose, and a spelling dictionary on the table." *

* Some of our readers may have a curiosity to know in what manner this old annuitant captain does actually express himself in the village of his adoption. For their gratification, we annex the two first stanzas of his story; in which, with all the attention we have been able to bestow, we have been utterly unable to detect any traits that can be supposed to characterize either a seaman, an annuitant, or a stranger in a country town. It is a style, on the contrary, which we should ascribe, without hesitation, to a certain poetical fraternity in the West of England; and which, we verily believe, never was, and never will be, used by any one out of that fraternity.

"There is a thorn — it looks so old,
In truth, you'd find it hard to say,

From these childish and absurd affectations, we turn with pleasure to the manly sense and correct picturing of Mr. Crabbe; and, after being dazzled and made giddy with the elaborate raptures and obscure originalities of these new artists, it is refreshing to meet again with the spirit and nature of our old masters, in the nervous pages of the author now before us.

The poem that stands first in the volume, is that to which we have already alluded as having been first given to the public upwards of twenty years ago. It is so old, and has of late been so scarce, that it is probably new to many of our readers. We shall venture, therefore, to give a few extracts from it as a specimen of Mr. Crabbe's original style of composition. We have already hinted at the description of the Parish Workhouse, and insert it as an example of no common poetry:—

"There is yon house that holds the parish poor,
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;
There, where the putrid vapours flagging play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day;
There children dwell who know no parents' care;
Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there;
Heart-broken matrons on their joyless bed,
Forsaken wives, and mothers never wed;
Dejected widows with unheeded tears,
And crippled age with more than childhood-fears;
The lame, the blind, and far the happiest they!
The moping idiot and the madman gay.
"Here, too, the sick their final doom receive,
Here brought amid the scenes of grief, to grieve;
Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,
Mixt with the clamours of the crowd below.
"Say ye, opprest by some fantastic woes,
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose;
Who with sad prayers the weary doctor tease,
To name the nameless ever-new disease;
How would ye bear in real pain to lie,
Despised, neglected, left alone to die?
How would ye bear to draw your latest breath,
Where all that's wretched paves the way for death?
"Such is that room which one rude beam divides,
And naked rafters form the sloping sides;
Where the vile bands that bind that thatch are seen,
And lath and mud are all that lie between;
Save one dull pane that, coarsely patch'd, gives way
To the rude tempest, yet excludes the day:
Here, on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head;
For him no hand the cordial cup applies," &c.

Pp. 12—14.

The consequential apothecary, who gives an impatient attendance in these abodes of misery, is admirably described; but we pass to the last scene:—

"Now to the church behold the mourners come,
Sedately torpid and devoutly dumb;
The village children now their games suspend,
To see the bier that bears their ancient friend;
For he was one in all their idle sport,
And like a monarch ruled their little court;
The pliant bow he form'd, the flying ball,
The bat, the wicket, were his labours all;
Him now they follow to his grave, and stand,
Silent and sad, and gazing, hand in hand;
While bending low, their eager eyes explore
The mingled relics of the parish poor!
The bell tolls late, the moping owl flies round,
Fear marks the flight and magnifies the sound;
The busy priest, detain'd by weightier care,
Defers his duty till the day of prayer;
And waiting long, the crowd retire distrest,
To think a poor man's bones should lie unblest."

Pp. 16, 17

The scope of the poem is to show, that the villagers of real life have no resemblance to the villagers of poetry: that poverty, in sober truth, is very uncomfortable; and vice by no means confined to the opulent. The following passage is powerfully, and finely written:—

"Or will you deem them amply paid in health,
Labour's fair child, that languishes with wealth?
Go then! and see them rising with the sun,
Through a long course of daily toil to run;
See them beneath the dog-star's raging heat,
When the knees tremble and the temples beat;
Behold them, leaning on their scythes, look o'er
The labour past, and toils to come explore;

How it could ever have been young!
It looks so old and grey.
Not higher than a two-years' child,
It stands erect; this aged thorn!
No leaves it has, no thorny points
It is a mass of knotted joints:
A wretched thing forlorn.
It stands erect; and like a stone,
With lichens it is overgrown.

"*Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown*
With lichens;—to the very top;
And hung with heavy tufts of moss
A melancholy crop.
Up from the earth these mosses creep,
And *this poor thorn,* they clasp it round
So close, you'd say that they were bent,
With plain and manifest intent!
To drag it to the ground;
And all had join'd in one endeavour,
To bury *this poor thorn* for ever."*

And this, it seems, is Nature, and Pathos, and Poetry!

Through fens and marshy moors their steps pursue,
When their warm pores imbibe the evening dew.
"There may you see the youth of slender frame
Contend with weakness, weariness, and shame:
Yet urg'd along, and proudly loath to yield,
He strives to join his fellows of the field;
Till long-contending nature droops at last;
Declining health rejects his poor repast!
His cheerless spouse the coming danger sees,
And mutual murmurs urge the slow disease.
"Yet grant them health, 'tis not for us to tell,
Though the head droops not, that the heart is well;
Or will you praise that homely, healthy fare,
Plenteous and plain, that happy peasants share?
Oh! trifle not with wants you cannot feel!
Nor mock the misery of a stinted meal;
Homely not wholesome—plain not plenteous—such
As you who praise would never deign to touch!
"Ye gentle souls, who dream of rural ease,
Whom the smooth stream and smoother sonnet please;
Go! if the peaceful cot your praises share,
Go look within, and ask if peace be there:
If peace be his—that drooping, weary sire,
Or theirs, that offspring round their feeble fire!
Or hers, that matron pale, whose trembling hand
Turns on the wretched hearth th' expiring brand."
Pp. 8—10.

We shall only give one other extract from this poem; and we select the following fine description of that peculiar sort of barrenness which prevails along the sandy and thinly inhabited shores of the Channel;—

"Lo! where the heath, with with'ring brake grown o'er,
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves his wither'd ears;
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil,
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil:
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendour vainly shines around."
Pp. 5, 6.

The next poem, and the longest in the volume, is now presented for the first time to the public. It is dedicated, like the former, to the delineation of rural life and characters, and is entitled the "Village Register;" and, upon a very simple but singular plan, is divided into three parts, viz. Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials. After an introductory and general view of village manners, the reverend author proceeds to present his readers with an account of all the remarkable baptisms, marriages, and funerals, that appear on his register for the preceding year; with a sketch of the character and behaviour of the respective parties, and such reflections and exhortations as are suggested by the subject. The poem consists, therefore, of a series of portraits taken from the middling and lower ranks of rustic life, and delineated on occasions at once more common and more interesting, than any other that could well be imagined. They are selected, we think, with great judgment, and drawn with inimitable accuracy and strength of colouring. They are finished with much more minuteness and detail, indeed, than the more general pictures in "The Village;" and, on this account, may appear occasionally deficient in comprehension, or in dignity. They are, no doubt, executed in some instances with too much of a Chinese accuracy; and enter into details which many readers may pronounce tedious and unnecessary. Yet there is a justness and force in the representation which is entitled to something more than indulgence; and though several of the groups are composed of low and disagreeable subjects, still, we think that some allowance is to be made for the author's plan of giving a full and exact view of village life, which could not possibly be accomplished without including those baser varieties. He aims at an important moral effect by this exhibition; and must not be defrauded either of that, or of the praise which is due to the coarser efforts of his pen, out of deference to the sickly delicacy of his more fastidious readers. We admit, however, that there is more carelessness, as well as more quaintness in this poem than in the other; and that he has now and then apparently heaped up circumstances rather to gratify his own taste for detail and accumulation, than to give any additional effect to his description. With this general observation, we beg the reader's attention to the following abstract and citations.

The poem begins with a general view, first of the industrious and contented villager, and then of the profligate and disorderly. The first compartment is not so striking as the last. Mr. Crabbe, it seems, has a set of smugglers among his flock, who inhabit what is called the Street

in his village. There is nothing comparable to the following description, but some of the prose sketches of Mandeville: —

"Here, in cabal, a disputatious crew
Each evening meet; the sot, the cheat, the shrew;
Riots are nightly heard — the curse, the cries
Of beaten wife, perverse in her replies;
Boys in their first stol'n rags, to swear begin,
And girls, who know not sex, are skill'd in gin!
Snarers and smugglers here their gains divide,
Ensnaring females here their victims hide;
And here is one, the Sibyl of the Row,
Who knows all secrets, or affects to know.—
"See! on the floor, what frowzy patches rest!
What nauseous fragments on yon fractur'd chest!
What downy dust beneath yon window-seat!
And round these posts that serve this bed for feet;
This bed where all those tatter'd garments lie,
Worn by each sex, and now per force thrown by.
"See, as we gaze, an infant lifts its head,
Left by neglect, and burrow'd in that bed;
The mother-gossip has the love supprest,
An infant's cry once waken'd in her breast," &c. &c.
"Here are no wheels for either wool or flax,
But packs of cards — made up of sundry packs;
Here are no books, but ballads on the wall,
Are some abusive, and indecent all;
Pistols are here, unpair'd; with nets and hooks,
Of every kind, for rivers, ponds, and brooks;
An ample flask that nightly rovers fill,
With recent poison from the Dutchman's still;
A box of tools with wires of various size,
Frocks, wigs, and hats, for night or day disguise,
And bludgeons stout to gain or guard a prize.—
"Here his poor bird, th' inhuman cocker brings,
Arms his hard heel, and clips his golden wings;
With spicy food th' impatient spirit feeds,
And shouts and curses as the battle bleeds:
Struck through the brain, depriv'd of both his eyes,
The vanquish'd bird must combat till he dies!
Must faintly peck at his victorious foe,
And reel and stagger at each feeble blow;
When fall'n, the savage grasps his dabbled plumes,
His blood-stain'd arms for other deaths assumes;
And damns the craven-fowl that lost his stake,
And *only* bled and perish'd for his sake!"

Pp. 40—44.

Mr. Crabbe now opens his chronicle; and the first babe that appears on the list is a natural child of the miller's daughter. This damsel fell in love with a sailor; but her father refused his consent, and no priest would unite them without it. The poor girl yielded to her passion; and her lover went to sea, to seek a portion for his bride: —

"Then came the days of shame, the grievous night,
The varying look, the wand'ring appetite;
The joy assum'd, while sorrow dimm'd the eyes,
The forc'd sad smiles that follow'd sudden sighs,
And every art, long us'd, but us'd in vain,
To hide thy progress, Nature, and thy pain,
"Day after day were past in grief and pain.
Week after week, nor came the youth again;
Her boy was born: — No lads nor lasses came
To grace the rite or give the child a name;
Nor grave conceited nurse, of office proud,
Bore the young Christian, roaring through the crowd;
In a small chamber was my office done,
Where blinks, through paper'd panes, the setting sun;
Where noisy sparrows, perch'd on penthouse near,
Chirp tuneless joy, and mock the frequent tear."—
"Throughout the lanes, she glides at evening's close,
There softly lulls her infant to repose;
Then sits and gazes, but with viewless look,
As gilds the moon the rimpling of the brook;
Then sings her vespers, but in voice so low,
She hears their murmurs as the waters flow;
And she too murmurs, and begins to find
The solemn wand'rings of a wounded mind!"

Pp. 47—49

We pass the rest of the Baptisms; and proceed to the more interesting chapter of Marriages. The first pair here is an old snug bachelor, who, in the first days of dotage, had married his maid-servant. The reverend Mr. Crabbe is very facetious on this match; and not very scrupulously delicate.

The following picture, though liable in part to the same objection, is perfect, we think, in that style of drawing; —

"Next at our altar stood a luckless pair,
Brought by strong passions — and a warrant — there;
By long rent cloak, hung loosely, strove the bride,
From ev'ry eye, what all perceiv'd, to hide;
While the boy-bridegroom, shuffling in his pace,
Now hid awhile, and then expos'd, his face;
As shame alternately with anger strove
The brain, confus'd with muddy ale, to move!
In haste and stamm'ring he perform'd his part,
And look'd the rage that rankled in his heart.
Low spake the lass, and lisp'd and minc'd the while;
Look'd on the lad, and faintly tried to smile;
With soft'ned speech and humble tone she strove
To stir the embers of departed love;
While he a tyrant, frowning walked before,
Felt the poor purse, and sought the public door;
She sadly following in submission went,
And saw the final shilling foully spent!
Then to her father's hut the pair withdrew,
And bade to love and comfort long adieu!"

Pp. 74, 75.

The next bridal is that of Phœbe Dawson, the most innocent and beautiful of all the village maidens. We give the following pretty description of her courtship:—

"Now, through the lane, up hill, and cross the green,
(Seen but by few, and blushing to be seen—
Dejected, thoughtful, anxious, and afraid,)
Led by the lover, walked the silent maid:
Slow through the meadows rov'd they, many a mile,
Toy'd by each bank, and trifled at each stile;
Where, as he painted every blissful view,
And highly coloured what he strongly drew,
The pensive damsel, prone to tender fears,
Dimm'd the fair prospect with prophetic tears."
Pp. 76, 77.

This is the taking side of the picture: at the end of two years, here is the reverse. Nothing can be more touching, we think, than the quiet suffering and solitary hysterics of this ill-fated young woman:—

"Lo! now with red rent cloak and bonnet black,
And torn green gown, loose hanging at her back,
One who an infant in her arms sustains,
And seems, with patience, striving with her pains;
Pinch'd are her looks, as one who pines for bread,
Whose cares are growing, and whose hopes are fled!
Pale her parch'd lips, her heavy eyes sunk low,
And tears unnotic'd from their channels flow;
Serene her manner, till some sudden pain
Frets the meek soul, and then she's calm again!—
Her broken pitcher to the pool she takes
And every step with cautious terror makes;
For not alone that infant in her arms,
But nearer cause, maternal fear, alarms!
With water burden'd, then she picks her way,
Slowly and cautious, in the clinging clay;
Till in mid-green she trusts a place unsound,
And deeply plunges in th' adhesive ground;
From whence her slender foot with pain she takes,"
&c.
"And now her path, but not her peace, she gains,
Safe from her task, but shiv'ring with her pains;
Her home she reaches, open leaves the door,
And placing first her infant on the floor,
She bares her bosom to the wind, and sits,
And sobbing struggles with the rising fits!
In vain!—they come—she feels th' inflaming grief,
That shuts the swelling bosom from relief;
That speaks in feeble cries a soul distrest,
Or the sad laugh that cannot be represt;
The neighbour-matron leaves her wheel, and flies
With all the aid her poverty supplies
Unfee'd, the calls of nature she obeys,
Nor led by profit, nor allur'd by praise;
And waiting long, till these contentions cease,
She speaks of comfort, and departs in peace."
Pp. 77, 78.

The ardent lover, it seems, turned out a brutal husband:—

"If present, railing, till he saw her pain'd;
If absent, spending what their labours gain'd:
Till that fair form in want and sickness pin'd,
And hope and comfort fled that gentle mind."
P. 79.

It may add to the interest which some readers will take in this simple story, to be told, that it was the last piece of poetry that was read to Mr. Fox during his fatal illness; and that he examined and made some flattering remarks on the manuscript of it a few days before his death.

We are obliged to pass over the rest of the Marriages, though some of them are extremely characteristic and beautiful, and to proceed to the Burials. Here we have a great variety of portraits—the old drunken innkeeper—the bustling farmer's wife—the infant—and next the lady of the manor. The following description of her deserted mansion is striking, and in the good old taste of Pope and Dryden:—

——— "Forsaken stood the hall,
Worms ate the floors, the tap'stry fled the wall;
No fire the kitchen's cheerless grate display'd;
No cheerful light the long-clos'd sash convey'd;
The crawling worm that turns a summer fly,
Here spun his shroud and laid him up to die
The winter-death;—upon the bed of state,
The bat, shrill-shrieking, woo'd his flick'ring mate:
To empty rooms, the curious came no more,
From empty cellars, turn'd the angry poor,
And surly beggars curs'd the ever-bolted door.
To one small room the steward found his way,
Where tenants follow'd to complain and pay."
Pp. 104, 105.

The old maid follows next to the shades of mortality. The description of her house, furniture, and person, is admirable, and affords a fine specimen of Mr. Crabbe's most minute finishing; but it is too long for extracting. We rather present our readers with a part of the character of Isaac Ashford:—

"Next to these ladies, but in nought allied,
A noble peasant, Isaac Ashford, died.
Noble he was—contemning all things mean,
His truth unquestioned, and his soul serene:
Of no man's presence Isaac felt afraid:
At no man's question Isaac look'd dismay'd;
Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace," &c.
"Were others joyful, he look'd smiling on,
And gave allowance where he needed none;

Yet far was he from stoic-pride remov'd;
He felt, with many, and he warmly lov'd:
I mark'd his action, when his infant died,
And an old neighbour for offence was tried;
The still tears, stealing down that furrow'd check,
Spoke pity plainer than the tongue can speak," &c.
Pp. 111, 112.

The rest of the character is drawn with equal spirit; but we can only make room for the author's final commemoration of him.

"I feel his absence in the hours of prayer,
And view his seat, and sigh for Isaac there!
I see, no more, those white locks thinly spread,
Round the bald polish of that honour'd head;
No more that awful glance on playful wight,
Compell'd to kneel and tremble at the sight;
To fold his fingers all in dread the while,
Till Mr. Ashford soften'd to a smile!
No more that meek, that suppliant look in prayer,
Nor that pure faith, that gave it force—are there:—
But he is blest; and I lament no more
A wise good man contented to be poor."—P. 114.

We then bury the village midwife, superseded in her old age by a volatile doctor; then a surly rustic misanthrope; and last of all, the reverend author's ancient sexton, whose chronicle of his various pastors is given rather at too great length. The poem ends with a simple recapitulation.

We think this the most important of the new pieces in the volume; and have extended our account of it so much, that we can afford to say but little of the others. "The Library" and "The Newspaper" are republications. They are written with a good deal of terseness, sarcasm, and beauty; but the subjects are not very interesting, and they will rather be approved, we think, than admired or delighted in. We are not much taken either with "The Birth of Flattery." With many nervous lines and ingenious allusions, it has something of the languor which seems inseparable from an allegory which exceeds the length of an epigram.

"Sir Eustace Grey" is quite unlike any of the preceding compositions. It is written in a sort of lyric measure; and is intended to represent the perturbed fancies of the most terrible insanity settling by degrees into a sort of devotional enthusiasm. The opening stanza, spoken by a visitor in the madhouse, is very striking.

"I'll see no more! — the heart is torn
By views of woe we cannot heal;
Long shall I see these *things* forlorn,
And oft again their griefs shall feel,
As each upon the mind shall steal;
That wan projector's mystic style,
That lumpish idiot leering by,
That peevish idler's ceaseless wile,
And *that poor maiden's half-form'd smile,*
While struggling for the full-drawn sigh!
I'll know no more!" — P. 217.

There is great force both of language and conception, in the wild narrative Sir Eustace gives of his frenzy; though we are not sure whether there is not something too elaborate, and too much worked up, in the picture. We give only one image, which we think is original. He supposed himself hurried along by two tormenting demons.

"Through lands we fled, o'er seas we flew,
And halted on a boundless plain;
Where nothing fed, nor breath'd, nor grew,
But silence ruled the still domain.

"Upon that boundless plain, below,
The setting sun's last rays were shed,
And gave a mild and sober glow,
Where all were still, asleep, or dead;
Vast ruins in the midst were spread,
Pillars and pediments sublime,
Where the grey moss had form'd a bed,
And clothed the crumbling spoils of Time.

"There was I fix'd, I know not how,
Condemn'd for untold years to stay;
Yet years were not; — one dreadful *now*,
Endur'd no change of night or day;
The same mild evening's sleeping ray
Shone softly-solemn and serene,
And all that time I gazed away,
The setting sun's sad rays were seen."— P. 226.

"The Hall of Justice," or the story of the Gipsy Convict, is another experiment of Mr. Crabbe's. It is very nervous — very shocking — and very powerfully represented. The woman is accused of stealing, and tells her story in impetuous and lofty language.

"My crime! this sick'ning child to feed,
I seized the food your witness saw;
I knew your laws forbade the deed,
But yielded to a stronger law!"—

"But I have griefs of other kind,
Troubles and sorrows more severe;
Give me to ease my tortured mind,
Lend to my woes a patient ear
And let me — if I may not find
A friend to help — find one to hear.

"My mother dead, my father lost,
I wander'd with a vagrant crew;

> A common care, a common cost,
> Their sorrows and their sins I knew:
> With them on want and error forced,
> Like them, I base and guilty grew!
>
> "So through the land I wand'ring went,
> And little found of grief or joy;
> But lost my bosom's sweet content,
> When first I loved the gypsy boy.
>
> "A sturdy youth he was and tall,
> His looks would all his soul declare,
> His piercing eyes were deep and small,
> And strongly curl'd his raven hair.
>
> "Yes, Aaron had each manly charm,
> All in the May of youthful pride;
> He scarcely fear'd his father's arm,
> And every other arm defied.—
>
> "Oft when they grew in anger warm,
> (Whom will not love and power divide?)
> I rose, their wrathful souls to calm,
> Not yet in sinful combat tried."
>
> Pp. 240—242.

The father felon falls in love with the betrothed of his son, whom he despatches on some distant errand. The consummation of his horrid passion is told in these powerful stanzas:—

> "The night was dark, the lanes were deep,
> And one by one they took their way;
> He bade me lay me down and sleep!
> I only wept, and wish'd for day.
>
> "Accursed be the love he bore—
> *Accursed was the force he used—*
> *So let him of his God implore*
> *For mercy!—and be so refused!"*—P. 243.

It is painful to follow the story out. The son returns, and privately murders his father; and then marries his widow! The profligate barbarity of the life led by those outcasts is forcibly expressed by the simple narrative of the lines that follow:—

> "I brought a lovely daughter forth,
> His father's child, in Aaron's bed!
> He took her from me in his wrath,
> 'Where is my child?'—'Thy child is dead.'
>
> "'Twas false! We wander'd far and wide,
> Through town and country, field and fen,
> Till Aaron fighting, fell and died,
> And I became a wife again."—P. 248.

We have not room to give the sequel of this dreadful ballad. It certainly is not pleasing reading; but it is written with very unusual power of language, and shows Mr. Crabbe to have great mastery over the tragic passions of pity and horror. The volume closes with some verses of no great value in praise of Women.

We part with regret from Mr. Crabbe; but we hope to meet with him again. If his muse, to be sure, is prolific only once in twenty-four years, we can scarcely expect to live long enough to pass judgment on her future progeny: but we trust, that a larger portion of public favour than has hitherto been dealt to him will encourage him to greater efforts; and that he will soon appear again among the worthy supporters of the old poetical establishment, and come in time to surpass the revolutionists in fast firing, as well as in weight of metal.

GEORGE CRABBE.

(April, 1810.)

The Borough: a Poem, in Twenty-four Letters. By the Rev. George Crabbe, LL.B. 8vo. pp. 344. London: 1810.

We are very glad to meet with Mr. Crabbe so soon again: and particularly glad to find, that his early return has been occasioned, in part, by the encouragement he received on his last appearance. This late spring of public favour, we hope, he will yet live to see ripen into mature fame. We scarcely know any poet who deserves it better; and are quite certain there is none who is more secure of keeping with posterity whatever he may win from his contemporaries.

The present poem is precisely of the character of "The Village" and the "Parish Register." It has the same peculiarities, and the same faults and beauties; though a severe critic might perhaps add, that its peculiarities are more obtrusive, its faults greater, and its beauties less. However that be, both faults and beauties are so plainly produced by the peculiarity, that it may be worth while, before giving any more particular account of it, to try if we can ascertain in what that consists.

And here we shall very speedily discover, that Mr. Crabbe is distinguished from all other poets, both by the choice of his subjects, and by his manner of treating them. All his persons are taken from the lower ranks of life; and all his scenery from the most ordinary and familiar objects of nature or art. His

characters and incidents, too, are as common as the elements out of which they are compounded are humble; and not only has he nothing prodigious or astonishing in any of his representations, but he has not even attempted to impart any of the ordinary colours of poetry to those vulgar materials. He has no moralising swains or sentimental tradesmen; and scarcely ever seeks to charm us by the artless graces or lowly virtues of his personages. On the contrary, he has represented his villagers and humble burghers as altogether as dissipated, and more dishonest and discontented, than the profligates of higher life; and, instead of conducting us through blooming groves and pastoral meadows, has led us along filthy lanes and crowded wharfs, to hospitals, alms-houses, and gin-shops. In some of these delineations, he may be considered as the Satirist of low life — an occupation sufficiently arduous, and, in a great degree, new and original in our language. But by far the greater part of his poetry is of a different and a higher character; and aims at moving or delighting us by lively, touching, and finely contrasted representations of the dispositions, sufferings, and occupations of those ordinary persons, who form the far greater part of our fellow-creatures. This, too, he has sought to effect, merely by placing before us the clearest, most brief, and most striking sketches of their external condition — the most sagacious and unexpected strokes of character — and the truest and most pathetic pictures of natural feeling and common suffering. By the mere force of his art, and the novelty of his style, he forces us to attend to objects that are usually neglected, and to enter into feelings from which we are in general but too eager to escape; — and then trusts to nature for the effect of the representation.

It is obvious, at first sight, that this is not a task for an ordinary hand; and that many ingenious writers, who make a very good figure with battles, nymphs, and moonlight landscapes, would find themselves quite helpless, if set down among streets, harbours, and taverns. The difficulty of such subjects, in short, is sufficiently visible — and some of the causes of that difficulty: but they have their advantages also; — and of these, and their hazards, it seems natural to say a few words, before entering more minutely into the merits of the work before us.

The first great advantage of such familiar subjects is, that every one is necessarily well acquainted with the originals; and is therefore sure to feel all that pleasure, from a faithful representation of them, which results from the perception of a perfect and successful imitation. In the kindred art of painting, we find that this single consideration has been sufficient to stamp a very high value upon accurate and lively delineations of objects, in themselves uninteresting, and even disagreeable; and no very inconsiderable part of the pleasure which may be derived from Mr. Crabbe's poetry may probably be referred to its mere truth and fidelity; and to the brevity and clearness with which he sets before his readers objects and characters with which they have been all their days familiar.

In his happier passages, however, he has a higher merit, and imparts a far higher gratification. The chief delight of poetry consists, not so much in what it directly supplies to the imagination, as in what it enables it to supply to itself; — not in warming the heart by its passing brightness, but in kindling its own latent stores of light and heart; — not in hurrying the fancy along by a foreign and accidental impulse, but in setting it agoing, by touching its internal springs and principles of activity. Now, this highest and most delightful effect can only be produced by the poet's striking a note to which the heart and the affections naturally vibrate in unison; — by rousing one of a large family of kindred impressions; — by dropping the rich seed of his fancy upon the fertile and sheltered places of the imagination. But it is evident, that the emotions connected with common and familiar objects — with objects which fill every man's memory, and are necessarily associated with all that he has ever really felt or fancied, are of all others the most likely to answer this description, and to produce, where they can be raised to a sufficient height, this great effect in its utmost perfection. It is for this reason that the images and affections that belong to our *universal* nature, are always, if tolerably represented, infinitely more captivating, in spite of their apparent commonness and simplicity, than those that are peculiar to certain

situations, however they may come recommended by novelty or grandeur. The familiar feeling of maternal tenderness and anxiety, which is every day before our eyes, even in the brute creation — and the enchantment of youthful love, which is nearly the same in all characters, ranks, and situations — still contribute far more to the beauty and interest of poetry than all the misfortunes of princes, the jealousies of heroes, and the feats of giants, magicians, or ladies in armour. Every one can enter into the former set of feelings; and but a few into the latter. The one calls up a thousand familiar and long-remembered emotions — which are answered and reflected on every side by the kindred impressions which experience or observation have traced upon every memory: while the other lights up but a transient and unfruitful blaze, and passes away without perpetuating itself in any kindred and native sensation.

Now the delineation of all that concerns the lower and most numerous classes of society, is, in this respect, on a footing with the pictures of our primary affections — that their originals are necessarily familiar to all men, and are inseparably associated with their own most interesting impressions. Whatever may be our own condition, we all live surrounded with the poor, from infancy to age; — we hear daily of their sufferings and misfortunes; — and their toils, their crimes, or their pastimes, are our hourly spectacle. Many diligent readers of poetry know little, by their own experience, of palaces, castles, or camps; and still less of tyrants, warriors, and banditti; — but every one understands about cottages, streets, and villages; and conceives, pretty correctly, the character and condition of sailors, ploughmen, and artificers. If the poet can contrive, therefore, to create a sufficient interest in subjects like these, they will infallibly sink deeper into the mind, and be more prolific of kindred trains of emotion, than subjects of greater dignity. Nor is the difficulty of exciting such an interest by any means so great as is generally imagined. For it is common human nature, and common human feelings, after all, that form the true source of interest in poetry of every description; — and the splendour and the marvels by which it is sometimes surrounded, serve no other purpose than to fix our attention on those workings of the heart, and those energies of the understanding, which alone command all the genuine sympathies of human beings — and which may be found as abundantly in the breasts of cottagers as of kings. Wherever there are human beings, therefore, with feelings and characters to be represented, our attention may be fixed by the art of the poet — by his judicious selection of circumstances — by the force and vivacity of his style, and the clearness and brevity of his representations.

In point of fact, we are all touched more deeply, as well as more frequently, in real life, with the sufferings of peasants than of princes; and sympathize much oftener, and more heartily, with the successes of the poor, than of the rich and distinguished. The occasions of such feelings are indeed so many, and so common, that they do not often leave any very permanent traces behind them, but pass away, and are effaced by the very rapidity of their succession. The business and the cares, and the pride of the world, obstruct the development of the emotions to which they would naturally give rise; and press so close and thick upon the mind, as to shut it, at most seasons, against the reflections that are perpetually seeking for admission. When we have leisure, however, to look quietly into our hearts, we shall find in them an infinite multitude of little fragments of sympathy with our brethren in humble life — abortive movements of compassion, and embryos of kindness and concern, which had once fairly begun to live and germinate within them, though withered and broken off by the selfish bustle and fever of our daily occupations. Now, all these may be revived and carried on to maturity by the art of the poet; — and, therefore, a powerful effort to interest us in the feelings of the humble and obscure, will usually call forth more deep, more numerous, and more permanent emotions, than can ever be excited by the fate of princesses and heroes. Independent of the circumstances to which we have already alluded, there are causes which make us at all times more ready to enter into the feelings of the humble, than of the exalted part of our species. Our sympathy with their enjoyments is enhanced by a certain mixture of pity for their general condition, which, by

purifying it from that taint of envy which almost always adheres to our admiration of the great, renders it more welcome and satisfactory to our bosoms; while our concern for their sufferings is at once softened and endeared to us, by the recollection of our own exemption from them, and by the feeling, that we frequently have it in our power to relieve them.

From these, and from other causes, it appears to us to be certain, that where subjects, taken from humble life, can be made sufficiently interesting to overcome the distaste and the prejudices with which the usages of polished society too generally lead us to regard them, the interest which they excite will commonly be more profound and more lasting than any that can be raised upon loftier themes; and the poet of the Village and the Borough be oftener, and longer read, than the poet of the Court or the Camp. The most popular passages of Shakspeare and Cowper, we think, are of this description: and there is much, both in the volume before us, and in Mr. Crabbe's former publications, to which we might now venture to refer, as proofs of the same doctrine. When such representations have once made an impression on the imagination, they are remembered daily, and for ever. We can neither look around, nor within us, without being reminded of their truth and their importance; and, while the more brilliant effusions of romantic fancy are recalled only at long intervals, and in rare situations, we feel that we cannot walk a step from our own doors, nor cast a glance back on our departed years, without being indebted to the poet of vulgar life for some striking image or touching reflection, of which the occasions were always before us, but — till he taught us how to improve them — were almost always allowed to escape.

Such, we conceive, are some of the advantages of the subjects which Mr. Crabbe has in a great measure introduced into modern poetry; — and such the grounds upon which we venture to predict the durability of the reputation which he is in the course of acquiring. That they have their disadvantages also, in obvious; and it is no less obvious, that it is to these we must ascribe the greater part of the faults and deformities with which this author is fairly chargeable. The two great errors into which he has fallen, are — that he has described many things not worth describing; — and that he has frequently excited disgust, instead of pity or indignation, in the breasts of his readers. These faults are obvious — and, we believe, are popularly laid to his charge: yet there is, in so far as we have observed, a degree of misconception as to the true grounds and limits of the charge, which we think it worth while to take this opportunity of correcting.

The poet of humble life *must* describe a great deal — and must even describe, minutely, many things which possess in themselves no beauty or grandeur. The reader's fancy must be awaked — and the power of his own pencil displayed: a distinct locality and imaginary reality must be given to his characters and agents: and the ground colour of their common condition must be laid in, before his peculiar and selected groups can be presented with any effect or advantage. In the same way, he must study characters with a minute and anatomical precision; and must make both himself and his readers familiar with the ordinary traits and general family features of the beings among whom they are to move, before they can either understand, or take much interest in the individuals who are to engross their attention. Thus far, there is no excess or unnecessary minuteness. But this faculty of observation, and this power of description, hold out great temptations to go further. There is a pride and a delight in the exercise of all peculiar power; and the poet, who has learned to describe external objects exquisitely, with a view to heighten the effect of his moral designs, and to draw characters with accuracy, to help forward the interest or the pathos of the picture, will be in great danger of describing scenes, and drawing characters, for no other purpose, but to indulge his taste, and to display his talents. It cannot be denied, we think, that Mr. Crabbe has, on many occasions, yielded to this temptation. He is led away, every now and then, by his lively conception of external objects, and by his nice and sagacious observation of human character; and wantons and luxuriates in descriptions and moral portrait painting, while his readers are left to wonder to what end so much industry has been exerted.

His chief fault, however, is his frequent lapse into disgusting representations; and this, we will confess, is an error for which we find it far more difficult either to account or to apologize. We are not, however, of the opinion which we have often heard stated, that he has represented human nature under too unfavourable an aspect; or that the distaste which his poetry sometimes produces, is owing merely to the painful nature of the scenes and subjects with which it abounds. On the contrary, we think he has given a juster, as well as a more striking picture, of the true character and situation of the lower orders of this country, than any other writer, whether in verse or in prose; and that he has made no more use of painful emotions than was necessary to the production of a pathetic effect.

All powerful and pathetic poetry, it is obvious, abounds in images of distress. The delight which it bestows partakes strongly of pain; and, by a sort of contradiction, which has long engaged the attention of the reflecting, the compositions that attract us most powerfully, and detain us the longest, are those that produce in us most of the effects of actual suffering and wretchedness. The solution of this paradox is to be found, we think, in the simple fact, that pain is a far stronger sensation than pleasure, in human existence; and that the cardinal virtue of all things that are intended to delight the mind, is to produce a strong sensation. Life itself appears to consist in sensation; and the universal passion of all beings that have life, seems to be, that they should be made intensely conscious of it, by a succession of powerful and engrossing emotions. All the mere gratifications or natural pleasures that are in the power even of the most fortunate, are quite insufficient to fill this vast craving for sensation: and accordingly we see every day, that a more violent stimulus is sought for by those who have attained the vulgar heights of life, in the pains and dangers of war — the agonies of gaming — or the feverish toils of ambition. To those who have tasted of those potent cups, where the bitter, however, so obviously predominates, the security, the comforts, and what are called the enjoyments of common life, are intolerably insipid and disgusting. Nay, we think we have observed, that even those who, without any effort or exertion, have experienced unusual misery, frequently appear, in like manner, to acquire a sort of taste or craving for it; and come to look on the tranquillity of ordinary life with a kind of indifference not unmingled with contempt. It is certain, at least, that they dwell with most apparent satisfaction on the memory of those days, which have been marked by the deepest and most agonizing sorrows; and derive a certain delight from the recollections of those overwhelming sensations which once occasioned so fierce a throb in the languishing pulse of their existence.

If any thing of this kind, however, can be traced in real life — if the passion for emotion be so strong as to carry us, not in imagination, but in reality, over the rough edge of present pain — it will not be difficult to explain, why it should be so attractive in the copies and fictions of poetry. There, as in real life, the great demand is for emotion; while the pain with which it may be attended, can scarcely, by any possibility, exceed the limits of endurance. The recollection, that it is but a copy and a fiction, is quite sufficient to keep it down to a moderate temperature, and to make it welcome as the sign or the harbinger of that agitation of which the soul is avaricious. It is not, then, from any peculiar quality in painful emotions that they become capable of affording the delight which attends them in tragic or pathetic poetry — but merely from the circumstance of their being more intense and powerful than any other emotions of which the mind is susceptible. If it was the constitution of our nature to feel joy as keenly, or to sympathize with it as heartily as we do with sorrow, we have no doubt that no other sensation would ever be intentionally excited by the artists that minister to delight. But the fact is, that *the pleasures* of which we are capable are slight and feeble compared with *the pains* that we may endure; and that, feeble as they are, the sympathy which they excite falls much more short of the original emotion. When the object, therefore, is to obtain sensation, there can be no doubt to which of the two fountains we should repair; and if there be but few pains in real life which are not, in some measure, endeared to us by the emotions with which they are attended, we may be pretty sure, that the more distress we introduce into poetry, the

more we shall rivet the attention and attract the admiration of the reader.

There is but one exception to this rule — and it brings us back from the apology of Mr. Crabbe, to his condemnation. Every form of distress, whether it proceed from passion or from fortune, and whether it fall upon vice or virtue, adds to the interest and the charm of poetry — except only that which is connected with ideas of *Disgust* — the least taint of which disenchants the whole scene, and puts an end both to delight and sympathy. But what is it, it may be asked, that is the proper object of disgust? and what is the precise description of things which we think Mr. Crabbe so inexcusable for admitting? It is not easy to define a term at once so simple and so significant; but it may not be without its use, to indicate, in a general way, our conception of its true force and comprehension.

It is needless, we suppose, to explain what are the objects of disgust in physical or external existences. These are sufficiently plain and unequivocal; and it is universally admitted, that all mention of them must be carefully excluded from every poetical description. With regard, again, to human character, action, and feeling, we should be inclined to term every thing disgusting, which represented misery, without making any appeal to our love, respect, or admiration. If the suffering person be amiable, the delightful feeling of love and affection tempers the pain which the contemplation of suffering has a tendency to excite, and enhances it into the stronger, and therefore more attractive, sensation of pity. If there be great power or energy, however, united to guilt or wretchedness, the mixture of admiration exalts the emotion into something that is sublime and pleasing: and even in cases of mean and atrocious, but efficient guilt, our sympathy with the victims upon whom it is practised, and our active indignation and desire of vengeance, reconcile us to the humiliating display, and make a compound that, upon the whole, is productive of pleasure.

The only sufferers, then, upon whom we cannot bear to look, are those that excite pain by their wretchedness, while they are too depraved to be the objects of affection, and too weak and insignificant to be the causes of misery to others, or, consequently, of indignation to the spectators. Such are the depraved, abject, diseased, and neglected poor — creatures in whom every thing amiable or respectable has been extinguished by sordid passions or brutal debauchery; — who have no means of doing the mischief of which they are capable — whom every one despises, and no one can either love or fear. On the characters, the miseries, and the vices of such beings, we look with *disgust* merely: and, though it may perhaps serve some *moral* purpose, occasionally to set before us this humiliating spectacle of human nature sunk to utter worthlessness and insignificance, it is altogether in vain to think of exciting either pity or horror, by the truest and most forcible representations of their sufferings or their enormities. They have no hold upon any of the feelings that lead us to take an interest in our fellow-creatures; — we turn away from them, therefore, with loathing and dispassionate aversion; — we feel our imaginations polluted by the intrusion of any images connected with them; and are offended and disgusted when we are forced to look closely upon those festering heaps of moral filth and corruption.

It is with concern we add, that we know no writer who has sinned so deeply in this respect as Mr. Crabbe—who has so often presented us with spectacles which it is purely painful and degrading to contemplate, and bestowed such powers of conception and expression in giving us distinct ideas of what we must ever abhor to remember. If Mr. Crabbe had been a person of ordinary talents, we might have accounted for his error, in some degree, by supposing, that his frequent success in treating of subjects which had been usually rejected by other poets, had at length led him to disregard, altogether, the common impressions of mankind as to what was allowable and what inadmissible in poetry, and to reckon the unalterable laws by which nature has regulated our sympathies, among the prejudices by which they were shackled and impaired. It is difficult, however, to conceive how a writer of his quick and exact observation should have failed to perceive, that there is not a single instance of a serious interest being excited by an object of disgust; and that Shakspeare himself, who has ventured every thing, has never ventured to shock our feelings with the crimes or the

sufferings of beings absolutely without power or principle. Independent of universal practice, too, it is still more difficult to conceive how he should have overlooked the reason on which this practice is founded; for though it be generally true, that poetical representations of suffering and of guilt produce emotion, and consequently delight, yet it certainly did not require the penetration of Mr. Crabbe to discover, that there is a degree of depravity which counteracts our sympathy with suffering, and a degree of insignificance which extinguishes our interest in guilt. We abstain from giving any extracts in support of this accusation; but those who have perused the volume before us, will have already recollected the story of Frederic Thompson, of Abel Keene, of Blaney, of Benbow, and a good part of those of Grimes and Ellen Orford — besides many shorter passages. It is now time, however, to give the reader a more particular account of the work which contains them.

The Borough of Mr. Crabbe, then, is a detailed and minute account of an ancient English sea-port town, of the middling order; containing a series of pictures of its scenery, and of the different classes and occupations of its inhabitants. It is thrown into the form of letters, though without any attempt at the epistolary character; and treats of the vicar and curate — the sectaries — the attorneys — the apothecaries; and the inns, clubs, and strolling-players, that make a figure in the place: — but more particularly of the poor, and their characters and treatment; and of almshouses, prisons, and schools. There is, of course, no unity or method in the poem — which consists altogether of a succession of unconnected descriptions, and is still more miscellaneous in reality, than would be conjectured from the titles of its twenty-four separate compartments. As it does not admit of analysis, therefore, or even of a much more particular description, we can only give our readers a just idea of its execution, by extracting a few of the passages that appear to us most characteristic in each of the many styles it exhibits.

One of the first that strikes us, is the following very touching and beautiful picture of innocent love, misfortune, and resignation — all of them taking a tinge of additional sweetness and tenderness from the humble condition of the parties; and thus affording a striking illustration of the remarks we have ventured to make on the advantages of such subjects. The passage occurs in the second letter, where the author has been surveying, with a glance half pensive and half sarcastical, the monuments erected in the churchyard. He then proceeds: —

"Yes! there are real Mourners — I have seen
A fair sad Girl, mild, suffering, and serene;
Attention (through the day) her duties claim'd,
And to be useful as resign'd she aim'd;
Neatly she dress'd, nor vainly seem'd to expect
Pity for grief, or pardon for neglect;
But when her wearied Parents sunk to sleep,
She sought this place to meditate and weep;
Then to her mind was all the past display'd,
That faithful Memory brings to Sorrow's aid:
For then she thought on one regretted Youth,
Her tender trust, and his unquestion'd truth;
In ev'ry place she wander'd where they'd been,
And sadly-sacred held the parting-scene
Where last for sea he took his leave; — that place
With double interest would she nightly trace," &c.

"Happy he sail'd; and great the care she took,
That he should softly sleep, and smartly look;
White was his better linen, and his check
Was made more trim than any on the deck;
And every comfort Men at Sea can know,
Was hers to buy, to make, and to bestow:
For he to Greenland sail'd, and much she told,
How he should guard against the climate's cold;
Yet saw no danger; dangers he'd withstood,
Nor could she trace the fever in his blood:
His Messmates smil'd at flushings in his cheek,
And he too smil'd, but seldom would he speak;
For now he found the danger, felt the pain,
With grievous symptoms he could not explain.

"He call'd his friend, and prefac'd with a sigh
A Lover's message — '*Thomas!* I must die!
Would I could see my *Sally!* and could rest
My throbbing temples on her faithful breast,
And gazing go! — if not, this trifle take,
And say, till death I wore it for her sake:
Yes! I must die! blow on, sweet breeze, blow on!
Give me one look, before my life be gone,
Oh! give me that! and let me not despair —
One last fond look! — and now repeat the prayer.'

"He had his wish; had more; I will not paint
The Lovers' meeting: she beheld him faint —
With tender fears, she took a nearer view,
Her terrors doubling as her hopes withdrew;
He tried to smile, and, half succeeding, said,
'Yes! I must die' — and hope for ever fled!

"Still long she nursed him; tender thoughts meantime
Were interchang'd, and hopes and views sublime.

To her he came to die; and every day
She took some portion of the dread away!
With him she pray'd, to him his Bible read,
Sooth'd the faint heart, and held the aching head:
She came with smiles the hour of pain to cheer;
Apart she sigh'd; alone, she shed the tear;
Then, as if breaking from a cloud, she gave
Fresh life, and gilt the prospect of the grave.
"One day he lighter seem'd, and they forgot
The care, the dread, the anguish of their lot;
They spoke with cheerfulness, and seem'd to think,
Yet said not so — 'perhaps he will not sink.'
A sudden brightness in his look appear'd,
A sudden vigour in his voice was heard; —
She had been reading in the Book of Prayer,
And led him forth, and plac'd him in his chair;
Lively he seem'd, and spoke of all he knew,
The friendly many, and the favourite few;
Nor one that day did he to mind recall,
But she has treasur'd, and she loves them all;
When in her way she meets them, they appear
Peculiar people — death has made them dear!
He nam'd his friend, but then his hand she prest,
And fondly whisper'd, 'Thou must go to rest.'
'I go!' he said; but, as he spoke, she found
His hand more cold, and flutt'ring was the sound;
Then gaz'd affrighten'd; but she caught a last,
A dying look of love — and all was past! —
"She plac'd a decent stone his grave above,
Neatly engrav'd — an offering of her Love;
For that she wrought, for that forsook her bed,
Awake alike to duty and the dead;
She would have griev'd, had friends presum'd to spare
The least assistance — 'twas her proper care.
"Here will she come, and on the grave will sit,
Folding her arms in long abstracted fit;
But if observer pass, will take her round,
And careless seem, for she would not be found;
Then come again, and thus her hour employ,
While visions please her, and while woes destroy."
Pp. 23—27.

There is a passage in the same tone, in the letter on Prisons. It describes the dream of a felon under sentence of death; and though the exquisite accuracy and beauty of the landscape painting are such as must have recommended it to notice in poetry of any order, it seems to us to derive an unspeakable charm from the lowly simplicity and humble content of the characters — at least we cannot conceive any walk of *ladies and gentlemen* that should furnish out so sweet a picture as terminates the following extract. It is only doing Mr. Crabbe justice to present along with it a part of the dark foreground which he has drawn, in the waking existence of the poor dreamer.

"When first I came
Within his view, I fancied there was Shame,
I judg'd Resentment; I mistook the air —
These fainter passions live not with Despair;
Or but exist and die: — Hope, Fear, and Love,
Joy, Doubt, and Hate, may other spirits move,
But touch not his, who every waking hour
Has one fix'd dread, and always feels its power.
He takes his tasteless food; and, when 'tis done,
Counts up his meals, now lessen'd by that one:
For expectation is on Time intent,
Whether he brings us Joy or Punishment.
"Yes! e'en in sleep th' impressions all remain;
He hears the sentence, and he feels the chain;
He seems the place for that sad act to see,
And dreams the very thirst which then will be!
A priest attends — it seems the one he knew
In his best days, beneath whose care he grew.
"At this his terrors take a sudden flight —
He sees his native village with delight;
The house, the chamber, where he once array'd
His youthful person; where he knelt and pray'd:
Then too the comforts he enjoy'd at home,
The days of joy; the joys themselves are come; —
The hours of innocence; — the timid look
Of his lov'd maid, when first her hand he took
And told his hope; her trembling joy appears,
Her forc'd reserve, and his retreating fears.
"Yes! all are with him now, and all the while
Life's early prospects and his *Fanny* smile:
Then come his sister and his village friend,
And he will now the sweetest moments spend
Life has to yield: — No! never will he find
Again on earth such pleasure in his mind.
He goes through shrubby walks these friends among,
Love in their looks, and pleasure on the tongue.
Pierc'd by no crime, and urg'd by no desire
For more than true and honest hearts require,
They feel the calm delight, and thus proceed
Through the green lane, — then linger in the mead, —
Stray o'er the heath in all its purple bloom,
And pluck the blossom where the wild-bees hum;
Then through the broomy bound with ease they pass,
And press the sandy sheep-walk's slender grass,
Where dwarfish flowers among the gorse are spread,
And the lamb browzes by the linnet's bed!
Then 'cross the bounding brook they make their way
O'er its rough bridge — and there behold the bay!
The ocean smiling to the fervid sun —
The waves that faintly fall and slowly run —
The ships at distance, and the boats at hand:
And now they walk upon the sea-side sand,
Counting the number, and what kind they be,
Ships softly sinking in the sleepy sea:
Now arm in arm, now parted, they behold
The glitt'ring waters on the shingles roll'd:
The timid girls, half dreading their design,
Dip the small foot in the retarded brine,
And search for crimson weeds, which spreading flow,
Or lie like pictures on the sand below;

With all those bright red pebbles, that the sun
Through the small waves so softly shines upon;
And those live lucid jellies which the eye
Delights to trace as they swim glittering by:
Pearl-shells and rubied star-fish they admire,
And will arrange above the parlour fire —
Tokens of bliss!" — Pp. 323—326.

If these extracts do not make the reader feel how deep and peculiar an interest may be excited by humble subjects, we should almost despair of bringing him over to our opinion, even by Mr. Crabbe's inimitable description and pathetic pleading for the parish poor. The subject is one of those, which to many will appear repulsive, and, to some fastidious natures, perhaps, disgusting. Yet, if the most admirable painting of external objects — the most minute and thorough knowledge of human character — and that warm glow of active and rational benevolence which lends a guiding light to observation, and an enchanting colour to eloquence, can entitle a poet to praise, as they do entitle him to more substantial rewards, we are persuaded that the following passage will not be speedily forgotten.

"Your plan I love not: — with a number you
Have plac'd your poor, your pitiable few;
There, in one house, for all their lives to be,
The pauper-palace which they hate to see!
That giant-building, that high bounding wall,
Those bare-worn walks, that lofty thund'ring hall!
That large loud clock, which tolls each dreaded hour,
Those gates and locks, and all those signs of power:
It is a prison, with a milder name,
Which few inhabit without dread or shame." —
"Alas! their sorrows in their bosoms dwell,
They've much to suffer, but have nought to tell:
They have no evil in the place to state,
And dare not say, it is the house they hate:
They own there's granted all such place can give,
But live repining,— for 'tis there they live!
"Grandsires are there, who now no more must see
No more must nurse upon the trembling knee,
The lost lov'd daughter's infant progeny!
Like death's dread mansion, this allows not place
For joyful meetings of a kindred race.
"Is not the matron there, to whom the son
Was wont at each declining day to run;
He (when his toil was over) gave delight,
By lifting up the latch, and one 'Good night?'
Yes, she is here; but nightly to her door
The son, still lab'ring, can return no more.
"Widows are here, who in their huts were left,
Of husbands, children, plenty, ease, bereft;
Yet all that grief within the humble shed
Was soften'd, soften'd in the humble bed:
But here, in all its force, remains the grief,
And not one soft'ning object for relief.
"Who can, when here, the social neighbour meet?
Who learn the story current in the street?
Who to the long-known intimate impart
Facts they have learn'd, or feelings of the heart? —
They talk, indeed; but who can choose a friend,
Or seek companions, at their journey's end?" —
"What, if no grievous fears their lives annoy,
Is it not worse, no prospects to enjoy?
'Tis cheerless living in such bounded view,
With nothing dreadful, but with nothing new;
Nothing to bring them joy, to make them weep —
The day itself is, like the night, asleep;
Or on the sameness, if a break be made,
'Tis by some pauper to his grave convey'd;
By smuggled news from neighb'ring village told,
News never true, or truth a twelvemonth old!
By some new inmate doom'd with them to dwell,
Or justice come to see that all goes well;
Or change of room, or hour of leave to crawl
On the black footway winding with the wall,
'Till the stern bell forbids, or master's sterner call.
"Here the good pauper, losing all the praise
By worthy deeds acquir'd in better days,
Breathes a few months; then, to his chamber led,
Expires — while strangers prattle round his bed.'
Pp. 241—244.

These we take to be specimens of Mr. Crabbe's best style; — but he has great variety; — and some readers may be better pleased with his satirical vein — which is both copious and original. The Vicar is an admirable sketch of what must be very difficult to draw; — a good, easy man, with no character at all. His little, humble vanity; — his constant care to offend no one; — his mawkish and feeble gallantry — indolent good nature, and love of gossiping and trifling — are all very exactly, and very pleasingly delineated.

To the character of Blaney, we have already objected, as offensive, from its extreme and impotent depravity. The first part of his history, however, is sketched with a masterly hand; and affords a good specimen of that sententious and antithetical manner by which Mr. Crabbe sometimes reminds us of the style and versification of Pope.

"*Blaney*, a wealthy heir at twenty-one,
At twenty-five was ruin'd and undone;
These years with grievous crimes we need not load,
He found his ruin in the common road;
Gam'd without skill, without inquiry bought,
Lent without love, and borrow'd without thought.
But, gay and handsome, he had soon the dower
Of a kind wealthy widow in his power;

Then he aspir'd to loftier flights of vice:
To singing harlots of enormous price:
And took a jockey in his gig to buy
A horse, so valued, that a duke was shy:
To gain the plaudits of the knowing few,
Gamblers and grooms, what would not *Blaney* do?"—
"Cruel he was not,—If he left his wife,
He left her to her own pursuits in life;
Deaf to reports, to all expenses blind,
Profuse, not just—and careless but not kind."
Pp. 193, 194.

Clelia is another worthless character, drawn with infinite spirit, and a thorough knowledge of human nature. She began life as a sprightly, talking, flirting girl, who passed for a wit and a beauty in the half-bred circles of the borough; and who, in laying herself out to entrap a youth of better condition, unfortunately fell a victim to his superior art, and forfeited her place in society. She then became the smart mistress of a dashing attorney—then tried to teach a school—lived as the favourite of an innkeeper—let lodgings—wrote novels—set up a toy-shop—and, finally, was admitted into the almshouse. There is nothing very interesting perhaps in such a story; but the details of it show the wonderful accuracy of the author's observation of character; and give it, and many of his other pieces, a value of the same kind that some pictures are thought to derive from the truth and minuteness of the *anatomy* which they display. There is something original too, and well conceived, in the tenacity with which he represents this frivolous person, as adhering to her paltry characteristics, under every change of circumstances. The concluding view is as follows.

"Now friendless, sick, and old, and wanting bread,
The first-born tears of fallen pride were shed—
True, bitter tears; and yet that wounded pride,
Among the poor, for poor distinctions sigh'd!
Though now her tales were to her audience fit;
Though loud her tones, and vulgar grown her wit:
Though now her dress—(but let me not explain
The piteous patchwork of the needy vain,
The flirtish form to coarse materials lent,
And one poor robe through fifty fashions sent);
Though all within was sad, without was mean—
Still 'twas her wish, her comfort to be seen;
She would to plays on lowest terms resort,
Where once her box was to the beaux a court;
And, strange delight! to that same house where she
Join'd in the dance, all gaiety and glee,
Now with the menials crowding to the wall,
She'd see, not share, the pleasures of the ball,
And with degraded vanity unfold,
How she too triumph'd in the years of old."
Pp. 209, 210.

The graphic powers of Mr. Crabbe, indeed, are too frequently wasted on unworthy subjects. There is not, perhaps, in all English poetry a more complete and highly finished piece of painting, than the following description of a vast old boarded room or warehouse, which was let out, it seems, in the borough, as a kind of undivided lodging, for beggars and vagabonds, of every description. No Dutch painter ever presented an interior more distinctly to the eye; or ever gave half such a group to the imagination.

"That window view!—oil'd paper and old glass
Stain the strong rays, which, though impeded, pass,
And give a dusty warmth to that huge room,
The conquer'd sunshine's melancholy gloom;
When all those western rays, without so bright,
Within become a ghastly glimm'ring light,
As pale and faint upon the floor they fall,
Or feebly gleam on the opposing wall:
That floor, once oak, now piec'd with fir unplan'd,
Or, where not piec'd, in places bor'd and stain'd;
That wall once whiten'd, now an odious sight,
Stain'd with all hues, except its ancient white.
"Where'er the floor allows an even space,
Chalking and marks of various games have place:
Boys, without foresight, pleas'd in halters swing!
On a fix'd hook men cast a flying ring;
While gin and snuff their female neighbours share,
And the black beverage in the fractur'd ware.
"On swinging shelf are things incongruous stor'd—
Scraps of their food—the cards and cribbage board—
With pipes and pouches; while on peg below,
Hang a lost member's fiddle and its bow;
That still reminds them how he'd dance and play,
Ere sent untimely to the Convict's Bay!
"Here by a curtain, by a blanket there,
Are various beds conceal'd, but none with care;
Where some by day and some by night, as best
Suit their employments, seek uncertain rest;
The drowsy children at their pleasure creep
To the known crib, and there securely sleep.
"Each end contains a grate, and these beside
Are hung utensils for their boil'd and fry'd—
All us'd at any hour, by night, by day,
As suit the purse, the person, or the prey.
"Above the fire, the mantel-shelf contains
Of china-ware some poor unmatch'd remains;
There many a tea-cup's gaudy fragment stands,
All plac'd by Vanity's unwearied hands;
For here she lives, e'en here she looks about,
To find some small consoling objects out.
"High hung at either end, and next the wall,
Two ancient mirrors show the forms of all."
Pp. 249-251.

The following picture of a calm sea fog is by the same powerful hand: —

"When all you see through densest fog is seen;
When you can hear the fishers near at hand
Distinctly speak, yet see not where they stand;
Or sometimes them and not their boats discern,
Or half-conceal'd some figure at the stern;
Boys who, on shore, to see the pebble cast,
Will hear it strike against the viewless mast;
While the stern boatman growls his fierce disdain,
At whom he knows not, whom he threats in vain.
"'Tis pleasant then to view the nets float past,
Net after net till you have seen the last;
And as you wait till all beyond you slip,
A boat comes gliding from an anchor'd ship,
Breaking the silence with the dipping oar,
And their own tones, as labouring for the shore;
Those measur'd tones with which the scene agree,
And gives a sadness to serenity." — Pp. 123, 124.

We add one other sketch of a similar character, which though it be introduced as the haunt and accompaniment of a desponding spirit, is yet chiefly remarkable for the singular clearness and accuracy with which it represents the dull scenery of a common tide river. The author is speaking of a solitary and abandoned fisherman, who was compelled —

"At the same times the same dull views to see,
The bounding marsh-bank and the blighted tree;
The water only, when the tides were high,
When low, the mud half-covered and half-dry;
The sun-burn'd tar that blisters on the planks,
And bank-side stakes in their uneven ranks:
Heaps of entangled weeds that slowly float,
As the tide rolls by the impeded boat.
"When tides were neap, and, in the sultry day,
Through the tall bounding mud-banks made their way,
Which on each side rose swelling, and below
The dark warm flood ran silently and slow;
There anchoring, *Peter* chose from man to hide,
There hang his head, and view the lazy tide
In its hot slimy channel slowly glide;
Where the small eels that left the deeper way
For the warm shore, within the shallows play;
Where gaping muscles, left upon the mud,
Slope their slow passage to the fallen flood; —
Here dull and hopeless he'd lie down and trace
How sidelong crabs had scrawl'd their crooked race;
Or sadly listen to the tuneless cry
Of fishing *Gull* or clanging *Golden Eye*."
Pp. 305, 306.

Under the head of Amusements, we have a spirited account of the danger and escape of a party of pleasure, who landed, in a fine evening, on a low sandy island, which was covered with the tide at high water, and were left upon it by the drifting away of their boat.

"On the bright sand they trode with nimble feet,
Dry shelly sand that made the summer seat;
The wond'ring mews flew flutt'ring o'er their head,
And waves ran softly up their shining bed."
P. 127.

While engaged in their sports, they discover their boat floating at a distance, and are struck with instant terror.

"Alas! no shout the distant land can reach,
Nor eye behold them from the foggy beach:
Again they join in one loud powerful cry,
They cease, and eager listen for reply;
None came — the rising wind blew sadly by,
They shout once more, and then they turn aside,
To see how quickly flow'd the coming tide;
Between each cry they find the waters steal
On their strange prison, and new horrors feel;
Foot after foot on the contracted ground
The billows fall, and dreadful is the sound!
Less and yet less the sinking isle became,
And there was wailing, weeping, wrath, and blame.
Had one been there, with spirit strong and high,
Who could observe, as he prepar'd to die,
He might have seen of hearts the varying kind,
And trac'd the movement of each different mind;
He might have seen, that not the gentle maid
Was more than stern and haughty man afraid," &c.
"Now rose the water through the less'ning sand,
And they seem'd sinking while they yet could stand!
The sun went down, they look'd from side to side,
Nor aught except the gath'ring sea descry'd.
Dark and more dark, more wet, more cold it grew,
And the most lively bade to hope adieu;
Children, by love, then lifted from the seas,
Felt not the waters at the parent's knees,
But wept aloud; the wind increas'd the sound,
And the cold billows as they broke around.
—— But hark! an oar,
That sound of bliss! comes dashing to their shore;
Still, still the water rises, 'Haste!' they cry,
'Oh! hurry, seamen, in delay we die!'
(Seamen were these who in their ship perceiv'd
The drifted boat, and thus her crew reliev'd.)
And now the keel just cuts the cover'd sand,
Now to the gunwale stretches every hand;
With trembling pleasure all confus'd embark,
And kiss the tackling of their welcome ark;
While the most giddy, as they reach the shore,
Think of their danger, and their God adore."
Pp. 127—130.

In the letter on Education, there are some fine descriptions of boarding-schools for both sexes, and of the irksome and useless restraints which they impose on the bounding spirits and open affections of early youth. This is fol-

lowed by some excellent remarks on the *ennui* which so often falls to the lot of the learned — or that description at least of the learned that are bred in English universities. But we have no longer left room for any considerable extracts; though we should have wished to lay before our readers some part of the picture of the sectaries — the description of the inns — the strolling players — and the clubs. The poor man's club, which partakes of the nature of a friendly society, is described with that good-hearted indulgence which marks all Mr. Crabbe's writings.

> "The printed rules he guards in painted frame,
> And shows his children where to read his name," &c.

We have now alluded, we believe, to what is best and most striking in this poem; and, though we do not mean to quote any part of what we consider as less successful, we must say, that there are large portions of it which appear to us considerably inferior to most of the author's former productions. The letter on the *Election*, we look on as a complete failure — or at least as containing scarcely any thing of what it ought to have contained. The letters on Law and Physic, too, are tedious; and the general heads of Trades, Amusements, and Hospital Government, by no means amusing. The Parish Clerk, too, we find dull and without effect; and already have given our opinion of Peter Grimes, Abel Keene, and Benbow. We are struck, also, with several omissions in the picture of a maritime borough. Mr. Crabbe might have made a great deal of a press-gang; and, at all events, should have given us some wounded veteran sailors, and some voyagers with tales of wonder from foreign lands.

The style of this poem is distinguished, like all Mr. Crabbe's other performances, by great force and compression of diction — a sort of sententious brevity, once thought essential to poetical composition, but of which he is now the only living example. But though this is almost an unvarying characteristic of his style, it appears to us that there is great variety, and even some degree of unsteadiness and inconsistency in the tone of his expression and versification. His taste seems scarcely to be sufficiently fixed and settled as to these essential particulars; and, along with a certain quaint, broken, and harsh manner of his own, we think we can trace very frequent imitations of poets of the most opposite character. The following antithetical and half-punning lines of Pope, for instance: —

> "Sleepless himself, to give his readers sleep;"

and —

> "Whose trifling pleases, and whom trifles please;"

have evidently been copied by Mr. Crabbe in the following, and many others :—

> "And in the restless ocean, seek for rest."
> "Denying her who taught thee to deny."
> "Scraping they lived, but not a scrap they gave."
> "Bound for a friend, whom honour could not bind."
> "Among the poor, for poor distinctions sigh'd."

In the same way, the common, nicely-balanced line of two members, which is so characteristic of the same author, has obviously been the model of our author in the following: —

> "That woe could wish, or vanity devise."
> "Sick without pity, sorrowing without hope."
> "Gloom to the night, and pressure to the chain" —

and a great multitude of others.

On the other hand, he appears to us to be frequently misled by Darwin into a sort of mock-heroic magnificence, upon ordinary occasions. The poet of the Garden, for instance, makes his nymphs

> "Present the fragrant quintessence of tea."

And the poet of the Dock-yards makes his carpenters

> "Spread the warm pungence of o'erboiling tar."

Mr. Crabbe, indeed, does not scruple, on some occasions, to adopt the mock-heroic in good earnest. When the landlord of the Griffin becomes bankrupt, he says —

> "The insolvent Griffin struck her wings sublime" —

and introduces a very serious lamentation over the learned poverty of the curate, with this most misplaced piece of buffoonery: —

> "Oh! had he learn'd to make the wig he wears!"

One of his letters, too, begins with this wretched quibble: —

> "From Law to Physic stepping at our ease,
> We find a way to finish — by *Degrees*."

There are many imitations of the peculiar rhythm of Goldsmith and Campbell, too, as our readers must have observed in some of our longer specimens; — but these, though they do not always make a very harmonious combination, are better, at all events, than the tame heaviness and vulgarity of such verses as the following: —

——" As soon
Could he have thought gold issued from the moon."

" A seaman's body — *there 'll be more* to-night."

" Those who will not to any guide submit,
Nor find one creed to their conceptions fit —
True *Independents;* whilst they *Calvin* hate,
They heed as little what *Socinians* state." — P. 54.

" Here pits of crag, with spongy, plashy base,
To some enrich the uncultivated space," &c. &c.

Of the sudden, harsh turns, and broken conciseness which we think peculiar to himself, the reader may take the following specimens:—

" Has your wife's brother, or your uncle's son,
Done aught amiss; or is he thought t' have done?"

" Stepping from post to post he reach'd the chair;
And there he now reposes: — that's the Mayor!"

He has a sort a sort of jingle, too, which we think is of his own invention; — for instance,

" For forms and feasts that sundry times have past,
And formal feasts that will for ever last."

" We term it free and easy; and yet we
Find it no easy matter to be free."

We had more remarks to make upon the taste and diction of this author; and had noted several other little blemishes, which we meant to have pointed out for his correction: but we have no longer room for such minute criticism — from which, indeed, neither the author nor the reader would be likely to derive any great benefit. We take our leave of Mr. Crabbe, therefore, by expressing our hopes that, since it is proved that he *can* write fast, he will not allow his powers to languish for want of exercise; and that we shall soon see him again repaying the public approbation, by entitling himself to a still larger share of it. An author generally knows his own forte so much better than any of his readers, that it is commonly a very foolish kind of presumption to offer any advice as to the direction of his efforts; but we own we have a very strong desire to see Mr. Crabbe apply his great powers to the construction of some interesting and connected story. He has great talents for narration; and that unrivalled gift in the delineation of character, which is now used only for the creation of detached portraits, might be turned to admirable account in maintaining the interest, and enhancing the probability, of an extended train of adventures. At present, it is impossible not to regret, that so much genius should be wasted in making us perfectly acquainted with individuals, of whom we are to know nothing but the characters. In such a poem, however, Mr. Crabbe must entirely lay aside the sarcastic and jocose style to which he has rather too great a propensity; but which we know, from what he has done in Sir Eustace Grey, that he can, when he pleases, entirely relinquish. That very powerful and original performance, indeed, the chief fault of which is, to be set too thick with images — to be too strong and undiluted, in short, for the digestion of common readers — makes us regret, that its author should ever have stopped to be trifling and ingenious — or condescended to tickle the imaginations of his readers, instead of touching the higher passions of their nature.

GEORGE CRABBE.

(November, 1812.)

Tales. By the Reverend George Crabbe. 8vo. pp. 398. London: 1812.

We are very thankful to Mr. Crabbe for these Tales; as we must always be for any thing that comes from his hands. But they are not exactly the tales which we wanted. We did not, however, wish him to write an Epic — as he seems from his preface to have imagined. We are perfectly satisfied with the length of the pieces he has given us; and delighted with their number and varity. In these respects the volume is exactly as we could have wished it. But we should have liked a little more of the deep and tragical passions; of those passions which exalt and overwhelm the soul — to whose stormy seat the modern muses can so rarely raise their flight — and which he has wielded with such terrific force in his Sir Eustace Grey, and the

Gipsy Woman. What we wanted, in short, were tales something in the style of those two singular compositions — with less jocularity than prevails in the rest of his writings — rather more incidents — and rather fewer details.

The pieces before us are not of this description; — they are mere supplementary chapters to "The Borough," or "The Parish Register." The same tone — the same subjects — the same style, measure, and versification; — the same finished and minute delineation of things ordinary and common — generally very engaging when employed upon external objects, but often fatiguing when directed merely to insignificant characters and habits; — the same strange mixture too of feelings that tear the heart and darken the imagination, with starts of low humour and patches of ludicrous imagery; — the same kindly sympathy with the humble and innocent pleasures of the poor and inelegant, and the same indulgence for their venial offences, contrasted with a strong sense of their frequent depravity, and too constant a recollection of the sufferings it produces; — and, finally, the same honours paid to the delicate affections and ennobling passions of humble life, with the same generous testimony to their frequent existence; mixed up, as before, with a reprobation sufficiently rigid, and a ridicule sufficiently severe, of their excesses and affectations.

If we were required to make a comparative estimate of the merits of the present publication, or to point out the shades of difference by which it is distinguished from those that have gone before it, we should say that there are a greater number of instances on which he has combined the natural language and manners of humble life with the energy of true passion, and the beauty of generous affection; — in which he has traced out the course of those rich and lovely veins in the rude and unpolished masses that lie at the bottom of society; — and unfolded, in the middling orders of the people, the workings of those finer feelings, and the stirrings of those loftier emotions which the partiality of other poets had attributed, almost exclusively, to actors on a higher scene.

We hope, too, that this more amiable and consoling view of human nature will have the effect of rendering Mr. Crabbe still more popular than we know that he already is, among that great body of the people, from among whom almost all his subjects are taken, and for whose use his lessons are chiefly intended: and we say this, not only on account of the moral benefit which we think they may derive from them, but because we are persuaded that they will derive more pleasure from them than readers of any other description. Those who do not belong to that rank of society with which this powerful writer is chiefly conversant in his poetry, or who have not at least gone much among them, and attended diligently to their characters and occupations, can neither be half aware of the exquisite fidelity of his delineations, nor feel in their full force the better part of the emotions which he has suggested. Vehement passion indeed is of all ranks and conditions; and its language and external indications nearly the same in all. Like highly rectified spirit, it blazes and inflames with equal force and brightness, from whatever materials it is extracted. But all the softer and kindlier affections, all the social anxieties that mix with our daily hopes, and endear our homes, and colour our existence, wear a different livery, and are written in a different character in almost every great *caste* or division of society; and the heart is warmed, and the spirit touched by their delineation, exactly in the proportion in which we are familiar with the types by which they are represented. — When Burns, in his better days, walked out in a fine summer morning with Dugald Stewart, and the latter observed to him what a beauty the scattered cottages, with their white walls and curling smoke shining in the silent sun, imparted to the landscape, the peasant poet answered, that *he* felt that beauty ten times more strongly than his companion could do; and that it was necessary to be a cottager to know what pure and tranquil pleasures often nestled below those lowly roofs, or to read, in their external appearance, the signs of so many heartfelt and long-remembered enjoyments. In the same way, the humble and patient hopes — the depressing embarrassments — the little mortifications — the slender triumphs, and strange temptations which arise in middling life, and are the theme of Mr. Crabbe's finest and most touching re-

presentations — can only be guessed at by those who glitter in the higher walks of existence; while they must raise many a tumultuous throb and many a fond recollection in the breasts of those to whom they reflect so truly the image of their own estate, and reveal so clearly the secrets of their habitual sensations.

We cannot help thinking, therefore, that though such writings as are now before us must give great pleasure to all persons of taste and sensibility, they will give by far the greatest pleasure to those whose condition is least remote from that of the beings with whom they are occupied. But we think also, that it was wise and meritorious in Mr. Crabbe to occupy himself with such beings. In this country, there probably are not less than 300,000 persons who read for amusement or instruction, among the middling classes * of society. In the higher classes, there are not as many as 30,000. It is easy to see therefore which a poet should choose to please, for his own glory and emolument, and which he should wish to delight and amend, out of mere philanthropy. The fact too we believe is, that a great part of the larger body are to the full as well educated and as high-minded as the smaller; and, though their taste may not be so correct and fastidious, we are persuaded that their sensibility is greater. The misfortune is, to be sure, that they are extremely apt to affect the taste of their superiors, and to counterfeit even that absurd disdain of which they are themselves the objects; and that poets have generally thought it safest to invest their interesting characters with all the trappings of splendid fortune and high station, chiefly because those who know least about such matters think it unworthy to sympathise in the adventures of those who are without them! For our own parts, however, we are quite positive, not only that persons in middling life would naturally be most touched with the emotions that belong to their own condition, but that those emotions are, in themselves the most powerful, and consequently the best fitted for poetical or pathetic representation. Even with regard to the heroic and ambitious passions, as the vista is longer, which leads from humble privacy to the natural objects of such passions; so, the career is likely to be more impetuous, and its outset more marked by striking and contrasted emotions: — and as to all the more tender and less turbulent affections, upon which the beauty of the pathetic is altogether dependent, we apprehend it to be quite manifest, that their proper soil and *nidus* is the privacy and simplicity of humble life; — that their very elements are dissipated by the variety of objects that move for ever in the world of fashion; and their essence tainted by the cares and vanities that are diffused in the atmosphere of that lofty region. But we are wandering into a long dissertation, instead of making our readers acquainted with the book before us. The most satisfactory thing we can do, we believe, is to give them a plain account of its contents, with such quotations and remarks as may occur to us as we proceed.

The volume contains twenty-one tales; — the first of which is called "The Dumb Orators." This is not one of the most engaging; and is not judiciously placed at the portal, to tempt hesitating readers to go forward. The second, however, entitled "The Parting Hour," is of a far higher character, and contains some passages of great beauty and pathos. The story is simply that of a youth and a maiden in humble life, who had loved each other from their childhood, but were too poor to marry. The youth goes to the West Indies to push his fortune; but is captured by the Spaniards and carried to Mexico, where, in the course of time, though still sighing for his first love, he marries a Spanish girl, and lives twenty years with her and his children — he is then impressed, and carried round the world for twenty years longer; and is at last moved by an irresistible impulse, when old and shattered and lonely, to seek his native town, and the scene of his youthful vows. He comes and finds his Judith like himself in a state of widowhood, but still brooding, like himself, over the memory of their early love. She had waited twelve anxious years without tidings of him, and then married: and now when all passion, and fuel for passion, is extinguished within them, the memory of their young attachment

* By the middling classes we mean almost all those who are below the sphere of what is called fashionable or public life, and who do not aim at distinction or notoriety beyond the circle of their equals in fortune and situation.

endears them to each other, and they still cling together in sad and subdued affection, to the exclusion of all the rest of the world. The history of the growth and maturity of their innocent love is beautifully given: but we pass on to the scene of their parting.

"All things prepar'd, on the expected day
Was seen the vessel anchor'd in the bay.
From her would seamen in the evening come,
To take th' advent'rous *Allen* from his home;
With his own friends the final day he pass'd
And every painful hour, except the last,
The grieving Father urg'd the cheerful glass.
To make the moments with less sorrow pass;
Intent the Mother look'd upon her son,
And wish'd th' assent withdrawn, the deed undone;
The younger Sister, as he took his way,
Hung on his coat, and begg'd for more delay;
But his own *Judith* call'd him to the shore,
Whom he must meet—for they might meet no more!—
And there he found her—faithful, mournful, true,
Weeping and waiting for a last adieu!
The ebbing tide had left the sand, and there
Mov'd with slow steps the melancholy pair:
Sweet were the painful moments—but how sweet,
And without pain, when they again should meet!"
P. 29.

The sad and long-delayed return of this ardent adventurer is described in a tone of genuine pathos, and in some places with such truth and force of colouring, as to outdo the efforts of the first dramatic representation.

"But when return'd the Youth?—the *Youth* no more
Return'd exulting to his native shore!
But forty years were past; and then there came
A worn-out man, with wither'd limbs and lame!
Yes! old and griev'd, and trembling with decay,
Was *Allen* landing in his native bay:
In an autumnal eve he left the beach,
In such an eve he chanc'd the port to reach:
He was alone; he press'd the very place
Of the sad parting, of the last embrace:
There stood his parents, there retir'd the Maid,
So fond, so tender, and so much afraid;
And on that spot, through many a year, his mind
Turn'd mournful back, half sinking, half resign'd.
"No one was present; of its crew bereft,
A single boat was in the billows left;
Sent from some anchor'd vessel in the bay,
At the returning tide to sail away:
O'er the black stern the moonlight softly play'd,
The loosen'd foresail flapping in the shade:
All silent else on shore; but from the town
A drowsy peal of distant bells came down:
From the tall houses, here and there, a light
Serv'd some confus'd remembrance to excite:
'There,' he observ'd, and new emotions felt,
'Was my first home—and yonder *Judith* dwelt,' &c.
A swarthy matron he beheld, and thought
She might unfold the very truths he sought;
Confus'd and trembling, he the dame address'd:
'The *Booths!* yet live they?' pausing and oppress'd:
Then spake again:—'Is there no ancient man,
David his name?—assist me, if you can.—
Flemings there were!—and *Judith!* doth she live?'
The woman gaz'd, nor could an answer give;
Yet wond'ring stood, and all were silent by,
Feeling a strange and solemn sympathy.'"—Pp. 31, 32.

The meeting of the lovers is briefly told.

"But now a Widow, in a village near,
Chanc'd of the melancholy man to hear:
Old as she was, to *Judith*'s bosom came
Some strong emotions at the well-known name;
He was her much-lov'd *Allen!* she had stay'd
Ten troubled years, a sad afflicted maid," &c.
"The once-fond Lovers met: Not grief nor age,
Sickness or pain, their hearts could disengage:
Each had immediate confidence; a friend
Both now beheld, on whom they might depend:
'Now is there one to whom I can express
My nature's weakness, and my soul's distress.'"

There is something sweet and touching, and in a higher vein of poetry, in the story which he tells to Judith of all his adventures, and of those other ties, of which it still wrings her bosom to hear him speak.—We can afford but one little extract.

"There, hopeless ever to escape the land,
He to a Spanish maiden gave his hand;
In cottage shelter'd from the blaze of day,
He saw his happy infants round him play;
Where summer shadows made by lofty trees,
Wav'd o'er his seat, and sooth'd his reveries;
E'en then he thought of *England*, nor could sigh,
But his fond *Isabel* demanded 'Why?'
Griev'd by the story, she the sigh repaid,
And wept in pity for the English Maid."—Pp 35, 36.

The close is extremely beautiful, and leaves upon the mind just that impression of sadness which is both salutary and delightful, because it is akin to pity, and mingled with admiration and esteem.

"Thus silent, musing through the day, he sees
His children sporting by those lofty trees,
Their mother singing in the shady scene
Where the fresh springs burst o'er the lively green;—
So strong his eager fancy, he affrights
The faithful widow by its pow'rful flights;
For what disturbs him he aloud will tell,
And cry—''Tis she, my wife! my *Isabel!*'—
'Where are my children?'—*Judith* grieves to hear
How the soul works in sorrows so severe;—
Watch'd by her care, in sleep, his spirit takes
Its flight, and watchful finds her when he wakes.

"'Tis now her office; her attention see!
While her friend sleeps beneath that shading tree,
Careful, she guards him from the glowing heat,
And pensive muses at her *Allen*'s feet.
"And where is he? Ah! doubtless in those scenes
Of his best days, amid the vivid greens,
Fresh with unnumber'd rills, where ev'ry gale
Breathes the rich fragrance of the neighb'ring vale;
Smiles not his wife?—and listens as there comes
The night-bird's music from the thick'ning glooms?
And as he sits with all these treasures nigh,
Gleams not with fairy-light the phosphor fly,
When like a sparkling gem it wheels illumin'd by?
This is the joy that now so plainly speaks
In the warm transient flushing of his cheeks;
For he is list'ning to the fancied noise
Of his own children, eager in their joys!—
All this he feels; a dream's delusive bliss
Gives the expression, and the glow like this.
And now his *Judith* lays her knitting by,
These strong emotions in her friend to spy;
For she can fully of their nature deem——
But see! he breaks the long protracted theme,
And wakes and cries—'My God! 'twas but a dream!'"—Pp. 39, 40.

The third tale is "The Gentleman Farmer," and is of a coarser texture than that we have just been considering—though full of acute observation, and graphic delineation of ordinary characters. The hero is not a farmer turned gentleman, but a gentleman turned farmer—a conceited, active, talking, domineering sort of person—who plants and eats and drinks with great vigour—keeps a mistress, and speaks with audacious scorn of the tyranny of wives, and the impositions of priests, lawyers, and physicians. Being but a shallow fellow, however, at bottom, his confidence in his opinions declines gradually as his health decays; and, being seized with some maladies in his stomach, he ends with marrying his mistress, and submitting to be triply governed by three of her confederates; in the respective characters of a quack doctor, a methodist preacher, and a projecting land steward. We cannot afford any extracts from this performance.

The next, which is called "Procrastination," has something of the character of the "Parting Hour;" but more painful, and less refined. It is founded like it on the story of a betrothed youth and maiden, whose marriage is prevented by their poverty; and this youth, too, goes to pursue his fortune at sea; while the damsel awaits his return, with an old female relation at home. He is crossed with many disasters, and is not heard of for many years. In the mean time, the virgin gradually imbibes her aunt's paltry love for wealth and finery; and when she comes, after long, sordid expectation, to inherit her hoards, feels that those new tastes have supplanted every warmer emotion in her bosom; and, secretly hoping never more to see her youthful lover, gives herself up to comfortable gossiping and formal ostentatious devotion. At last, when she is set in her fine parlour, with her china and toys, and prayer-books around her, the impatient man bursts into her presence, and reclaims her vows! She answers coldly, that she has now done with the world, and only studies how to prepare to die! and exhorts him to betake himself to the same needful meditations. We shall give the conclusion of the scene in the author's own words. The faithful and indignant lover replies:—

"Heav'n's spouse thou art not: nor can I believe
That God accepts her, who will Man deceive:
True I am shatter'd, I have service seen,
And service done, and have in trouble been;
My cheek (it shames me not) has lost its red,
And the brown buff is o'er my features spread;
Perchance my speech is rude; for I among
Th' untam'd have been, in temper and in tongue;
But speak my fate! For these my sorrows past,
Time lost, youth fled, hope wearied, and at last
This doubt of thee—a childish thing to tell,
But certain truth—my very throat they swell;
They stop the breath, and but for shame could I
Give way to weakness, and with passion cry;
These are unmanly struggles, but I feel
This hour must end them, and perhaps will heal."—
"Here *Dinah* sigh'd as if afraid to speak—
And then repeated—'They were frail and weak;
His soul she lov'd; and hop'd he had the grace
To fix his thoughts upon a better place.'"
Pp. 72, 73.

Nothing can be more forcible or true to nature, than the description of the effect of this cold-blooded cant on the warm and unsuspecting nature of her disappointed suitor.

"She ceas'd:—With steady glance, as if to see
The very root of this hypocrisy,—
He her small fingers moulded in his hard
And bronz'd broad hand; then told her his regard,
His best respect were gone, but Love had still
Hold in his heart, and govern'd yet the will—
Or he would curse her!—Saying this, he threw
The hand in scorn away, and bade adieu
To every ling'ring hope, with every care in view.

"In health declining as in mind distress'd,
To some in power his troubles he confess'd,
And shares a parish-gift. At prayers he sees
The pious *Dinah* dropp'd upon her knees;
Thence as she walks the street with stately air,
As chance directs, oft meet the parted pair!
When he, with thickset coat of Badgeman's blue,
Moves near her shaded silk of changeful hue;
When his thin locks of grey approach her braid
(A costly purchase made in beauty's aid);
When his frank air, and his unstudied pace,
Are seen with her soft manner, air, and grace,
And his plain artless look with her sharp meaning face;
It might some wonder in a stranger move,
How these together could have talk'd of love!"

Pp. 73, 74.

"The Patron," which is next in order, is also very good; and contains specimens of very various excellence. The story is that of a young man of humble birth, who shows an early genius for poetry; and having been, with some inconvenience to his parents, provided with a frugal, but regular education, is at last taken notice of by a nobleman in the neighbourhood, who promises to promote him in the church, and invites him to pass an autumn with him at his seat in the country. Here the youth, in spite of the admirable admonitions of his father, is gradually overcome by a taste for elegant enjoyments, and allows himself to fall in love with the enchanting sister of his protector. When the family leave him with indifference to return to town, he feels the first pang of humiliation and disappointment; and afterwards, when he finds that all his noble friend's fine promises end in obtaining for him a poor drudging place in the Customs, he pines and pines till he falls into insanity; and recovers, only to die prematurely in the arms of his disappointed parents. We cannot make room for the history of the Poet's progress — the father's warnings — or the blandishments of the careless syren by whom he was enchanted—though all are excellent. We give however the scene of the breaking up of that enchantment; — a description which cannot fail to strike, if it had no other merit, from its mere truth and accuracy.

"Cold grew the foggy morn; the day was brief;
Loose on the cherry hung the crimson leaf:
The dew dwelt ever on the herb; the woods
Roar'd with strong blasts, with mighty showers the floods;
All green was vanish'd, save of pine and yew,
That still display'd their melancholy hue;
Save the green holly with its berries red,
And the green moss that o'er the gravel spread.
"To public views my Lord must soon attend;
And soon the Ladies — would they leave their friend?
The time was fix'd — approach'd — was near — was come!
The trying time that fill'd his soul with gloom;
Thoughtful our Poet in the morning rose,
And cried, 'One hour my fortune will disclose.'
"The morning meal was past; and all around
The mansion rang with each discordant sound;
Haste was in every foot, and every look
The trav'llers' joy for London-journey spoke;
Not so our Youth; whose feelings at the noise
Of preparation had no touch of joys;
He pensive stood, and saw each carriage drawn,
With lackies mounted, ready on the lawn:
The Ladies came; and *John* in terror threw
One painful glance, and then his eyes withdrew;
Not with such speed, but he in other eyes
With anguish read — 'I pity, but despise —
Unhappy boy! presumptuous scribbler! — you,
To dream such dreams — be sober, and adieu!'"

Pp. 93, 94.

"The Frank Courtship," which is the next in order, is rather in a merry vein; and contains even less than Mr. Crabbe's usual moderate allowance of incident. The whole of the story is, that the daughter of a rigid Quaker, having been educated from home, conceives a slight prejudice against the ungallant manners of the sect, and is prepared to be very contemptuous and uncomplying when her father proposes a sober youth of the persuasion for a husband: — but is so much struck with the beauty of his person, and the cheerful reasonableness of his deportment at their first interview, that she instantly yields her consent. There is an excellent description of the father and the unbending elders of his tribe; and some fine traits of natural coquetry.

"The Widow's Tale" is also rather of the facetious order. It contains the history of a farmer's daughter, who comes home from her boarding-school a great deal too fine to tolerate the gross habits, or submit to the filthy drudgery of her father's house; but is induced, by the warning history and sensible exhortations of a neighbouring widow, in whom she expected to find a sentimental companion, to reconcile herself to all those abominations, and marry a jolly young farmer in the neighbourhood. The account of her horrors, on first

coming down, is in Mr. Crabbe's best style of Dutch painting — a little coarse, and needlessly minute — but perfectly true, and marvellously coloured.

"Used to spare meals, dispos'd in manner pure,
Her father's kitchen she could ill endure;
Where by the steaming beef he hungry sat,
And laid at once a pound upon his plate;
Hot from the field, her eager brothers seized
An equal part, and hunger's rage appeased;—
When one huge wooden bowl before them stood,
Fill'd with huge balls of farinaceous food;
With bacon, mass saline, where never lean
Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen;
When from a single horn the party drew
Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;
She could not breathe; but, with a heavy sigh,
Rein'd the fair neck, and shut the offended eye;
She minc'd the sanguine flesh in frustums fine,
And wonder'd much to see the creatures dine."
Pp. 128, 129.

"The Lover's Journey" is a pretty fancy; and very well executed — at least as to the descriptions it contains. — A lover takes a long ride to see his mistress; and passing, in full hope and joy, through a barren and fenny country, finds beauty in every thing. Being put out of humour, however, by missing the lady at the end of this stage, he proceeds through a lovely landscape, and finds every thing ugly and disagreeable. At last he meets his fair one — is reconciled — and returns along with her; when the landscape presents neither beauty nor deformity; and excites no emotion whatever in a mind engrossed with more lively sensations. There is nothing in this volume, or perhaps in any part of Mr. Crabbe's writings, more exquisite than some of the descriptions in this story. The following, though by no means the best, is too characteristic of the author to be omitted: —

" First o'er a barren heath beside the coast
Orlando rode, and joy began to boast.
—" 'This neat low gorse,' said he, 'with golden bloom
Delights each sense, is beauty, is perfume;
And this gay ling, with all its purple flowers,
A man at leisure might admire for hours;
This green-fring'd cup-moss has a scarlet tip,
That yields to nothing but my *Laura*'s lip;
And then how fine this herbage! men may say
A heath is barren: nothing is so gay.'
" Onward he went, and fiercer grew the heat,
Dust rose in clouds beneath the horse's feet;
For now he pass'd through lanes of burning sand,
Bounds to thin crops or yet uncultur'd land;
Where the dark poppy flourish'd on the dry
And sterile soil, and mock'd the thin-set rye.
" The Lover rode, as hasty lovers ride,
And reach'd a common pasture wild and wide;
Small black-legg'd sheep devour with hunger keen
The meagre herbage; fleshless, lank and lean:
He saw some scatter'd hovels; turf was pil'd
In square brown stacks; a prospect bleak and wild!
A mill, indeed, was in the centre found,
With short sear herbage withering all around;
A smith's black shed oppos'd a wright's long shop,
And join'd an inn where humble travellers stop."
Pp. 176, 177.

The features of the fine country are less perfectly drawn: but what, indeed, could be made of the vulgar fine country of *England?* If Mr. Crabbe had had the good fortune to live among *our* Highland hills, and lakes, and upland woods—our living floods sweeping through forests of pine — our lonely vales and rough copse-covered cliffs; what a delicious picture would his unrivalled powers have enabled him to give to the world! — But we have no right to complain, while we have such pictures as this of a group of Gipsies. It is evidently finished *con amore;* and does appear to us to be absolutely perfect, both in its moral and its physical expression.

"Again the country was enclos'd; a wide
And sandy road has banks on either side;
Where, lo! a hollow on the left appear'd,
And there a Gipsy-tribe their tent had rear'd;
'Twas open spread, to catch the morning sun,
And they had now their early meal begun,
When two brown Boys just left their grassy seat,
The early Trav'ller with their prayers to greet:
While yet *Orlando* held his pence in hand,
He saw their sister on her duty stand;
Some twelve years old, demure, affected, sly,
Prepar'd the force of early powers to try:
Sudden a look of languor he descries,
And well-feign'd apprehension in her eyes;
Train'd, but yet savage, in her speaking face,
He mark'd the features of her vagrant race;
When a light laugh and roguish leer express'd
The vice implanted in her youthful breast!
Within, the Father, who from fences nigh
Had brought the fuel for the fire's supply,
Watch'd now the feeble blaze, and stood dejected by.
On ragged rug, just borrow'd from the bed,
And by the hand of coarse indulgence fed,
In dirty patchwork negligently dress'd,
Reclin'd the Wife, an infant at her breast;
In her wild face some touch of grace remain'd,
Of vigour palsied and of beauty stain'd;
Her blood-shot eyes on her unheeding mate,
Were wrathful turn'd, and seem'd her wants to state.

Cursing his tardy aid — her Mother there
With Gipsy-state engrossed the only chair;
Solemn and dull her look: with such she stands,
And reads the Milk-maid's fortune, in her hands,
Tracing the lines of life; assum'd through years,
Each feature now the steady falsehood wears;
With hard and savage eye she views the food,
And grudging pinches their intruding brood!
Last in the group, the worn-out Grandsire sits,
Neglected, lost, and living but by fits;
Useless, despis'd, his worthless labours done,
And half protected by the vicious Son,
Who half supports him! He with heavy glance,
Views the young ruffians who around him dance;
And, by the sadness in his face, appears
To trace the progress of their future years;
Through what strange course of misery, vice, deceit,
Must wildly wander each unpractis'd cheat;
What shame and grief, what punishment and pain,
Sport of fierce passions, must each child sustain —
Ere they like him approach their latter end,
Without a hope, a comfort, or a friend!"

Pp. 180—182.

The next story, which is entitled "Edward Shore," also contains many passages of exquisite beauty. The hero is a young man of aspiring genius and enthusiastic temper, with an ardent love of virtue, but no settled principles either of conduct or opinion. He first conceives an attachment for an amiable girl, who is captivated with his conversation;—but being too poor to marry, soon comes to spend more of his time in the family of an elderly sceptic (though we really see no object in giving him that character) of his acquaintance, who had recently married a young wife, and placed unbounded confidence in her virtue, and the honour of his friend. In a moment of temptation, they abuse his confidence. The husband renounces him with dignified composure; and he falls at once from the romantic pride of his virtue. He then seeks the company of the dissipated and gay; and ruins his health and fortune, without regaining his tranquillity. When in gaol, and miserable, he is relieved by an unknown hand; and traces the benefaction to the friend whose former kindness he had so ill repaid. This humiliation falls upon his proud spirit and shattered nerves with an overwhelming force; and his reason fails beneath it. He is for some time a raving maniac; and then falls into a state of gay and compassionable imbecility, which is described with inimitable beauty in the close of this story. We can afford but a few extracts. The nature of the seductions which led to his first fatal lapse are well intimated in the following short passage: —

"Then as the Friend repos'd, the younger Pair
Sat down to cards, and play'd beside his chair;
Till he awaking, to his books applied,
Or heard the music of th' obedient Bride;
If mild th' evening, in the fields they stray'd,
And their own flock with partial eye survey'd;
But oft the Husband, to indulgence prone,
Resum'd his book, and bade them walk alone.
"This was obey'd; and oft when this was done
They calmly gaz'd on the declining sun;
In silence saw the glowing landscape fade,
Or, sitting, sang beneath the arbour's shade:
Till rose the moon, and on each youthful face,
Shed a soft beauty, and a dangerous grace."

Pp. 198, 199.

The ultimate downfall of this lofty mind, with its agonizing gleams of transitory recollection, form a picture, than which we do not know if the whole range of our poetry, rich as it is in representations of disordered intellect, furnishes any thing more touching, or delineated with more truth and delicacy.

"Harmless at length th' unhappy man was found,
The spirit settled, but the reason drown'd;
And all the dreadful tempest died away,
To the dull stillness of the misty day!
"And now his freedom he attain'd — if free
The lost to reason, truth, and hope, can be;
The playful children of the place he meets;
Playful with them he rambles through the streets;
In all they need, his stronger arm he lends,
And his lost mind to these approving friends,
"That gentle Maid, whom once the Youth had lov'd,
Is now with mild religious pity mov'd;
Kindly she chides his boyish flights, while he
Will for a moment fix'd and pensive be;
And as she trembling speaks, his lively eyes,
Explore her looks, he listens to her sighs;
Charm'd by her voice, th' harmonious sounds invade
His clouded mind, and for a time persuade:
Like a pleas'd Infant, who has newly caught
From the maternal glance, a gleam of thought;
He stands enrapt, the half-known voice to hear,
And starts, half-conscious, at the falling tear!
"Rarely from town, nor then unwatch'd, he goes,
In darker mood, as if to hide his woes;
But soon returning, with impatience seeks
His youthful friends, and shouts, and sings, and speaks;
Speaks a wild speech, with action all as wild —
The children's leader, and himself a child;
He spins their top, or, at their bidding bends
His back, while o'er it leap his laughing friends;

Simple and weak, he acts the boy once more,
And heedless children call him *Silly Shore*."
Pp. 206, 207.

"Squire Thomas" is not nearly so interesting. This is the history of a mean domineering spirit, who, having secured the succession of a rich relation by assiduous flattery, looks about for some obsequious and yielding fair one, from whom he may exact homage in his turn. He thinks he has found such a one in a lowly damsel in his neighbourhood, and marries her without much premeditation; — when he discovers, to his consternation, not only that she has the spirit of a virago, but that she and her family have decoyed him into the match, to revenge or indemnify themselves for his having run away with the whole inheritance of their common relative. She hopes to bully him into a separate maintenance — but his avarice refuses to buy his peace at such a price; and they continue to live together, on a very successful system of mutual tormenting.

"Jesse and Colin" pleases us much better. Jesse is the orphan of a poor clergyman, who goes, upon her father's death, to live with a rich old lady who had been his friend; and Colin is a young farmer, whose father had speculated away a handsome property; and who, though living in a good degree by his own labour, yet wished the damsel (who half wished it also) to remain and share his humble lot. The rich lady proves to be suspicious, overbearing, and selfish; and sets Jesse upon the ignoble duty of acting the spy and informer over the other dependents of her household; on the delineation of whose characters Mr. Crabbe has lavished a prodigious power of observation and correct description: — but this not suiting her pure and ingenuous mind, she suddenly leaves the splendid mansion, and returns to her native village, where Colin and his mother soon persuade her to form one of their happy family. There is a great deal of good-heartedness in this tale, and a kind of moral beauty, which has lent more than usual elegance to the simple pictures it presents. We are tempted to extract a good part of the *denouement*.

"The pensive *Colin* in his garden stray'd,
But felt not then the beauties it display'd;
There many a pleasant object met his view,
A rising wood of oaks behind it grew;
A stream ran by it, and the village-green
And public road were from the garden seen;
Save where the pine and larch the bound'ry made,
And on the rose beds threw a soft'ning shade.
"The Mother sat beside the garden-door,
Dress'd as in times ere she and hers were poor;
The broad-lac'd cap was known in ancient days,
When Madam's dress compell'd the village praise;
And still she look'd as in the times of old;
Ere his last farm the erring husband sold;
While yet the mansion stood in decent state,
And paupers waited at the well-known gate.
"'Alas! my Son!' the Mother cried, 'and why
That silent grief and oft-repeated sigh?
Fain would I think that *Jesse* still may come
To share the comforts of our rustic home:
She surely lov'd thee; I have seen the maid,
When thou hast kindly brought the Vicar aid —
When thou hast eas'd his bosom of its pain,
Oh! I have seen her — she will come again.'
"The Matron ceas'd; and *Colin* stood the while
Silent, but striving for a grateful smile;
He then replied — 'Ah! sure had *Jesse* stay'd,
And shar'd the comforts of our sylvan shade,' &c.
"Sighing he spake — but hark! he hears th' approach
Of rattling wheels! and lo! the evening-coach;
Once more the movement of the horses' feet
Makes the fond heart with strong emotion beat:
Faint were his hopes, but ever had the sight
Drawn him to gaze beside his gate at night;
And when with rapid wheels it hurried by,
He griev'd his parent with a hopeless sigh;
And could the blessing have been bought — what sum
Had he not offer'd, to have *Jesse* come?
She came! — he saw her bending from the door,
Her face, her smile, and he beheld no more;
Lost in his joy! — The mother lent her aid
T' assist and to detain the willing Maid;
Who thought her late, her present home to make,
Sure of a welcome for the Vicar's sake;
But the good Parent was so pleas'd, so kind,
So pressing *Colin*, she so much inclin'd,
That night advanc'd; and then so long detain'd
No wishes to depart she felt, or feign'd;
Yet long in doubt she stood, and then perforce remain'd.
"In the mild evening, in the scene around,
The Maid, now free, peculiar beauties found;
Blended with village-tones, the evening gale
Gave the sweet night-bird's warblings to the vale;
The youth embolden'd, yet abash'd, now told
His fondest wish, nor found the Maiden cold," &c.
Pp. 240, 241.

"The Struggles of Conscience," though visibly laboured, and, we should suspect, a favourite with the author, pleases us less than any tale in the volume. It is a long account of a low base fellow, who rises by mean and

dishonourable arts to a sort of opulence; and without ever committing any flagrant crime, sullies his mind with all sorts of selfish, heartless, and unworthy acts, till he becomes a prey to a kind of languid and loathsome remorse.

"The Squire and the Priest" we do not like much better. A free living and free thinking squire had been galled by the public rebukes of his unrelenting pastor, and breeds up a dependent relation of his own to succeed to his charge. The youth drinks and jokes with his patron to his heart's content, during the progress of his education; — but just as the old censor dies, falls into the society of Saints, becomes a rigid and intolerant Methodist, and converts half the parish, to the infinite rage of his patron, and his own ultimate affliction.

"The Confidant" is more interesting; though not altogether pleasing. A fair one makes a slip at the early age of fifteen, which is concealed from every one but her mother, and a sentimental friend, from whom she could conceal nothing. Her after life is pure and exemplary; and at twenty-five she is married to a worthy man, with whom she lives in perfect innocence and concord for many happy years. At last, the confidant of her childhood, whose lot has been less prosperous, starts up and importunes her for money — not forgetting to hint at the fatal secret of which she is the depository. After agonizing and plundering her for years, she at last comes and settles herself in her house, and embitters her whole existence by her selfish threats and ungenerous extortions. The husband, who had been greatly disturbed at the change in his wife's temper and spirits, at last accidentally overhears enough to put him in possession of the fact; and resolving to forgive a fault so long past, and so well repaired, takes occasion to intimate his knowledge of it, and his disdain of the false confidant, in an ingenious apologue — which, however, is plain enough to drive the pestilent visitor from his house, and to restore peace and confidence to the bosom of his grateful wife.

"Resentment" is one of the pieces in which Mr. Crabbe has exercised his extraordinary powers of giving pain — though not gratuitously in this instance, nor without inculcating a strong lesson of forgiveness and compassion. A middle-aged merchant marries a lady of good fortune, and persuades her to make it all over to him when he is on the eve of bankruptcy. He is reduced to utter beggary; and his wife, bitterly and deeply resenting the wrong he had done her, renounces all connection with him, and endures her own reverses with magnanimity. At last a distant relation leaves her his fortune; and she returns to the enjoyment of moderate wealth, and the exercise of charity — to all but her miserable husband. Broken by age and disease, he now begs the waste sand from the stone-gutters, and sells it on an ass through the streets: —

—— "And from each trifling gift
Made shift to live — and wretched was the shift."

The unrelenting wife descries him creeping through the wet at this miserable employment; but still withholds all relief; in spite of the touching entreaties of her compassionate handmaid, whose nature is as kind and yielding as that of her mistress is hard and inflexible. Of all the pictures of mendicant poverty that have ever been brought forward in prose or verse — in charity sermons or seditious harangues — we know of none half so moving or complete — so powerful and so true — as is contained in the following passages: —

"A dreadful winter came; each day severe,
Misty when mild, and icy-cold when clear;
And still the humble dealer took his load,
Returning slow, and shivering on the road:
The Lady, still relentless, saw him come,
And said, — 'I wonder, has the Wretch a home!'
'A hut! a hovel!' — 'Then his fate appears
To suit his crime.' — 'Yes, Lady, not his years; —
No! nor his sufferings — nor that form decay'd.' —
'The snow,' quoth *Susan*, "falls upon his bed —
It blows beside the thatch — it melts upon his head.' —
''Tis weakness, child, for grieving guilt to feel.'
'Yes, but he never sees a wholesome meal;
Through his bare dress appears his shrivel'd skin,
And ill he fares without, and worse within:
With that weak body, lame, diseas'd, and slow,
What cold, pain, peril, must the suff'rer know! —
Oh! how those flakes of snow their entrance win
Through the poor rags, and keep the frost within!
His very heart seems frozen as he goes,
Leading that starv'd companion of his woes:
He tried to pray — his lips, I saw them move,
And he so turn'd his piteous looks above;
But the fierce wind the willing heart oppos'd,
And, ere he spoke, the lips in misery clos'd!
When reach'd his home, to what a cheerless fire
And chilling bed will those cold limbs retire!
Yet ragged, wretched as it is, that bed
Takes half the space of his contracted shed;

I saw the thorns beside the narrow grate,
With straw collected in a putrid state;
There will he, kneeling, strive the fire to raise,
And *that* will warm him rather than the blaze;
The sullen, smoky blaze, that cannot last
One moment after his attempt is past:
And I so warmly and so purely laid,
To sink to rest! — indeed, I am afraid!'"

Pp. 320—322.

The Lady at last is moved, by this pleading pity, to send him a little relief; but has no sooner dismissed her delighted messenger, than she repents of her weakness, and begins to harden her heart again by the recollection of his misconduct.

"Thus fix'd, she heard not her Attendant glide
With soft low step — till, standing by her side,
The trembling Servant gasp'd for breath, and shed
Relieving tears, then utter'd — 'He is dead!'
"'Dead!' said the startled Lady. 'Yes, he fell
Close at the door where he was wont to dwell.
There his sole friend, the Ass, was standing by,
Half dead himself, to see his Master die.'"

Pp. 324, 325.

"The Convert" is rather dull — though it teaches a lesson that may be useful in these fanatic times. John Dighton was bred a blackguard; and we have here a most lively and complete description of the items that go to the composition of that miscellaneous character; but being sore reduced by a long fever, falls into the hands of the Methodists, and becomes an exemplary convert. He is then set up by the congregation in a small stationer's shop; and, as he begins to thrive in business, adds worldly literature to the evangelical tracts which composed his original stock-in-trade. This scandalises the brethren; and John, having no principles or knowledge, falls out with the sect, and can never settle in the creed of any other; and so lives perplexed and discontented — and dies in agitation and terror.

"The Brothers" restores us again to human sympathies. The characters, though humble, are admirably drawn, and the baser of them, we fear, the most strikingly natural. An open-hearted generous sailor had a poor, sneaking, cunning, selfish brother, to whom he remitted all his prize-money, and gave all the arrears of his pay — receiving, in return, vehement professions of gratitude, and false protestations of regard. At last, the sailor is disabled in action, and discharged; just as his heartless brother has secured a small office by sycophancy, and made a prudent marriage with a congenial temper. He seeks the shelter of his brother's house as freely as he would have given it; and does not at first perceive the coldness of his reception. — But mortifications grow upon him day by day. His grog is expensive, and his pipe makes the wife sick; then his voice is so loud, and his manners so rough, that her friends cannot visit her if he appears at table! So he is banished by degrees to a garret; where he falls sick, and has no consolation but in the kindness of one of his nephews, a little boy, who administers to his comforts, and listens to his stories with a delighted attention. This too, however, is at last interdicted by his hard-hearted parents; and the boy is obliged to steal privately to his disconsolate uncle. One day his father catches him at his door; and, after beating him back, proceeds to deliver a severe rebuke to his brother for encouraging the child in disobedience — when he finds the unconscious culprit released by death from his despicable insults and reproaches! The great art of the story consists in the plausible excuses with which the ungrateful brother always contrives to cover his wickedness. This cannot be exemplified in an extract; but we shall give a few lines as a specimen.

"Cold as he grew, still *Isaac* strove to show,
By well-feign'd care, that cold he could not grow;
And when he saw his Brother look distress'd,
He strove some petty comforts to suggest;
On his Wife solely their neglect to lay,
And then t' excuse it as a woman's way;
He too was chidden when her rules he broke,
And then she sicken'd at the scent of smoke!
"*George*, though in doubt, was still consol'd to find
His Brother wishing to be reckon'd kind:
That *Isaac* seem'd concern'd by his distress,
Gave to his injur'd feelings some redress;
But none he found dispos'd to lend an ear
To stories, all were once intent to hear!
Except his Nephew, seated on his knee,
He found no creature car'd about the sea;
But *George* indeed — for *George* they call'd the boy,
When his good Uncle was their boast and joy —
Would listen long, and would contend with sleep,
To hear the woes and wonders of the deep:
Till the fond Mother cried — 'That man will teach
The foolish boy his loud and boisterous speech.'
So judg'd the Father — and the boy was taught
To shun the Uncle whom his love had sought."

Pp. 368, 369.

"At length he sicken'd, and this duteous child
Watch'd o'er his sickness, and his pains beguil'd;
The Mother bade him from the loft refrain,
But, though with caution, yet he went again;
And now his tales the Sailor feebly told,
His heart was heavy, and his limbs were cold!
The tender boy came often to entreat
His good kind friend would of his presents eat:
Purloin'd or purchas'd, for he saw, with shame,
The food untouch'd that to his Uncle came;
Who, sick in body and in mind, receiv'd
The Boy's indulgence, gratified and griev'd!
"Once in a week the Father came to say,
'*George*, are you ill?'—and hurried him away;
Yet to his wife would on their duties dwell,
And often cry, 'Do use my brother well:'
And something kind, no question, *Isaac* meant,
And took vast credit for the vague intent.
"But, truly kind, the gentle Boy essay'd
To cheer his Uncle, firm, although afraid:
But now the Father caught him at the door,
And, swearing —— yes, the Man in Office swore,
And cried, 'Away?—How! Brother, I'm surpris'd,
That one so old can be so ill advis'd,'" &c.
Pp. 370, 371.

After the catastrophe, he endures severe remorse and anguish.

"He takes his Son, and bids the Boy unfold
All the good Uncle of his feelings told,
All he lamented—and the ready tear
Falls as he listens, sooth'd and griev'd, to hear,
"'Did he not curse me, Child?'—'He never curs'd,
But could not breathe, and said his heart would burst:'—
'And so will mine!'—'Then, Father, you must pray:
My Uncle said it took his pains away.'"—P. 374.

The last tale in the volume, entitled "The Learned Boy," is not the most interesting in the collection; though it is not in the least like what its title would lead us to expect. It is the history of a poor, weakly, paltry lad who is sent up from the country to be a clerk in town; and learns by slow degrees to affect freethinking, and to practise dissipation. Upon the tidings of which happy conversion his father, a worthy old farmer, orders him down again to the country, where he harrows up the soul of his pious grandmother by his infidel prating—and his father reforms him at once by burning his idle books, and treating him with a vigorous course of horsewhipping. There is some humour in this tale;—and a great deal of nature and art, especially in the delineation of this slender clerk's gradual corruption—and in the constant and constitutional predominance of weakness and folly in all his vice and virtue—his piety and profaneness.

We have thus gone through the better part of this volume with a degree of minuteness for which we are not sure that even our poetical readers will all be disposed to thank us. But considering Mr. Crabbe as, upon the whole, the most original writer who has ever come before us; and being at the same time of opinion, that his writings are destined to a still more extensive popularity than they have yet obtained, we could not resist the temptation of contributing our little aid to the fulfilment of that destiny. It is chiefly for the same reason that we have directed our remarks rather to the moral than the literary qualities of his works;—to his genius at least, rather than his taste—and to his thoughts rather than his figures of speech. By far the most remarkable thing in his writings, is the prodigious mass of original observations and reflections they every where exhibit; and that extraordinary power of conceiving and representing an imaginary object, whether physical or intellectual, with such a rich and complete accompaniment of circumstances and details, as few ordinary observers either perceive or remember in realities;—a power which, though often greatly misapplied, must for ever entitle him to the very first rank among descriptive poets; and when directed to worthy objects, to a rank inferior to none in the highest departments of poetry.

In such an author, the attributes of style and versification may fairly be considered as secondary;—and yet, if we were to go minutely into them, they would afford room for a still longer chapter than that which we are now concluding. He cannot be said to be uniformly, or even generally, an elegant writer. His style is not dignified—and neither very pure nor very easy. Its characters are force, precision, and familiarity;—now and then obscure—sometimes vulgar, and sometimes quaint. With a great deal of tenderness, and occasional fits of the sublime of despair and agony, there is a want of habitual fire, and of a tone of enthusiasm in the general tenor of his writings. He seems to recollect rather than invent; and frequently brings forward his statements more in the temper of a cautious and conscientious witness, than of a fervent

orator or impassioned spectator. His similes are almost all elaborate and ingenious, and rather seem to be furnished from the efforts of a fanciful mind, than to be exhaled by the spontaneous ferment of a heated imagination. His versification again is frequently harsh and heavy, and his diction flat and prosaic;—both seeming to be altogether neglected in his zeal for the accuracy and complete rendering of his conceptions. These defects too are infinitely greater in his recent than in his early compositions. "The Village" is written, upon the whole, in a flowing and sonorous strain of versification; and "Sir Eustace Grey," though a late publication, is in general remarkably rich and melodious. It is chiefly in his narratives and curious descriptions that these faults of diction and measures are conspicuous. Where he is warmed by his subject, and becomes fairly indignant or pathetic, his language is often very sweet and beautiful. He has no fixed system or manner of versification; but mixes several very opposite styles, as it were by accident, and not in general very judiciously;—what is peculiar to himself is not good, and strikes us as being both abrupt and affected.

He may profit, if he pleases, by these hints—and, if he pleases, he may laugh at them. It is no great matter. If he will only write a few more Tales of the kind we have suggested at the beginning of this article, we shall engage for it that he shall have our praises—and those of more fastidious critics—whatever be the qualities of his style or versification.

GEORGE CRABBE.

(July, 1819.)

Tales of the Hall. By the Rev. George Crabbe. 2 vols. 8vo. Pp. 670. London: 1819.

Mr. Crabbe is the greatest *mannerist*, perhaps, of all our living poets; and it is rather unfortunate that the most prominent features of his mannerism are not the most pleasing. The homely, quaint, and prosaic style—the flat, and often broken and jingling versification—the eternal full-lengths of low and worthless characters—with their accustomed garnishings of sly jokes and familiar moralizing—are all on the surface of his writings; and are almost unavoidably the things by which we are first reminded of him, when we take up any of his new productions. Yet they are *not* the things that truly constitute his peculiar manner; nor give that character by which he will, and ought to be, remembered with future generations. It is plain enough, indeed, that these are things that will make nobody remembered—and can never, therefore, be really characteristic of some of the most original and powerful poetry that the world has ever seen.

Mr. C., accordingly, has other gifts; and those not less peculiar or less strongly marked than the blemishes with which they are contrasted;—an unrivalled and almost magical power of observation, resulting in descriptions so true to nature as to strike us rather as transcripts than imitations—an anatomy of character and feeling not less exquisite and searching—an occasional touch of matchless tenderness—and a deep and dreadful pathetic, interspersed by fits, and strangely interwoven with the most minute and humble of his details. Add to all this the sure and profound sagacity of the remarks with which he every now and then startles us in the midst of very unambitious discussions;—and the weight and terseness of the maxims which he drops, like oracular responses, on occasions that give no promise of such a revelation;—and last, though not least, that sweet and seldom sounded chord of Lyrical inspiration, the lightest touch of which instantly charms away all harshness from his numbers, and all lowness from his themes—and at once exalts him to a level with the most energetic and inventive poets of his age.

These, we think, are the true characteristics of the genius of this great writer; and it is in their mixture with the oddities and defects to which we have already alluded, that the peculiarity of his manner seems to us substantially to consist. The ingredients may all of them be found, we suppose, in other writers; but their combination—in such proportions at least as occur in this instance—may safely be pronounced to be original.

Extraordinary, however, as this combination must appear, it does not seem very difficult to conceive in what way it may have arisen; and,

so far from regarding it as a proof of singular humorousness, caprice, or affectation in the individual, we are rather inclined to hold that something approaching to it must be the natural result of a long habit of observation in a man of genius, possessed of that temper and disposition which is the usual accompaniment of such a habit; and that the same strangely compounded and apparently incongruous assemblage of themes and sentiments would be frequently produced under such circumstances — if authors had oftener the courage to write from their own impressions, and had less fear of the laugh or wonder of the more shallow and barren part of their readers.

A great talent for observation, and a delight in the exercise of it — the power and the practice of dissecting and disentangling that subtle and complicated tissue, of habit, and self-love, and affection, which constitute human character — seems to us, in all cases, to imply a contemplative, rather than an active disposition. It can only exist, indeed, where there is a good deal of social sympathy; for, without this, the occupation could excite no interest, and afford no satisfaction — but only such a measure and sort of sympathy as is gratified by being a spectator, and not an actor on the great theatre of life — and leads its possessor rather to look with eagerness on the feats and the fortunes of others, than to take a share for himself in the game that is played before him. Some stirring and vigorous spirits there are, no doubt, in which this taste and talent is combined with a more thorough and effective sympathy; and leads to the study of men's characters by an actual and hearty participation in their various passions and pursuits; — though it is to be remarked, that when such persons embody their observations in writing, they will generally be found to exhibit their characters in action, rather than to describe them in the abstract; and to let their various personages disclose themselves and their peculiarities, as it were spontaneously, and without help or preparation in their ordinary conduct and speech — of all which we have a very splendid and striking example in the "Tales of My Landlord," and the other pieces of that extraordinary writer. In the common case, however, a great observer, we believe, will be found, pretty certainly, to be a person of a shy and retiring temper — who does not mingle enough with the people he surveys, to be heated with their passions, or infected with their delusions — and who has usually been led, indeed, to take up the office of a looker on, from some little infirmity of nerves, or weakness of spirits, which has unfitted him from playing a more active part on the busy scene of existence.

Now, it is very obvious, we think, that this contemplative turn, and this alienation from the vulgar pursuits of mankind, must, in the first place, produce a great contempt for most of those pursuits, and the objects they seek to obtain — a levelling of the factitious distinctions which human pride and vanity have established in the world, and a mingled scorn and compassion for the lofty pretensions under which men so often disguise the nothingness of their chosen occupations. When the many-coloured scene of life, with all its petty agitations, its shifting pomps, and perishable passions, is surveyed by one who does not mix in its business, it is impossible that it should not appear a very pitiable and almost ridiculous affair; or that the heart should not echo back the brief and emphatic exclamation of the mighty dramatist —

> —— "Life's a poor player,
> Who frets and struts his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more!" —

Or the more sarcastic amplification of it, in the words of our great moral poet —

> "Behold the Child, by Nature's kindly law,
> Pleas'd with a rattle, tickl'd with a straw!
> Some livelier plaything gives our Youth delight,
> A little louder, but as empty quite:
> Scarfs, garters, gold our riper years engage;
> And beads and prayer-books are the *toys* of Age!
> Pleas'd with this bauble still as that before,
> Till tir'd we sleep — and *Life's poor play is o'er!*"

This is the more solemn view of the subject: — but the first fruits of observation are most commonly found to issue in satire — the unmasking the vain pretenders to wisdom, and worth, and happiness, with whom society is infested, and holding up to the derision of mankind those meannesses of the great, those miseries of the fortunate, and those

> "Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise,"

which the eye of a dispassionate observer so quickly detects under the glittering exterior

by which they would fain be disguised — and which bring pretty much to a level the intellect, and morals, and enjoyments of the great mass of mankind.

This misanthropic end has unquestionably been by far the most common result of a habit of observation; and that in which its effects have most generally terminated: — yet we cannot bring ourselves to think that it is their just or natural termination. Something, no doubt, will depend on the temper of the individual, and the proportions in which the gall and the milk of human kindness have been originally mingled in his composition. — Yet satirists, we think, have not in general been ill-natured persons — and we are inclined rather to ascribe this limited and uncharitable application of their powers of observation to their love of fame and popularity, — which are well known to be best secured by successful ridicule or invective — or, quite as probably, indeed, to the narrowness and insufficiency of the observations themselves, and the imperfection of their talents for their due conduct and extension. It is certain, at least, we think, that the satirist makes use but of half the discoveries of the observer; and teaches but half — and the worser half — of the lessons which may be deduced from his occupation. He puts down, indeed, the proud pretensions of the great and arrogant, and levels the vain distinctions which human ambition has established among the brethren of mankind; — he

"Bares the mean heart that lurks beneath a Star,"

— and destroys the illusions which would limit our sympathy to the forward and figuring persons of this world — the favourites of fame and fortune. But the true result of observation should be, not so much to cast down the proud, as to raise up the lowly; — not so much to diminish our sympathy with the powerful and renowned, as to extend it to all, who in humbler conditions, have the same, or still higher claims on our esteem or affection. — It is not surely the natural consequence of learning to judge truly of the characters of men, that we should despise or be indifferent about them all; — and, though we have learned to see through the false glare which plays round the envied summits of existence, and to know how little dignity or happiness, or worth, or wisdom, may sometimes belong to the possessors of power, and fortune, and learning, and renown, — it does not follow, by any means, that we should look upon the whole of human life as a mere deceit and imposture, or think the concerns of our species fit subjects only for scorn and derision. Our promptitude to admire and to envy will indeed be corrected, our enthusiasm abated, and our distrust of appearances increased; — but the sympathies and affections of our nature will continue, and be better directed — our love of our kind will not be diminished — and our indulgence for their faults and follies, if we read our lesson aright, will be signally strengthened and confirmed. The true and proper effect, therefore, of a habit of observation, and a thorough and penetrating knowledge of human character, will be, not to extinguish our sympathy, but to extend it — to turn, no doubt, many a throb of admiration, and many a sigh of love, into a smile of derision or of pity; but at the same time to reveal much that commands our homage and excites our affection, in those humble and unexplored regions of the heart and understanding, which never engage the attention of the incurious, — and to bring the whole family of mankind nearer to a level, by finding out latent merits as well as latent defects in all its members, and compensating the flaws that are detected in the boasted ornaments of life, by bringing to light the richness and the lustre that sleep in the mines beneath its surface.

We are afraid some of our readers may not at once perceive the application of these profound remarks to the subject immediately before us. But there are others, we doubt not, who do not need to be told that they are intended to explain how Mr. Crabbe, and other persons with the same gift of observation, should so often busy themselves with what may be considered as low and vulgar characters; and, declining all dealings with heroes and heroic topics, should not only venture to seek for an interest in the concerns of ordinary mortals, but actually intersperse small pieces of ridicule with their undignified pathos, and endeavour to make their readers look on their books with the same mingled feelings of compassion and amusement, with which — unnatural as it may appear to the readers of poetry — they, and all judicious observers

actually look upon human life and human nature. This, we are persuaded, is the true key to the greater part of the peculiarities of the author before us; and though we have dissertated upon it a little longer than was necessary, we really think it may enable our readers to comprehend him, and our remarks on him, something better than they could have done without it.

There is, as everybody must have felt, a strange mixture of satire and sympathy in all his productions — a great kindliness and compassion for the errors and sufferings of our poor human nature, but a strong distrust of its heroic virtues and high pretensions. His heart is always open to pity, and all the milder emotions — but there is little aspiration after the grand and sublime of character, nor very much encouragement for raptures and ecstasies of any description. These, he seems to think, are things rather too fine for the said poor human nature: and that, in our low and erring condition, it is a little ridiculous to pretend either to very exalted and immaculate virtue, or very pure and exquisite happiness. He not only never meddles, therefore, with the delicate distresses and noble fires of the heroes and heroines of tragic and epic fable, but may generally be detected indulging in a lurking sneer at the pomp and vanity of all such superfine imaginations — and turning from them, to draw men in their true postures and dimensions, and with all the imperfections that actually belong to their condition: — the prosperous and happy overshadowed with passing clouds of *ennui*, and disturbed with little flaws of bad humour and discontent — the great and wise beset at times with strange weaknesses and meannesses and paltry vexations — and even the most virtuous and enlightened falling far below the standard of poetical perfection — and stooping every now and then to paltry jealousies and prejudices — or sinking into shabby sensualities — or meditating on their own excellence and importance, with a ludicrous and lamentable anxiety.

This is one side of the picture; and characterizes sufficiently the satirical vein of our author: but the other is the most extensive and important. In rejecting the vulgar sources of interest in poetical narratives, and reducing his ideal persons to the standard of reality, Mr. C. does by no means seek to extinguish the sparks of human sympathy within us, or to throw any damp on the curiosity with which we naturally explore the characters of each other. On the contrary, he has afforded new and more wholesome food for all those propensities — and, by placing before us those details which our pride or fastidiousness is so apt to overlook, has disclosed, in all their truth and simplicity, the native and unadulterated workings of those affections which are at the bottom of all social interest, and are really rendered *less* touching by the exaggerations of more ambitious artists — while he exhibits, with admirable force and endless variety, all those combinations of passions and opinions, and all that cross-play of selfishness and vanity, and indolence and ambition, and habit and reason, which make up the intellectual character of individuals, and present to every one an instructive picture of his neighbour, or himself. Seeing, by the perfection of his art, the master passions in their springs, and the high capacities in their rudiments — and having acquired the gift of tracing all the propensities and marking tendencies of our plastic nature, in their first slight indications, or even from the aspect of the disguises they so often assume, he does not need, in order to draw out his characters in all their life and distinctness, the vulgar demonstration of those striking and decided actions by which their maturity is proclaimed even to the careless and inattentive; — but delights to point out to his readers, the seeds or tender filaments of those talents and feelings which wait only for occasion and opportunity to burst out and astonish the world — and to accustom them to trace, in characters and actions apparently of the most ordinary description, the self-same attributes that, under other circumstances, would attract universal attention, and furnish themes for the most popular and impassioned descriptions.

That he should not be guided in the choice of his subject by any regard to the rank or condition which his persons hold in society, may easily be imagined; and, with a view to the ends he aims at, might readily be forgiven. But we fear that his passion for observation, and the delight he takes in tracing out and analyzing all the little traits that indicate character, and all the little circumstances that influ-

ence it, have sometimes led him to be careless about his selection of the instances in which it was to be exhibited, or at least to select them upon principles very different from those which give them an interest in the eyes of ordinary readers. For the purpose of mere anatomy, beauty of form or complexion are things quite indifferent; and the physiologist, who examines plants only to study their internal structure, and to make himself master of the contrivances by which their various functions are performed, pays no regard to the brilliancy of their hues, the sweetness of their odours, or the graces of their form. Those who come to him for the sole purpose of acquiring knowledge may participate perhaps in this indifference; but the world at large will wonder at them — and he will engage fewer pupils to listen to his instructions, than if he had condescended in some degree to consult their predilections in the beginning. It is the same case, we think, in many respects, with Mr. Crabbe. Relying for the interest he is to produce, on the curious expositions he is to make of the elements of human character, or at least finding his own chief gratification in those subtle investigations, he seems to care very little upon what particular individuals he pitches for the purpose of these demonstrations. Almost every human mind, he seems to think, may serve to display that fine and mysterious mechanism which it is his delight to explore and explain; — and almost every condition, and every history of life, afford occasions to show how it may be put into action, and pass through its various combinations. It seems, therefore, almost as if he had caught up the first dozen or two of persons that came across him in the ordinary walks of life, — and then fitting in his little window in their breasts, and applying his tests and instruments of observation, had set himself about such a minute and curious scrutiny of their whole habits, history, adventures, and dispositions, as he thought must ultimately create not only a familiarity, but an interest, which the first aspect of the subject was far enough from leading any one to expect. That he succeeds more frequently than could have been anticipated, we are very willing to allow. But we cannot help feeling, also, that a little more pains bestowed in the selection of his characters, would have made his power of observation and description tell with tenfold effect; and that, in spite of the exquisite truth of his delineations, and the fineness of the perceptions by which he was enabled to make them, it is impossible to take any considerable interest in many of his personages, or to avoid feeling some degree of fatigue at the minute and patient exposition that is made of all that belongs to them.

These remarks are a little too general, we believe — and are not introduced with strict propriety at the head of our *fourth* article on Mr. Crabbe's productions. They have drawn out, however, to such a length, that we can afford to say but little of the work immediately before us. It is marked with all the characteristics that we have noticed, either now or formerly, as distinctive of his poetry. On the whole, however, it has certainly fewer of the grosser faults — and fewer too, perhaps, of the exquisite passages which occur in his former publications. There is nothing at least that has struck us, in going over these volumes, as equal in elegance to Phœbe Dawson in the Register, or in pathetic effect to the Convict's Dream, or Edward Shore, or the Parting Hour, or the Sailor dying beside his Sweetheart. On the other hand, there is far less that is horrible, and nothing that can be said to be absolutely disgusting; and the picture which is afforded of society and human nature is, on the whole, much less painful and degrading. There is both less misery and less guilt; and, while the same searching and unsparing glance is sent into all the dark caverns of the breast, and the truth brought forth with the same stern impartiality, the result is more comfortable and cheering. The greater part of the characters are rather more elevated in station, and milder and more amiable in disposition; while the accidents of life are more mercifully managed, and fortunate circumstances more liberally allowed. It is rather remarkable, too, that Mr. Crabbe seems to become more amorous as he grows older, — the interest of almost all the stories in this collection turning on the tender passion — and many of them on its most romantic varieties.

The plan of the work — for it has rather more of plan and unity than any of the former, — is abundantly simple. Two brothers, both past middle age, meet together for the first

time since their infancy, in the Hall of their native parish, which the elder and richer had purchased as a place of retirement for his declining age — and there tell each other their own history, and then that of their guests, neighbours, and acquaintances. The senior is much the richer, and a bachelor — having been a little distasted with the sex by the unlucky result of an early and very extravagant passion. He is, moreover, rather too reserved and sarcastic, and somewhat Toryish, though with an excellent heart, and a powerful understanding. The younger is very sensible also, but more open, social, and talkative — a happy husband and father, with a tendency to Whiggism, and some notion of reform — and a disposition to think well both of men and women. The visit lasts two or three weeks in autumn; and the Tales, which make up the volume, are told in the after-dinner *tête-à-têtes* that take place in that time between the worthy brothers over their bottle. The married man, however, wearies at length for his wife and children; and his brother lets him go, with more coldness than he had expected. He goes with him, however, a stage on the way; and, inviting him to turn aside a little to look at a new purchase he had made of a sweet farm with a neat mansion, he finds his wife and children comfortably settled there, and all dressed out and ready to receive them! and speedily discovers that he is, by his brother's bounty, the proprietor of a fair domain within a morning's ride of the Hall — where they may discuss politics, and tell tales any afternoon they think proper.

Though their own stories and descriptions are not, in our opinion, the best in the work, it is but fair to introduce these narrative brothers and their Hall a little more particularly to our readers. The history of the elder and more austere is not particularly probable — nor very interesting; but it affords many passages extremely characteristic of the author. He was a spoiled child, and grew up into a youth of a romantic and contemplative turn — dreaming, in his father's rural abode, of divine nymphs and damsels all passion and purity. One day he had the good luck to rescue a fair lady from a cow, and fell desperately in love: — though he never got to speech of his charmer, who departed from the place where she was on a visit, and eluded the eager search with which he pursued her, in town and country, for many a long year: for this foolish and poetical passion settled down on his spirits; and neither time nor company, nor the business of a London banker, could effect a diversion. At last, at the end of ten or twelve years — for the fit lasted that unreasonable time — being then an upper clerk in his uncle's bank, he stumbled upon his Dulcinea in a very unexpected way — and a way that no one but Mr. Crabbe would either have thought of — or thought of describing in verse. In short, he finds her established as the *chère amie* of another respectable banker! and after the first shock is over, sets about considering how he may reclaim her. The poor Perdita professes penitence; and he offers to assist and support her if she will abandon her evil courses. The following passage is fraught with a deep and a melancholy knowledge of character and of human nature.

"She vow'd — she tried! —— Alas! she did not know
How deeply rooted evil habits grow!
She felt the truth upon her spirits press,
But wanted ease, indulgence, show, excess;
Voluptuous banquets; pleasures — not refin'd,
But such as soothe to sleep th' opposing mind —
She look'd for idle vice, the time to kill,
And subtle, strong apologies for ill;
And thus her yielding, unresisting soul,
Sank, and let sin confuse her and control:
Pleasures that brought disgust yet brought relief,
And minds she hated help'd to war with grief."
Vol. i. p. 163.

As her health fails, however, her relapses become less frequent; and at last she dies, grateful and resigned. Her awakened lover is stunned by the blow — takes seriously to business — and is in danger of becoming avaricious; when a severe illness rouses him to higher thoughts, and he takes his name out of the firm, and, being turned of sixty, seeks a place of retirement.

"He chose his native village, and the hill
He climb'd a boy had its attraction still;
With that small brook beneath, where he would stand,
And stooping fill the hollow of his hand,
To quench th' impatient thirst — then stop awhile
To see the sun upon the waters smile,
In that sweet weariness, when, long denied,
We drink and view the fountain that supplied

The sparkling bliss—and feel, if not express,
Our perfect ease, in that sweet weariness.

"The oaks yet flourish'd in that fertile ground,
Where still the church with lofty tower was found;
And still that Hall, a first, a favourite view," &c.

"The Hall of Binning! his delight a boy,
That gave his fancy in her flight employ;
Here, from his father's modest home, he gaz'd,
Its grandeur charm'd him, and its height amaz'd.—
Now, young no more, retir'd to views well known,
He finds that object of his awe his own;
The Hall at Binning!—how he loves the gloom
That sun-excluding window gives the room;
Those broad brown stairs on which he loves to tread;
Those beams within; without, that length of lead,
On which the names of wanton boys appear,
Who died old men, and left memorials here,
Carvings of feet and hands, and knots and flowers,
The fruits of busy minds in idle hours."

Vol. i. pp. 4—6.

So much for Squire George—unless any reader should care to know, as Mr. Crabbe has kindly told, that—"The Gentleman was tall," and, moreover, "Looked old when followed, but alert when met." Of Captain Richard, the story is more varied and rambling. He was rather neglected in his youth; and passed his time, when a boy, very much as, we cannot help supposing, Mr. Crabbe must have passed his own. He ran wild in the neighbourhood of a seaport, and found occupation enough in its precincts.

"Where crowds assembled I was sure to run,
Hear what was said, and muse on what was done;
Attentive list'ning in the moving scene,
And often wond'ring what the men could mean.

"To me the wives of seamen lov'd to tell
What storms endanger'd men esteem'd so well;
What wondrous things in foreign parts they saw,
Lands without bounds, and people without law.

"No ships were wreck'd upon that fatal beach,
But I could give the luckless tale of each;
Eager I look'd, till I beheld a face
Of one dispos'd to paint their dismal case;
Who gave the sad survivors' doleful tale,
From the first brushing of the mighty gale
Until they struck! and, suffering in their fate,
I long'd the more they should its horrors state;
While some, the fond of pity, would enjoy
The earnest sorrows of the feeling boy.

"There were fond girls, who took me to their side
To tell the story how their lovers died!
They prais'd my tender heart, and bade me prove
Both kind and constant when I came to love!"

Once he saw a boat upset; and still recollects enough to give this spirited sketch of the scene.

"Then were those piercing shrieks, that frantic flight,
All hurried! all in tumult and affright!
A gathering crowd from different streets drew near,
All ask, all answer—none attend, none hear!

"O! how impatient on the sands we tread,
And the winds roaring, and the women led!
They know not who in either boat is gone,
But think the father, husband, lover, one.

"And who is *she* apart? She dares not come
To join the crowd, yet cannot rest at home:
With what strong interest looks she at the waves,
Meeting and clashing o'er the seamen's graves!
'Tis a poor girl betroth'd—a few hours more,
And *he* will lie a corpse upon the shore!
One wretched hour had pass'd before we knew
Whom they had sav'd! Alas! they were but two!
An orphan'd lad and widow'd man—no more!
And they unnoticed stood upon the shore,
With scarce a friend to greet them—widows view'd
This man and boy, and then their cries renew'd."

He also pries into the haunts of the smugglers, and makes friends with the shepherds on the downs in summer; and then he becomes intimate with an old sailor's wife, to whom he reads sermons, and histories, and jest books, and hymns, and indelicate ballads! The character of this woman is one of the many examples of talent and labour misapplied. It is very powerfully, and, we doubt not, very truly drawn—but it will attract few readers. Yet the story she is at last brought to tell of her daughter will command a more general interest.

"Ruth—I may tell, too oft had she been told!—
Was tall and fair, and comely to behold,
Gentle and simple; in her native place
Not one compared with her in form or face;
She was not merry, but she gave our hearth
A cheerful spirit that was more than mirth.

"There was a sailor boy, and people said
He was, as man, a likeness of the maid;
But not in this—for he was ever glad,
While Ruth was apprehensive, mild, and sad."

They are betrothed—and something more than betrothed—when, on the eve of their wedding-day, the youth is carried relentlessly off by a press-gang; and soon after is slain in battle!—and a preaching weaver then woos, with nauseous perversions of scripture, the loathing and widowed bride. This picture, too, is strongly drawn;—but we hasten to a scene of far more power as well as pathos. Her father urges her to wed the missioned suitor; and she agrees to give her answer on Sunday.

"She left her infant on the Sunday morn,
A creature doom'd to shame! in sorrow born.
She came not home to share our humble meal,—
Her father thinking what his child would feel
From his hard sentence!—Still she came not home.
The night grew dark, and yet she was not come!
The east-wind roar'd, the sea return'd the sound,
And the rain fell as if the world were drown'd:
There were no lights without, and my good man,
To kindness frighten'd, with a groan began
To talk of Ruth, and pray! and then he took
The Bible down, and read the holy book;
For he had learning: and when that was done
We sat in silence—whither could we run
We said—and then rush'd frighten'd from the door,
For we could bear our own conceit no more:
We call'd on neighbours—there she had not been;
We met some wanderers—ours they had not seen:
We hurried o'er the beach, both north and south,
Then join'd, and wander'd to our haven's mouth:
Where rush'd the falling waters wildly out,
I scarcely heard the good man's fearful shout,
Who saw a something on the billow ride,
And—Heaven have mercy on our sins! he cried
It is my child!—and to the present hour
So he believes—and spirits have the power!

"And she was gone! the waters wide and deep
Roll'd o'er her body as she lay asleep!
She heard no more the angry waves and wind,
She heard no more the threat'ning of mankind;
Wrapt in dark weeds, the refuse of the storm,
To the hard rock was borne her comely form!

"But O! what storm was in that mind! what strife,
That could compel her to lay down her life!
For she was seen within the sea to wade,
By one at distance, when she first had pray'd;
Then to a rock within the hither shoal,
Softly, and with a fearful step, she stole;
Then, when she gain'd it, on the top she stood
A moment still—and dropt into the flood!
The man cried loudly, but he cried in vain,—
She heard not then—she never heard again!"—

Richard afterwards tells how he left the sea and entered the army, and fought and marched in the Peninsula; and how he came home and fell in love with a parson's daughter, and courted and married her;—and he tells it all very prettily,—and moreover, that he is very happy, and very fond of his wife and children. —But we must now take the Adelphi out of doors; and let them introduce some of their acquaintances. Among the first to whom we are presented are two sisters, still in the bloom of life, who had been cheated out of a handsome independence by the cunning of a speculating banker, and deserted by their lovers in consequence of this calamity. Their characters are drawn with infinite skill and minuteness, and their whole story told with great feeling and beauty;—but it is difficult to make extracts.

The prudent suitor of the milder and more serious sister, sneaks pitifully away when their fortune changes. The bolder lover of the more elate and gay, seeks to take a baser advantage.

"Then made he that attempt, in which to fail
Is shameful,—still more shameful to prevail.
Then was there lightning in that eye that shed
Its beams upon him,—and his frenzy fled;
Abject and trembling at her feet he laid,
Despis'd and scorn'd by the indignant maid,
Whose spirits in their agitation rose,
Him, and her own weak pity, to oppose:
As liquid silver in the tube mounts high,
Then shakes and settles as the storm goes by!"

The effects of this double trial on their different tempers are also very finely described The gentler Lucy is the most resigned and magnanimous. The more aspiring Jane suffers far keener anguish and fiercer impatience; and the task of soothing and cheering her devolves on her generous sister. Her fancy, too, is at times a little touched by her afflictions—and she writes wild and melancholy verses. The wanderings of her reason are represented in a very affecting manner;—but we rather choose to quote the following verses, which appear to us to be eminently beautiful, and make us regret that Mr. Crabbe should have indulged us so seldom with those higher lyrical effusions.

"Let me not have this gloomy view,
About my room, around my bed!
But morning roses, wet with dew,
To cool my burning brows instead.
Like flow'rs that once in Eden grew,
Let them their fragrant spirits shed,
And every day the sweets renew,
Till I, a fading flower, am dead!

"I'll have my grave beneath a hill,
Where only Lucy's self shall know;
Where runs the pure pellucid rill
Upon its gravelly bed below;
There violets on the borders blow,
And insects their soft light display,
Till as the morning sunbeams glow,
The cold phosphoric fires decay.

"There will the lark, the lamb, in sport,
In air, on earth, securely play,
And Lucy to my grave resort,
As innocent, but not so gay.

"O! take me from a world I hate,
Men cruel, selfish, sensual, cold;
And, in some pure and blessed state,
Let me my sister minds behold:
From gross and sordid views refin'd,
Our heaven of spotless love to share,
For only generous souls design'd,
And not a Man to meet us there."
Vol. i. pp. 212—215.

"The Preceptor Husband" is exceedingly well managed — but it is rather too facetious for our present mood. The old bachelor, who had been five times on the brink of matrimony, is mixed up of sorrow and mirth; — but we cannot make room for any extracts, except the following inimitable description of the first coming on of old age, — though we feel assured, somehow, that this malicious observer has mistaken the date of these ugly symptoms; and brought them into view nine or ten, or, at all events, six or seven years too early.

"Six years had pass'd, and forty ere the six,
When Time began to play his usual tricks!
The locks once comely in a virgin's sight,
Locks of pure brown, display'd th' encroaching white;
The blood once fervid now to cool began,
And Time's strong pressure to subdue the man:
I rode or walk'd as I was wont before,
But now the bounding spirit was no more;
A moderate pace would now my body heat,
A walk of moderate length distress my feet.
I show'd my stranger-guest those hills sublime,
But said, 'the view is poor, we need not climb!'
At a friend's mansion I began to dread
The cold neat parlour, and the gay glazed bed;
At home I felt a more decided taste,
And must have all things in my order placed;
I ceas'd to hunt; my horses pleased me less,
My dinner more! I learn'd to play at chess;
I took my dog and gun, but saw the brute
Was disappointed that I did not shoot;
My morning walks I now could bear to lose,
And bless'd the shower that gave me not to choose:
In fact, I felt a languor stealing on;
The active arm, the agile hand were gone;
Small daily actions into habits grew,
And new dislike to forms and fashions new;
I lov'd my trees in order to dispose,
I number'd peaches, look'd how stocks arose,
Told the same story oft — in short, began to prose."
Vol. i. pp. 260, 261.

"The Maid's Story" is rather long — though it has many passages that must be favourites with Mr. Crabbe's admirers. "Sir Owen Dale" is too long also; but it is one of the best in the collection, and must not be discussed so shortly. Sir Owen, a proud, handsome man, is left a widower at forty-three, and is soon after jilted by a young lady of twenty; who, after amusing herself by encouraging his assiduities, at last meets his long-expected declaration with a very innocent surprise at finding her familiarity with "such an old friend of her father's" so strangely misconstrued! The knight, of course, is furious; — and, to revenge himself, looks out for a handsome young nephew, whom he engages to lay siege to her, and, after having won her affections, to leave her, — as *he* had been left. The lad rashly engages in the adventure; but soon finds his pretended passion turning into a real one — and entreats his uncle, on whom he is dependent, to release him from the unworthy part of his vow. Sir Owen, still mad for vengeance, rages at the proposal; and, to confirm his relentless purpose, makes a visit to one, who had better cause, and had formerly expressed equal thirst for revenge. This was one of the higher class of his tenantry — an intelligent, manly, good-humoured farmer, who had married the vicar's pretty niece, and lived in great comfort and comparative elegance, till an idle youth seduced her from his arms, and left him in rage and misery. It is here that the interesting part of the story begins; and few things can be more powerful or striking than the scenes that ensue. Sir Owen inquires whether he had found the objects of his just indignation. He at first evades the question; but at length opens his heart, and tells him all. We can afford to give but a small part of the dialogue.

"Twice the year came round —
Years hateful now — ere I my victims found:
But *I did* find them, in the dungeon's gloom
Of a small garret — a precarious home;
The roof, unceil'd in patches, gave the snow
Entrance within, and there were heaps below;
I pass'd a narrow region dark and cold,
The strait of stairs to that infectious hold;
And, when I enter'd, misery met my view
In every shape she wears, in every hue,
And the bleak icy blast across the dungeon flew.
There frown'd the ruin'd walls that once were white,
There gleam'd the panes that once admitted light;
There lay unsavory scraps of wretched food;
And there a measure, void of fuel, stood.
But who shall, part by part, describe the state
Of these, thus follow'd by relentless fate?
All, too, in winter, when the icy air
Breathed its black venom on the guilty pair.

"And could you know the miseries they endur'd,
The poor, uncertain pittance they procur'd;
When, laid aside the needle and the pen,
Their sickness won the neighbours of their den,
Poor as they are, and they are passing poor,
To lend some aid to those who needed more!
Then, too, an ague with the winter came,
And in this state—that wife I cannot name!
Brought forth a famish'd child of suffering and of shame!

"This had you known, and traced them to this scene,
Where all was desolate, defiled, unclean,
A fireless room, and, where a fire had place,
The blast loud howling down the empty space,
You must have felt a part of the distress,
Forgot your wrongs, and made their suffering less!"

"In that vile garret—which I cannot paint—
The sight was loathsome, and the smell was faint;
And there that wife,—whom I had lov'd so well,
And thought so happy! was condemn'd to dwell;
The gay, the grateful wife, whom I was glad
To see in dress beyond our station clad,
And to behold among our neighbours, fine,
More than perhaps became a wife of mine:
And now among her neighbours to explore,
And see her poorest of the very poor!
There she reclin'd unmov'd, her bosom bare
To her companion's unimpassion'd stare,
And my wild wonder:—Seat of virtue! chaste
As lovely once! O! how wert thou disgrac'd!
Upon that breast, by sordid rags defil'd,
Lay the wan features of a famish'd child;—
That sin-born babe in utter misery laid,
Too feebly wretched even to cry for aid;
The ragged sheeting, o'er her person drawn,
Serv'd for the dress that hunger placed in pawn.

"'At the bed's feet the man reclin'd his frame:
Their chairs had perish'd to support the flame
That warm'd his agued limbs; and, sad to see,
That shook him fiercely as he gazed on me, &c.

"'She had not food, nor aught a mother needs,
Who for another life, and dearer, feeds:
I saw her speechless; on her wither'd breast
The wither'd child extended, but not prest,
Who sought, with moving lip and feeble cry,
Vain instinct! for the fount without supply.

"'Sure it was all a grievous, odious scene,
Where all was dismal, melancholy, mean,
Foul with compell'd neglect, unwholesome, and unclean;
That arm—that eye—the cold, the sunken cheek—
Spoke all!—Sir Owen—fiercely miseries speak!'

"'And you reliev'd?'

"'If hell's seducing crew
Had seen that sight, *they* must have pitied too.'

"'Revenge was thine—thou hadst the power—the right;
To give it up was Heav'n's own act to slight.'

"'Tell me not, Sir, of rights, and wrongs, or powers!
I felt it written—Vengeance is not ours!'—

"'Then did you freely from your soul forgive?'—

"'Sure as I hope before my Judge to live,
Sure as I trust his mercy to receive,
Sure as his word I honour and believe,
Sure as the Saviour died upon the tree
For all who sin—*for that dear wretch*, and me—
Whom, never more on earth, will I forsake—or see!'

"Sir Owen softly to his bed adjourn'd!
Sir Owen quickly to his home return'd;
And all the way he meditating dwelt
On what this man in his affliction felt;
How he, resenting first, forbore, forgave;
His passion's lord, and not his anger's slave."
Vol. ii. pp. 36—46.

We always quote too much of Mr. Crabbe:—perhaps because the pattern of his arabesque is so large, that there is no getting a fair specimen of it without taking in a good space. But we must take warning this time, and forbear—or at least pick out but a few little morsels as we past hastily along. One of the best managed of all the tales is that entitled "Delay has Danger;"—which contains a very full, true, and particular account of the way in which a weakish, but well meaning young man, engaged on his own suit to a very amiable girl, may be seduced, during her unlucky absence, to entangle himself with a far inferior person, whose chief seduction is her apparent humility and devotion to him.

We cannot give any part of the long and finely converging details by which the catastrophe is brought about: but we are tempted to venture on the catastrophe itself, for the sake chiefly of the right English, melancholy, autumnal landscape, with which it concludes:—

"In that weak moment, when disdain and pride,
And fear and fondness, drew the man aside,
In that weak moment—'Wilt thou,' he began,
'Be mine!' and joy o'er all her features ran;
'I will!' she softly whisper'd; but the roar
Of cannon would not strike his spirit more!
Ev'n as his lips the lawless contract seal'd,
He felt that conscience lost her seven-fold shield,
And honour fled; but still he spoke of love;
And all was joy in the consenting dove!

"That evening all in fond discourse was spent;
Till the sad lover to his chamber went,
To think on what had past,—to grieve and to repent!
Early he rose, and look'd with many a sigh
On the red light that fill'd the eastern sky;
Oft had he stood before, alert and gay,
To hail the glories of the new-born day;
But now dejected, languid, listless, low,
He saw the wind upon the water blow,
And the cold stream curl'd onward, as the gale
From the pine-hill blew harshly down the dale;
On the right side the youth a wood survey'd,
With all its dark intensity of shade;
Where the rough wind alone was heard to move,
In this, the pause of nature and of love;
When now the young are rear'd, and when the old,
Lost to the tie, grow negligent and cold.
Far to the left he saw the huts of men,
Half hid in mist, that hung upon the fen;
Before him swallows, gathering for the sea,
Took their short flights, and twitter'd on the lea;
And near, the bean-sheaf stood, the harvest done,
And slowly blacken'd in the sickly sun!
All these were sad in nature; or they took
Sadness from him, the likeness of his look,
And of his mind—he ponder'd for a while,
Then met his Fanny with a borrow'd smile."
Vol. ii. pp. 81, 85.

The moral autumn is quite as gloomy, and far more hopeless.

"The Natural Death of Love" is perhaps the best written of all the pieces before us. It consists of a very spirited dialogue between a married pair, upon the causes of the difference between the days of marriage and those of courtship;—in which the errors and faults of both parties, and the petulance, impatience, and provoking acuteness of the lady, with the more reasonable and reflecting, but somewhat insulting manner of the gentleman, are all exhibited to the life; and with more uniform delicacy and *finesse* than is usual with the author.

"Lady Barbara, or the Ghost," is a long story, and not very pleasing. A fair widow had been warned, or supposed she had been warned, by the ghost of a beloved brother, that she would be miserable if she contracted a second marriage—and then, some fifteen years after, she is courted by the son of a reverend priest, to whose house she had retired—and upon whom, during all the years of his childhood, she had lavished the cares of a mother. She long resists his unnatural passion; but is at length subdued by his urgency and youthful beauty, and gives him her hand. There is something rather disgusting, we think, in this fiction—and certainly the worthy lady could have taken no way so likely to save the ghost's credit, as by entering into *such* a marriage—and she confessed as much, it seems, on her death-bed.

"The Widow," with her three husbands, is not quite so lively as the wife of Bath with her five;—but it is a very amusing, as well as a very instructive legend; and exhibits a rich variety of those striking intellectual portraits which mark the hand of our poetical Rembrandt. The serene close of her eventful life is highly exemplary. After carefully collecting all her dowers and jointures—

"The widow'd lady to her cot retir'd:
And there she lives, delighted and admir'd!
Civil to all, compliant and polite,
Dispos'd to think 'whatever is, is right.'
At home awhile—she in the autumn finds
The sea an object for reflecting minds,
And change for tender spirits: There she reads,
And weeps in comfort, in her graceful weeds!"
Vol. ii. p. 213.

The concluding tale is but the end of the visit to the Hall and the settlement of the younger brother near his senior, in the way we have already mentioned. It contains no great matter; but there is so much good nature and goodness of heart about it, that we cannot resist the temptation of gracing our exit with a bit of it. After a little raillery, the elder brother says—

"'We part no more, dear Richard! Thou wilt need
Thy brother's help to teach thy boys to read;
And I should love to hear Matilda's psalm,
To keep my spirit in a morning calm,
And feel the soft devotion that prepares
The soul to rise above its earthly cares;
Then thou and I, an independent two,
May have our parties, and defend them too;
Thy liberal notions, and my loyal fears,
Will give us subjects for our future years;
We will for truth alone contend and read,
And our good Jaques shall o'ersee our creed.'"
Vol. ii. pp. 348, 349.

And then, after leading him up to his new purchase, he adds eagerly—

"'Alight, my friend, and come,
I do beseech thee, to thy proper home!
Here, on this lawn, thy boys and girls shall run,
And play their gambols when their tasks are done;

There, from that window, shall their mother view
The happy tribe, and smile at all they do;
While thou, more gravely, hiding thy delight,
Shalt cry, "O! childish!" and enjoy the sight!'"
Vol. ii. p. 352.

We shall be abused by our political and fastidious readers for the length of this article. But we cannot repent of it. It will give as much pleasure, we believe, and do as much good, as many of the articles that are meant for *their* gratification; and, if it appear absurd to quote so largely from a popular and accessible work, it should be remembered, that no work of this magnitude passes into circulation with half the rapidity of our Journal—and that Mr. Crabbe is so unequal a writer, and at times so unattractive, as to require, more than any other of his degree, some explanation of his system, and some specimens of his powers, from those experienced and intrepid readers whose business it is to pioneer for the lazier sort, and to give some account of what they are to meet with on their journey. To be sure, all this is less necessary now than it was on Mr. Crabbe's first re-appearance nine or ten years ago; and though it may not be altogether without its use even at present, it may be as well to confess, that we have rather consulted our own gratification than our readers' improvement, in what we have now said of him; and hope they will forgive us.

JOHN KEATS.

(August, 1820.)

1. *Endymion: a Poetic Romance.* By John Keats. 8vo. pp. 207. London: 1818.
2. *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems.* By John Keats, *author of "Endymion."* 12mo. pp. 200. London: 1820.*

We had never happened to see either of these volumes till very lately—and have been exceedingly struck with the genius they display, and the spirit of poetry which breathes through all their extravagance. That imitation of our old writers, and especially of our older dramatists, to which we cannot help flattering ourselves that we have somewhat contributed, has brought on, as it were, a second spring in our poetry;—and few of its blossoms are either more profuse of sweetness, or richer in promise, than this which is now before us. Mr. Keats, we understand, is still a very young man; and his whole works, indeed, bear evidence enough of the fact. They are full of extravagance and irregularity, rash attempts at originality, interminable wanderings, and excessive obscurity. They manifestly require, therefore, all the indulgence that can be claimed for a first attempt:—but we think it no less plain that they deserve it: for they are flushed all over with the rich lights of fancy; and so coloured and bestrewn with the flowers of poetry, that even while perplexed and bewildered in their labyrinths, it is impossible to resist the intoxication of their sweetness, or to shut our hearts to the enchantments they so lavishly present. The models upon which he has formed himself, in the Endymion, the earliest and by much the most considerable of his poems, are obviously The Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher, and The Sad Shepherd of Ben Jonson;—the exquisite metres and inspired diction of which he has copied with great boldness and fidelity—and, like his great originals, has also contrived to impart to the whole piece that true rural and poetical air—which breathes only in them, and in Theocritus—which is at once homely and majestic, luxurious and rude, and sets before us the genuine sights and sounds and smells of the country, with all the magic and grace of Elysium. His subject has the disadvantage of being Mythological; and in this respect, as well as on account of the raised and rapturous tone it consequently assumes, his poem, it may be thought, would be better compared to the Comus and the Arcades of Milton, of which, also, there are many traces of imitation. The great distinction, however, between him and these divine authors, is, that imagination in them is subordinate to reason and judgment, while, with him, it is paramount

* I still think that a poet of great power and promise was lost to us by the premature death of Keats, in the twenty-fifth year of his age; and regret that I did not go more largely into the exposition of his merits, in the slight notice of them, which I now venture to reprint. But though I cannot, with propriety, or without departing from the principle which must govern this republication, now supply this omission, I hope to be forgiven for having added a page or two to *the citations*,—by which my opinion of those merits was then illustrated, and is again left to the judgment of the reader.

and supreme—that their ornaments and images are employed to embellish and recommend just sentiments, engaging incidents, and natural characters, while his are poured out without measure or restraint, and with no apparent design but to unburden the breast of the author, and give vent to the overflowing vein of his fancy. The thin and scanty tissue of his story is merely the light framework on which his florid wreaths are suspended; and while his imaginations go rambling and entangling themselves every where, like wild honeysuckles, all idea of sober reason, and plan, and consistency, is utterly forgotten, and "strangled in their waste fertility." A great part of the work, indeed, is written in the strangest and most fantastical manner that can be imagined. It seems as if the author had ventured every thing that occurred to him in the shape of a glittering image or striking expression—taken the first word that presented itself to make up a rhyme, and then made that word the germ of a new cluster of images—a hint for a new excursion of the fancy—and so wandered on, equally forgetful whence he came, and heedless whither he was going, till he had covered his pages with an interminable arabesque of connected and incongruous figures, that multiplied as they extended, and were only harmonized by the brightness of their tints, and the graces of their forms. In this rash and headlong career he has of course many lapses and failures. There is no work, accordingly, from which a malicious critic could cull more matter for ridicule, or select more obscure, unnatural, or absurd passages. But we do not take *that* to be our office;—and must beg leave, on the contrary, to say, that any one who, on this account, would represent the whole poem as despicable, must either have no notion of poetry, or no regard to truth.

It is, in truth, at least as full of genius as of absurdity; and he who does not find a great deal in it to admire and to give delight, cannot in his heart see much beauty in the two exquisite dramas to which we have already alluded; or find any great pleasure in some of the finest creations of Milton and Shakspeare. There are very many such persons, we verily believe, even among the reading and judicious part of the community—correct scholars, we have no doubt, many of them, and, it may be, very classical composers in prose and in verse—but utterly ignorant, on our view of the matter, of the true genius of English poetry, and incapable of estimating its appropriate and most exquisite beauties. With that spirit we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Keats is deeply imbued—and of those beauties he has presented us with many striking examples. We are very much inclined indeed to add, that we do not know any book which we would sooner employ as a test to ascertain whether any one had in him a native relish for poetry, and a genuine sensibility to its intrinsic charm. The greater and more distinguished poets of our country have so much in them, to gratify other tastes and propensities, that they are pretty sure to captivate and amuse those to whom their poetry may be but an hinderance and obstruction, as well as those to whom it constitutes their chief attraction. The interest of the stories they tell—the vivacity of the characters they delineate—the weight and force of the maxims and sentiments in which they abound—the very pathos, and wit and humour they display, which may all and each of them exist apart from their poetry, and independent of it, are quite sufficient to account for their popularity, without referring much to that still higher gift, by which they subdue to their enchantments those whose souls are truly attuned to the finer impulses of poetry. It is only, therefore, where those other recommendations are wanting, or exist in a weaker degree, that the true force of the attraction, exercised by the pure poetry with which they are so often combined, can be fairly appreciated:—where, without much incident or many characters, and with little wit, wisdom, or arrangement, a number of bright pictures are presented to the imagination, and a fine feeling expressed of those mysterious relations by which visible external things are assimilated with inward thoughts and emotions, and become the images and exponents of all passions and affections. To an unpoetical reader, such passages will generally appear mere raving and absurdity—and to this censure a very great part of the volumes before us will certainly be exposed, with this class of readers. Even in the judgment of a fitter audience, however, it must, we fear, be

admitted, that, besides the riot and extravagance of his fancy, the scope and substance of Mr. Keats's poetry is rather too dreamy and abstracted to excite the strongest interest, or to sustain the attention through a work of any great compass or extent. He deals too much with shadowy and incomprehensible beings, and is too constantly rapt into an extramundane Elysium, to command a lasting interest with ordinary mortals — and must employ the agency of more varied and coarser emotions, if he wishes to take rank with the enduring poets of this or of former generations. There is something very curious, too, we think, in the way in which he, and Mr. Barry Cornwall, also, have dealt with the Pagan mythology, of which they have made so much use in their poetry. Instead of presenting its imaginary persons under the trite and vulgar traits that belong to them in the ordinary systems, little more is borrowed from these than the general conception of their condition and relations; and an original character and distinct individuality is then bestowed upon them, which has all the merit of invention, and all the grace and attraction of the fictions on which it is engrafted. The ancients, though they probably did not stand in any great awe of their deities, have yet abstained very much from any minute or dramatic representation of their feelings and affections. In Hesiod and Homer they are broadly delineated by some of their actions and adventures, and introduced to us merely as the agents in those particular transactions; whilst in the Hymns, from those ascribed to Orpheus and Homer, down to those of Callimachus, we have little but pompous epithets and invocations, with a flattering commemoration of their most famous exploits — and are never allowed to enter into their bosoms, or follow out the train of their feelings, with the presumption of our human sympathy. Except the love-song of the Cyclops to his Sea Nymph in Theocritus — the Lamentation of Venus for Adonis in Moschus — and the more recent Legend of Apuleius, we scarcely recollect a passage in all the writings of antiquity in which the passions of an immortal are fairly disclosed to the scrutiny and observation of men. The author before us, however, and some of his contemporaries, have dealt differently with the subject; — and, sheltering the violence of the fiction under the ancient traditionary fable, have in reality created and imagined an entire new set of characters; and brought closely and minutely before us the loves and sorrows and perplexities of beings, with whose names and supernatural attributes we had long been familiar, without any sense or feeling of their personal character. We have more than doubts of the fitness of such personages to maintain a permanent interest with the modern public; — but the way in which they are here managed certainly gives them the best chance that now remains for them; and, at all events, it cannot be denied that the effect is striking and graceful. But we must now proceed to our extracts.

The first of the volumes before us is occupied with the loves of Endymion and Diana — which it would not be very easy, and which we do not at all intend to analyze in detail. In the beginning of the poem, however, the Shepherd Prince is represented as having had strange visions and delirious interviews with an unknown and celestial beauty: soon after which, he is called on to preside at a festival in honour of Pan; and his appearance in the procession is thus described: —

—— " His youth was fully blown,
Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown;
And, for those simple times, his garments were
A chieftain king's: Beneath his breast, half bare,
Was hung a silver bugle; and between
His nervy knees there lay a boar-spear keen.
A smile was on his countenance: he seem'd,
To common lookers on, like one who dream'd
Of idleness in groves Elysian;
But there were some who feelingly could scan
A lurking trouble in his nether lip,
And see that oftentimes the reins would slip
Through his forgotten hands!" — Pp. 11, 12.

There is then a choral hymn addressed to the sylvan deity, which appears to us to be full of beauty; and reminds us, in many places, of the finest strains of Sicilian — or of English poetry. A part of it is as follows: —

"'O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks; and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
Of unseen flowers, in heavy peacefulness!
Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress
Their ruffled locks, where meeting hazels darken;
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken

The dreary melody of bedded reeds —
In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds
The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth.—

"'O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles
Passion their voices coolingly 'mong myrtles,
What time thou wanderest at eventide
Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side
Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to whom
Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom
Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow girted bees
Their golden honeycombs; our village leas
Their fairest blossomed beans and poppied corn;
The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,
To sing for thee; low creeping strawberries
Their summer coolness; pent up butterflies
Their freckled wings! yea, the fresh budding year
All its completions! be quickly near,
By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
O forester divine!

"'Thou, to whom every fawn and satyr flies
For willing service; whether to surprise
The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit;
Or upward ragged precipices flit
To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw;
Or by mysterious enticement draw
Bewilder'd shepherds to their path again;
Or to tread breathless round the frothy main.
And gather up all fancifullest shells
For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping!
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,
The while they pelt each other on the crown
With silv'ry oak apples, and fir cones brown—
By all the echoes that about thee ring!
Hear us, O satyr king!

"'O Hearkener to the loud clapping shears,
While ever and anon to his shorn peers
A ram goes bleating: Winder of the horn,
When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn
Anger our huntsmen! Breather round our farms,
To keep off mildews, and all weather harms:
Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,
That come a swooning over hollow grounds,
And wither drearily on barren moors!'"
Pp. 114—117.

The enamoured youth sinks into insensibility in the midst of the solemnity, and is borne apart and revived by the care of his sister; and, opening his heavy eyes in her arms, says —

"'I feel this thine endearing love
All through my bosom! Thou art as a dove
Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings
About me; and the pearliest dew not brings
Such morning incense from the fields of May,
As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray
From those kind eyes. Then think not thou
That, any longer, I will pass my days
Alone and sad. No! I will once more raise
My voice upon the mountain heights; once more
Make my horn parley from their foreheads hoar!
Again my trooping hounds their tongues shall loll
Around the breathed boar: again I'll poll
The fair-grown yew tree, for a chosen bow:
And, when the pleasant sun is getting low,
Again I'll linger in a sloping mead
To hear the speckled thrushes, and see feed
Our idle sheep. So be thou cheered, sweet,
And, if thy lute is here, softly intreat
My soul to keep in its resolved course.'

"Hereat Peona, in their silver source
Shut her pure sorrow drops, with glad exclaim;
And took a lute, from which there pulsing came
A lively prelude, fashioning the way
In which her voice should wander. 'Twas a lay
More subtle cadenced, more forest wild
Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child;
And nothing since has floated in the air
So mournful strange."—Pp. 25—27.

He then tells her all the story of his love and madness; and gives this airy sketch of the first vision he had, or fancied he had, of his descending goddess. After some rapturous intimations of the glories of her gold-burnished hair, he says —

—— "She had,
Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad!
And they were simply gordian'd up and braided,
Leaving in naked comeliness, unshaded,
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and orbed brow;
The which were blended in, I knew not how,
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,
Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,
That when I think thereon, my spirit clings
And melts into the vision!"

"And then her hovering feet!
More bluely veined, more soft, more whitely sweet
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she rose
From out her cradle shell! The wind outblows
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion!—
'Tis blue; and overspangled with a million
Of little eyes; as though thou wert to shed
Over the darkest, lushest blue bell bed,
Handfuls of daisies."

Overpowered by this "celestial colloquy sublime," he sinks at last into slumber — and on wakening finds the scene disenchanted; and the dull shades of evening deepening over his solitude: —

"Then up I started — Ah! my sighs, my tears!
My clenched hands! For lo! the poppies hung
Dew dabbled on their stalks; the ouzel sung
A heavy ditty; and the sullen day

Had chidden herald Hesperus away,
With leaden looks. The solitary breeze
Bluster'd and slept; and its wild self did teaze
With wayward melancholy. And I thought,
Mark me, Peona! that sometimes it brought,
Faint Fare-thee-wells — and sigh-shrilled Adieus!"

Soon after this he is led away by butterflies to the haunts of Naiads; and by them sent down into enchanted caverns, where he sees Venus and Adonis, and great flights of Cupids; and wanders over diamond terraces among beautiful fountains and temples and statues, and all sorts of fine and strange things. All this is very fantastical: but there are spendid pieces of description, and a sort of wild richness in the whole. We cull a few little morsels. This is the picture of the sleeping Adonis: —

"In midst of all, there lay a sleeping youth
Of fondest beauty. Sideway his face repos'd
On one white arm, and tenderly unclos'd,
By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth
To slumbery pout; just as the morning south
Disparts a dew-lipp'd rose. Above his head,
Four lily stalks did their white honours wed
To make a coronal; and round him grew
All tendrils green, of every bloom and hue,
Together intertwin'd and trammel'd fresh:
The vine of glossy sprout; the ivy mesh,
Shading its Ethiop berries; and woodbine,
Of velvet leaves and bugle-blooms divine.

"Hard by,
Stood serene Cupids watching silently.
One, kneeling to a lyre, touch'd the strings,
Muffling to death the pathos with his wings!
And, ever and anon, uprose to look
At the youth's slumber; while another took
A willow-bough, distilling odorous dew,
And shook it on his hair; another flew
In through the woven roof, and fluttering-wise
Rain'd violets upon his sleeping eyes."—Pp. 72, 73.

Here is another, and more classical sketch, of Cybele — with a picture of lions that might excite the envy of Rubens, or Edwin Landseer!

"Forth from a rugged arch, in the dusk below,
Came mother Cybele! alone — alone! —
In sombre chariot; dark foldings thrown
About her majesty, and front death-pale
With turrets crown'd. Four maned lions hale
The sluggish wheels; solemn their toothed maws,
Their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws
Uplifted drowsily, and nervy tails
Cowering their tawny brushes. Silent sails
This shadowy queen athwart, and faints away
In another gloomy arch!" — P. 83.

The following picture of the fairy waterworks, which he unconsciously sets playing in these enchanted caverns, is, it must be confessed, "high fantastical;" but we venture to extract it, for the sake of the singular brilliancy and force of the execution: —

—— "So on he hies
Through caves and palaces of mottled ore,
Gold dome, and crystal wall, and turquoise floor,
Black polish'd porticoes of awful shade,
Till, at the last, a diamond balustrade
Leads sparkling just above the silvery heads
Of a thousand fountains; so that he could dash
The waters with his spear! But at that splash,
Done heedlessly, those spouting columns rose
Sudden a poplar's height, and 'gan to enclose
His diamond path with fretwork, streaming round,
Alive, and dazzling cool, and with a sound
Haply, like dolphin tumults, when sweet shells
Welcome the car of Thetis! Long he dwells
On this delight; for every minute's space
The streams with changing magic interlace;
Sometimes like delicatest lattices,
Cover'd with crystal vines: then weeping trees
Moving about, as in a gentle wind;
Which, in a wink, to wat'ry gauze refin'd
Pour into shapes of curtain'd canopies,
Spangled, and rich with liquid broideries
Of Flowers, Peacocks, Swans, and Naiads fair!
Swifter than lightning went these wonders rare;
And then the water into stubborn streams
Collecting, mimick'd the wrought oaken beams,
Pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof
Of those dark places, in times far aloof
Cathedrals nam'd!"

There are strange melodies too around him; and their effect on the fancy is thus poetically described: —

"Oh! when the airy stress
Of Music's kiss impregnates the free winds,
And with a sympathetic touch unbinds
Eolian magic from their lucid wombs!
Then old songs waken from forgotten tombs!
Old ditties sigh above their father's grave!
Ghosts of melodious prophesyings rave
Round every spot where trod Apollo's feet!
Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,
Where long ago a Giant battle was!
And from the turf a lullaby doth pass,
In ev'ry place where infant Orpheus slept!"

In the midst of all these enchantments he has, we do not very well know how, another ravishing interview with his unknown goddess; and when she again melts away from him, he finds himself in a vast grotto, where he over-

hears the courtship of Alpheus and Arethusa; and as they elope together, discovers that the grotto has disappeared, and that he is at the bottom of the sea, under the transparent arches of its naked waters! The following is abundantly extravagant; but comes of no ignoble lineage — nor shames its high descent:—

"Far had he roam'd,
With nothing save the hollow vast, that foam'd
Above, around, and at his feet; save things
More dead than Morpheus' imaginings!
Old rusted anchors, helmets, breast-plates large
Of gone sea-warriors; brazen beaks and targe;
Rudders that for a thousand years had lost
The sway of human hand; gold vase emboss'd
With long-forgotten story, and wherein
No reveller had ever dipp'd a chin
But those of Saturn's vintage; mould'ring scrolls,
Writ in the tongue of heaven, by those souls
Who first were on the earth; and sculptures rude
In pond'rous stone, developing the mood
Of ancient Nox; — then skeletons of man,
Of beast, behemoth, and leviathan,
And elephant, and eagle — and huge jaw
Of nameless monster." — P. 111.

There he finds ancient Glaucus enchanted by Circe — hears his wild story — and goes with him to the deliverance and restoration of thousands of drowned lovers, whose bodies were piled and stowed away in a large submarine palace. When this feat is happily performed, he finds himself again on dry ground, with woods and waters around him; and cannot help falling desperately in love with a beautiful damsel whom he finds there, pining for some such consolation; and who tells a long story of having come from India in the train of Bacchus, and having strayed away from him into that forest! — So they vow eternal fidelity; and are wafted up to heaven on flying horses; on which they sleep and dream among the stars; — and then the lady melts away, and he is again alone upon the earth; but soon rejoins his Indian love, and agrees to give up his goddess, and live only for her: but she refuses, and says she is resolved to devote herself to the service of Diana: but, when she goes to accomplish that dedication, she turns out to be the goddess herself in a new shape! and finally exalts her lover with her to a blessed immortality!

We have left ourselves room to say but little of the second volume; which is of a more miscellaneous character. Lamia is a Greek antique story, in the measure and taste of Endymion. Isabella is a paraphrase of the same tale of Boccacio which Mr. Cornwall has also imitated, under the title of "A Sicilian Story." It would be worth while to compare the two imitations; but we have no longer time for such a task. Mr. Keats has followed his original more closely, and has given a deep pathos to several of his stanzas. The widowed bride's discovery of the murdered body is very strikingly given.

"Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies!
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,
And put it in her bosom, where it dries.
Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd her care,
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

"That old nurse stood beside her, wondering,
Until her heart felt pity to the core,
At sight of such a dismal labouring;
And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,
And put her lean hands to the horrid thing:
Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore;
At last they felt the kernel of the grave, &c.

"In anxious secrecy they took it home,
And then — the prize was all for Isabel!
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb;
And all around each eye's sepulchral cell
Pointed each fringed lash: the smeared loam
With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,
She drench'd away: — and still she comb'd and kept
Sighing all day — and still she kiss'd and wept!

"Then in a silken scarf — sweet with the dews
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully, —
She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did choose
A garden pot, wherein she laid it by,
And cover'd it with mould; and o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

"And she forgot the stars, the moon, the sun!
And she forgot the blue above the trees;
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze!
She had no knowledge when the day was done;
And the new morn she saw not! But in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears, unto the core!"
Pp. 72—75.

The following lines from an ode to a Nightingale are equally distinguished for harmony and high poetic feeling:—

"O for a beaker full of the warm South!
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,

With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth!
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim!
Fade far away! dissolve — and quite forget
What Thou among the leaves hast never known—
The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
Here, — where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies!
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs.
The voice I hear, this passing night, was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown!
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when *sick for home!*
She stood in tears amid the alien corn!
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

Pp. 108—111.

We know nothing at once so truly fresh, genuine, and English, — and, at the same time so full of poetical feeling, and Greek elegance and simplicity, as this address to Autumn: —

"Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness—
Close bosom-friend of the maturing Sun!
Conspiring with him now, to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run!
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease;
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

"Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes, whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half reap'd furrow, sound asleep!
Drows'd with the fumes of poppies; while thy hook
Spares the next swath, and all its twined flowers!
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head, across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours!

"Where are the songs of Spring! Ay, where are they?
Think not of them! *Thou* hast thy music too;
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue!
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows; borne aloft
Or sinking, as the light wind lives or dies!
And full grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now, with treble soft,
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gath'ring swallows twitter in the skies!"

One of the sweetest of the smaller poems is that entitled "The Eve of St. Agnes:" though we can now afford but a scanty extract. The superstition is, that if a maiden goes to bed on that night, without supper, and never looks up after saying her prayers, till she falls asleep, she will see her destined husband by her bedside the moment she opens her eyes. The fair Madeline, who was in love with the gentle Porphyro, but thwarted by an imperious guardian, resolves to try this spell:—and Porphyro, who has a suspicion of her purpose, naturally determines to do what he can to help it to a happy issue; and accordingly prevails on her ancient nurse to admit him to her virgin bower; where he watches reverently, till she sinks in slumber; — and then, arranging a most elegant dessert by her couch, and gently rousing her with a tender and favourite air, finally reveals himself, and persuades her to steal from the castle under his protection. The opening stanza is a fair specimen of the sweetness and force of the composition.

"St. Agnes Eve! Ah, bitter cold it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was acold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold!
Numb were the bedesman's fingers, while he told
His rosary; and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet virgin's picture, while his prayers he saith."

But the glory and charm of the poem is in the description of the fair maiden's antique chamber, and of all that passes in that sweet and angel-guarded sanctuary: every part of which is touched with colours at once rich and delicate — and the whole chastened and harmonized, in the midst of its gorgeous distinctness, by a pervading grace and purity, that indicate not less clearly the exaltation than the refinement of the author's fancy. We cannot resist adding a good part of this description.

"Out went the taper as she hurried in!
Its little smoke in pallid moonshine died;
The door she closed! She panted, all akin

To spirits of the air, and visions wide!
No utter'd syllable — or woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble;
Paining with eloquence her balmy side!

"A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass;
And diamonded with panes of quaint device
Innumerable, of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger moth's deep damask'd wings!

"Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon!
Rose bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross, soft amethyst;
And on her hair, a glory like a saint!
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven! — Porphyro grew faint,
She knelt so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint!

"Anon his heart revives! Her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her *warmed* jewels, one by one;
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees!
Half hidden like a Mermaid in sea weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees
In fancy fair, St. Agnes on her bed!
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled!

"Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful dream, perplex'd she lay;
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away!
Haven'd alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a *bud* again!

"Stolen to this paradise, and so entranc'd,
Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing; if it chanc'd
To sink into a slumb'rous tenderness?
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself; — then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as Fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet silent stept.

"Then, by the bed-side, where the sinking moon
Made a dim silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet, &c.

"And still she slept — an azure-lidded sleep!
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd;
While he, from forth the closet, brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spiced dainties every one,
From silken Samarcand, to cedar'd Lebanon.

"Those delicates he heap'd with glowing hand,
On golden dishes, and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver; sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.
'And now, my love! my Seraph fair! awake!
Ope thy sweet eyes! for dear St. Agnes' sake!'"

It is difficult to break off in such a course of citation: but we must stop here; and shall close our extracts with the following lively lines: —

"O sweet Fancy! Let her loose!
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon,
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
—— Thou shalt hear
Distant harvest carols clear
Rustle of the reaped corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn;
And, in the same moment — hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plum'd lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celled sleep;
And the snake, all winter thin,
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing."

Pp. 122—125.

There is a fragment of a projected Epic, entitled "Hyperion," on the expulsion of Saturn and the Titanian deities by Jupiter and his younger adherents, of which we cannot advise the completion: for, though there are

passages of some force and grandeur, it is sufficiently obvious, from the specimen before us, that the subject is too far removed from all the sources of human interest, to be successfully treated by any modern author. Mr. Keats has unquestionably a very beautiful imagination, a perfect ear for harmony, and a great familiarity with the finest diction of English poetry; but he must learn not to misuse or misapply these advantages; and neither to waste the good gifts of Nature and study on intractable themes, nor to luxuriate too recklessly on such as are more suitable.

SAMUEL ROGERS.

(March, 1819.)

Human Life: a Poem. By Samuel Rogers. 4to. pp. 94. London: 1819.

These are very sweet verses. They do not, indeed, stir the spirit like the strong lines of Byron, nor make our hearts dance within us, like the inspiring strains of Scott: but they come over us with a bewitching softness that, in certain moods, is still more delightful — and soothe the troubled spirits with a refreshing sense of truth, purity, and elegance. They are pensive rather than passionate; and more full of wisdom and tenderness than of high flights of fancy, or overwhelming bursts of emotion — while they are moulded into grace, at least as much by the effect of the moral beauties they disclose, as by the taste and judgment with which they are constructed.

The theme is Human Life! — not only "the subject of all verse" — but the great centre and source of all interest in the works of human beings — to which both verse and prose invariably bring us back, when they succeed in rivetting our attention, or rousing our emotions — and which turns every thing into poetry to which its sensibilities can be ascribed, or by which its vicissitudes can be suggested! Yet it is not by any means to that which, in ordinary language, is termed the poetry or the romance of human life, that the present work is directed. The life which it endeavours to set before us, is not life diversified with strange adventures, embodied in extraordinary characters, or agitated with turbulent passions — not the life of warlike paladins, or desperate lovers, or sublime ruffians — or piping shepherds, or sentimental savages, or bloody bigots, or preaching pedlars — or conquerors, poets, or any other species of madmen — but the ordinary, practical, and amiable life of social, intelligent, and affectionate men in the upper ranks of society — such, in short, as multitudes may be seen living every day in this country — for the picture is entirely English — and though not perhaps in the choice of every one, yet open to the judgment, and familiar to the sympathies of all. It contains, of course, no story, and no individual characters. It is properly and peculiarly contemplative — and consists of a series of reflections on our mysterious nature and condition upon earth, and on the marvellous, though unnoticed changes which the ordinary course of our existence is continually bringing about in our being. Its marking peculiarity in this respect is, that it is free from the least alloy of acrimony or harsh judgment, and deals not at all, indeed, in any species of satirical or sarcastic remark. The poet looks here on man, and teaches us to look on him, not merely with love, but with reverence; and, mingling a sort of considerate pity for the shortness of his busy little career, and the disappointments and weaknesses by which it is beset, with a genuine admiration of the great capacities he unfolds, and the high destiny to which he seems to be reserved, works out a very beautiful and engaging picture, both of the affections by which Life is endeared, the trials to which it is exposed, and the pure and peaceful enjoyments with which it may often be filled.

This, after all, we believe, is the tone of true wisdom and true virtue — and that to which all good natures draw nearer, as they approach the close of life, and come to act less, and to know and to meditate more, on the varying and crowded scene of human existence. — When the inordinate hopes of early youth, which provoke their own disappointment, have been sobered down by longer experience and more extended views — when the keen contentions and eager rivalries which employed our riper age, have expired or been abandoned — when we have seen, year after year, the objects of our fiercest hostility, and

of our fondest affections, lie down together in the hallowed peace of the grave — when ordinary pleasures and amusements begin to be insipid, and the gay derision which seasoned them to appear flat and importunate — when we reflect how often we have mourned and been comforted — what opposite opinions we have successively maintained and abandoned — to what inconsistent habits we have gradually been formed — and how frequently the objects of our pride have proved the sources of our shame! we are naturally led to recur to the careless days of our childhood, and, from that distant starting-place, to retrace the whole of our career, and that of our contemporaries, with feelings of far greater humility and indulgence than those by which it had been actually accompanied: — to think all vain but affection and honour — the simplest and cheapest pleasures the truest and most precious — and generosity of sentiment the only mental superiority which ought either to be wished for or admired.

We are aware that we have said "something too much of this;" and that our readers would probably have been more edified, as well as more delighted by Mr. Rogers's text, than with our preachment upon it. But we were anxious to convey to them our sense of the spirit in which this poem is written;—and conceive, indeed, that what we have now said falls more strictly within the line of our critical duty, than our general remarks can always be said to do; — because the true character and poetical effect of the work seems, in this instance, to depend much more on its moral expression, than on any of its mere literary qualities.

The author, perhaps, may not think it any compliment to be thus told, that his verses are likely to be greater favourites with the old than with the young; — and yet it is no small compliment, we think, to say, that they are likely to be more favourites with his readers every year they live; — and it is at all events true, whether it be a compliment or not, that as readers of all ages, if they are any way worth pleasing, have little glimpses and occasional visitations of those truths which longer experience only renders more familiar, so no works ever sink so deep into amiable minds, or recur so often to their remembrance, as those which embody simple, and solemn, and reconciling truths, in emphatic and elegant language — and anticipate, as it were, and bring out with effect, those salutary lessons which it seems to be the great end of our life to inculcate. The pictures of violent passion and terrible emotion — the breathing characters, the splendid imagery and bewitching fancy of Shakspeare himself, are less frequently recalled, than those great moral aphorisms in which he has so often

> Told us the fashion of our own estate,
> The secrets of our bosoms——

and, in spite of all that may be said by grave persons, of the frivolousness of poetry, and of its admirers, we are persuaded that the most memorable, and the most generally admired of all its productions, are those which are chiefly recommended by their deep practical wisdom; and their coincidence with those salutary intimations with which Nature herself seems to furnish us from the passing scenes of our existence.

The literary character of the work is akin to its moral character; and the diction is as soft, elegant, and simple, as the sentiments are generous and true. The whole piece, indeed, is throughout in admirable keeping; and its beauties, though of a delicate, rather than an obtrusive character, set off each other to an attentive observer, by the skill with which they are harmonized, and the sweetness with which they slide into each other. The outline, perhaps, is often rather timidly drawn, and there is an occasional want of force and brilliancy in the colouring; which we are rather inclined to ascribe to the refined and somewhat fastidious taste of the artist, than to any defect of skill or of power. We have none of the broad and blazing tints of Scott — nor the startling contrasts of Byron — nor the anxious and endlessly repeated touch of Southey — but something which comes much nearer to the soft and tender manner of Campbell; with still more reserve and caution, perhaps, and more frequent sacrifices of strong and popular effect to an abhorrence of glaring beauties, and a disdain of vulgar resources.

The work opens with a sort of epitome of its subject—and presents us with a brief abstract of man's (or at least Gentleman's) life, as

marked by the four great eras of — his birth — his coming of age — his marriage — and his death. The comprehensive picture, with its four compartments, is comprised in less than thirty lines. — We give the two latter scenes only.

"And soon again shall music swell the breeze;
Soon, issuing forth, shall glitter through the trees
Vestures of nuptial white; and hymns be sung,
And violets scatter'd round; and old and young,
In every cottage-porch with garlands green,
Stand still to gaze, and gazing, bless the scene!
While her dark eyes declining, by his side
Moves in her virgin veil the gentle Bride.
"And once, alas! nor in a distant hour,
Another voice shall come from yonder tower!
When in dim chambers long black weeds are seen,
And weepings heard, where only joy had been;
When by his children borne, and from his door
Slowly departing to return no more,
He rests in holy earth, with them that went before!
"And such is Human Life! So gliding on,
It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone!"—Pp. 8—10.

After some general and very striking reflections upon the perpetual but unperceived gradations by which this mysterious being is carried through all the stages of its fleeting existence, the picture is resumed and expanded with more touching and discriminating details. Infancy, for example, is thus finely delineated: —

"The hour arrives, the moment wish'd and fear'd;
The child is born, by many a pang endear'd.
And now the mother's ear has caught his cry;
Oh grant the cherub to her asking eye!
He comes! — she clasps him. To her bosom press'd,
He drinks the balm of life, and drops to rest.
"Her by her smile how soon the Stranger knows;
How soon by his, the glad discovery shows.
As to her lips she lifts the lovely boy,
What answering looks of sympathy and joy!
He walks, he speaks. In many a broken word
His wants, his wishes, and his griefs are heard,
And ever, ever to her lap he flies,
When rosy Sleep comes on with sweet surprise,
Lock'd in her arms, his arms across her flung
(That name most dear for ever on his tongue),
As with soft accents round her neck he clings,
And cheek to cheek, her lulling song she sings,
How blest to feel the beatings of his heart,
Breathe his sweet breath, and kiss for kiss impart!
Watch o'er his slumbers like the brooding dove,
And, if she can, exhaust a mother's love!"—Pp. 19, 20.

This is pursued in the same strain of tenderness and beauty through all its most interesting bearings;—and then we pass to the bolder kindlings and loftier aspirations of Youth.

"Then is the Age of Admiration — then
Gods walk the earth, or beings more than men!
Ha! then come thronging many a wild desire,
And high imaginings and thoughts of fire!
Then from within a voice exclaims 'Aspire!'
Phantoms, that upward point, before him pass,
As in the Cave athwart the Wizard's glass," &c.
P. 24.

We cut short this tablature, however, as well as the spirited sketches of impetuous courage and devoted love that belong to the same period, to come to the joys and duties of maturer life; which, we think, are described with still more touching and characteristic beauties. The Youth passes into this more tranquil and responsible state, of course, by Marriage; and we have great satisfaction in recurring, with our uxorious poet, to his representation of that engaging ceremony, upon which his thoughts seem to dwell with so much fondness and complacency.

"Then are they blest indeed! and swift the hours
Till her young sisters wreathe her hair in flowers,
Kindling her beauty — while, unseen, the least
Twitches her robe, then runs behind the rest,
Known by her laugh that will not be suppress'd,
Then before All they stand! The holy vow
And ring of gold, no fond illusions now,
Bind her as his! Across the threshold led,
And ev'ry tear kiss'd off as soon as shed,
His house she enters; there to be a light
Shining within, when all without is night!
A guardian-angel o'er his life presiding,
Doubling his pleasures, and his cares dividing!
How oft her eyes read his; her gentle mind,
To all his wishes, all his thoughts inclin'd;
Still subject — ever on the watch to borrow
Mirth of his mirth, and sorrow of his sorrow."
Pp. 32, 33.

Beautiful as this is, we think it much inferior to what follows; when Parental affection comes to complete the picture of Connubial bliss.

"And laughing eyes and laughing voices fill
Their halls with gladness. She, when all are still,
Comes and undraws the curtain as they lie
In sleep, how beautiful! He, when the sky
Gleams, and the wood sends up its harmony,
When, gathering round his bed, they climb to share
His kisses, and with gentle violence there
Break in upon a dream not half so fair,
Up to the hill top leads their little feet;

Or by the forest lodge; perchance to meet
The stag-herd on its march, perchance to hear
The otter rustling in the sedgy mere;
Or to the echo near the Abbot's tree,
That gave him back his words of pleasantry —
When the House stood, no merrier man than he!
And, as they wander'd with a keen delight,
If but a leveret catch their quicker sight
Down a green alley, or a squirrel then
Climb the gnarl'd oak, and look and climb again,
If but a moth flit by, an acorn fall,
He turns their thoughts to Him who made them all."
Pp. 34—36.

"But Man is born to suffer. On the door
Sickness has set her mark; and now no more
Laughter within we hear, or wood-notes wild
As of a mother singing to her child.
All now in anguish from that room retire,
Where a young cheek glows with consuming fire,
And innocence breathes contagion! — all but one,
But she who gave it birth! — From her alone
The medicine-cup is taken. Through the night,
And through the day, that with its dreary light
Comes unregarded, she sits silent by,
Watching the changes with her anxious eye:
While they without, listening below, above,
(Who but in sorrow know how much they love?)
From every little noise catch hope and fear,
Exchanging still, still as they turn to hear,
Whispers and sighs and smiles all tenderness!
That would in vain the starting tear repress."
Pp. 38, 39.

The scene, however, is not always purely domestic — though all its lasting enjoyments are of that origin, and look back to that consummation. His country requires the arm of a free man! and home and all its joys must be left for the patriot battle. The sanguinary and tumultuous part is slightly touched; but the return is exquisite, nor do we know, any where, any verses more touching and full of heartfelt beauty, than some of those we are about to extract.

"He goes, and Night comes as it never came!
With shrieks of horror! — and a vault of flame!
And lo! when morning mocks the desolate,
Red runs the rivulet by; and at the gate
Breathless a horse without its rider stands!
But hush! — a shout from the victorious bands!
And oh! the smiles and tears! a sire restor'd!
One wears his helm — one buckles on his sword;
One hangs the wall with laurel-leaves, and all
Spring to prepare the soldier's festival;
While She best-lov'd, till then forsaken never,
Clings round his neck, as she would cling for ever!
"Such golden deeds lead on to golden days,
Days of domestic peace — by him who plays
On the great stage how uneventful thought;
Yet with a thousand busy projects fraught,
A thousand incidents that stir the mind
To pleasure, such as leaves no sting behind!
Such as the heart delights in — and records
Within how silently — in more than words!
A holiday — the frugal banquet spread
On the fresh herbage near the fountain-head,
With quips and cranks — what time the wood-lark there
Scatters her loose notes on the sultry air,
What time the kingfisher sits perch'd below,
Where, silver bright, the water lilies blow: —
A wake — the booths whit'ning the village-green,
Where Punch and Scaramouch aloft are seen;
Sign beyond sign in close array unfurl'd,
Picturing at large the wonders of the world;
And far and wide, over the vicar's pale,
Black hoods and scarlet crossing hill and dale,
All, all abroad, and music in the gale: —
A wedding-dance — a dance into the night!
On the barn floor when maiden-feet are light;
When the young bride receives the promis'd dower,
And flowers are flung, 'herself a fairer flower:' —
A morning-visit to the poor man's shed,
(Who would be rich while one was wanting bread?)
When all are emulous to bring relief,
And tears are falling fast, but not for grief: —
A walk in Spring — Gr*tt*n, like those with thee,
By the heath-side (who had not envied me?)
When the sweet limes, so full of bees in June,
Led us to meet beneath their boughs at noon;
And thou didst say which of the Great and Wise,
Could they but hear and at thy bidding rise,
Thou wouldst call up and question." — Pp. 42—46.

Other cares and trials and triumphs await him. He fights the good fight of freedom in the senate, as he had done before in the field —and with greater peril. The heavy hand of power weighs upon him, and he is arraigned of crimes against the State.

"Like Hampden struggling in his country's cause,
The first, the foremost to obey the laws,
The last to brook oppression! On he moves,
Careless of blame while his own heart approves,
Careless of ruin — ('For the general good
'Tis not the first time I shall shed my blood') —
On through that gate misnamed,* through which before
Went Sidney, Russel, Raleigh, Cranmer, More!
On into twilight within walls of stone,
Then to the place of trial; and alone,
Alone before his judges in array
Stands for his life! there, on that awful day,
Counsel of friends — all human help denied —
All but from her who sits the pen to guide,

* Traitor's Gate, in the Tower.

Like that sweet saint who sat by Russel's side*
Under the judgment-seat! — But guilty men
Triumph not always. To his hearth again,
Again with honour to his hearth restor'd,
Lo, in the accustom'd chair and at the board,
Thrice greeting those that most withdrew their claim
(The humblest servant calling by his name),
He reads thanksgiving in the eyes of all,
All met as at a holy festival!
— On the day *destin'd* for his funeral!
Lo, there the friend, who entering where he lay,
Breath'd in his drowsy ear 'Away, away!
Take thou *my* cloak — Nay, start not, but obey —
Take it and leave me.' And the blushing Maid,
Who through the streets as through a desert stray'd;
And, when her dear, dear Father pass'd along,
Would not be held — but, bursting through the throng,
Halberd and battle-axe — kiss'd him o'er and o'er;
Then turn'd and went — then sought him as before,
Believing she should see his face no more!"

Pp. 48—50.

What follows is sacred to still higher remembrances.

"And now once more where most he lov'd to be,
In his own fields — breathing tranquillity —
We hail him — not less happy, Fox, than thee!
Thee at St. Anne's, so soon of care beguil'd,
Playful, sincere, and artless as a child!
Thee, who wouldst watch a bird's nest on the spray,
Through the green leaves exploring, day by day.
How oft from grove to grove, from seat to seat,
With thee conversing in thy lov'd retreat,
I saw the sun go down! — Ah, then 'twas thine
Ne'er to forget some volume half divine,
Shakspeare's or Dryden's — thro' the chequer'd shade
Borne in thy hand behind thee as we stray'd;
And where we sate (and many a halt we made)
To read there with a fervour all thy own,
And in thy grand and melancholy tone,
Some splendid passage not to thee unknown,
Fit theme for long discourse. — Thy bell has toll'd!
— But in thy place among us we behold
One that resembles thee." — Pp. 52, 53.

* We know of nothing at once so pathetic and so sublime, as the few simple sentences here alluded to, in the account of Lord Russel's trial.

Lord Russel. May I have somebody write to help my memory?

Mr. Attorney General. Yes, a Servant.

Lord Chief Justice. Any of your Servants shall assist you in writing any thing you please for you.

Lord Russel. My Wife is here, my Lord, to do it!
—— When we recollect who Russel and his wife were, and what a destiny was then impending, this one trait makes the heart swell, almost to bursting.

The scene of closing age is not less beautiful and attractive — nor less true and exemplary.

"'Tis the sixth hour.
The village-clock strikes from the distant tower,
The ploughman leaves the field; the traveller hears,
And to the inn spurs forward. Nature wears
Her sweetest smile; the day-star in the west
Yet hovering, and the thistle's down at rest.

"And such, his labour done, the calm He knows,
Whose footsteps we have follow'd. Round him glows
An atmosphere that brightens to the last;
The light, that shines, reflected from the Past,
— And from the Future too! Active in thought
Among old books, old friends; and not unsought
By the wise stranger. In his morning-hours,
When gentle airs stir the fresh-blowing flowers,
He muses, turning up the idle weed;
Or prunes or grafts, or in the yellow mead
Watches his bees at hiving-time; and now,
The ladder resting on the orchard-bough,
Culls the delicious fruit that hangs in air,
The purple plum, green fig, or golden pear,
'Mid sparkling eyes, and hands uplifted there.

"At night, when all, assembling round the fire,
Closer and closer draw till they retire,
A tale is told of India or Japan,
Of merchants from Golcond or Astracan,
What time wild Nature revell'd unrestrain'd,
And Sinbad voyag'd and the Caliphs reign'd; —
Of some Norwegian, while the icy gale
Rings in the shrouds and beats the iron sail,
Among the snowy Alps of Polar seas
Immoveable — for ever there to freeze!
Or some great caravan, from well to well
Winding as darkness on the desert fell," &c.

"Age has now
Stamp'd with its signet that ingenuous brow;
And 'mid his old hereditary trees,
Trees he has climb'd so oft, he sits and sees
His children's children playing round his knees:
Envying no more the young their energies
Than they an old man when his words are wise;
His a delight how pure . . . without alloy;
Strong in their strength, rejoicing in their joy!

"Now in their turn assisting, they repay
The anxious cares of many and many a day;
And now by those he loves reliev'd, restor'd,
His very wants and weaknesses afford
A feeling of enjoyment. In his walks,
Leaning on them, how oft he stops and talks,
While they look up! Their questions, their replies,
Fresh as the welling waters, round him rise,
Gladdening his spirit." — Pp. 53—61.

We have dwelt too long, perhaps, on a work more calculated to make a lasting, than a

strong impression on the minds of its readers — and not, perhaps, very well calculated for being read at all in the pages of a Miscellaneous Journal. We have gratified ourselves, however, in again going over it; and hope we have not much wearied our readers. It is followed by a very striking copy of verses written at Pæstum in 1816 — and more characteristic of that singular and most striking scene than any thing we have ever read, in prose or verse, on the subject. The ruins of Pæstum, as they are somewhat improperly called, consist of three vast and massive Temples, of the most rich and magnificent architecture; which are not ruined at all, but as entire as on the day when they were built, while there is not a vestige left of the city to which they belonged! They stand in a desert and uninhabited plain, which stretches for many miles from the sea to the mountains — and, after the subversion of the Roman greatness, had fallen into such complete oblivion, that for nearly nine hundred years they had never been visited or heard of by any intelligent person, till they were accidentally discovered about the middle of last century. — The whole district in which they are situated, though once the most fertile and flourishing part of the Tyrrhene shore, has been almost completely depopulated by the Mal'aria; and is now, in every sense of the word, a vast and dreary desert. The following lines seem to us to tell all that need be told, and to express all that can be felt of a scene so strange and so mournful.

"They stand between the mountains and the sea;
Awful memorials — but of whom we know not!
The seaman, passing, gazes from the deck.
The buffalo-driver, in his shaggy cloak,
Points to the work of magic, and moves on.
Time was they stood along the crowded street,
Temples of Gods! and on their ample steps
What various habits, various tongues beset
The brazen gates, for prayer and sacrifice!
"How many centuries did the sun go round
From Mount Alburnus to the Tyrrhene sea,
While, by some spell render'd invisible,
Or, if approach'd, approach'd by him alone
Who saw as though he saw not, they remain'd
As in the darkness of a sepulchre,
Waiting the appointed time! All, all within
Proclaims that Nature had resum'd her right,
And taken to herself what man renounc'd;
No cornice, triglyph, or worn abacus,
But with thick ivy hung or branching fern,
Their iron-brown o'erspread with brightest verdure!
"From my youth upward have I longed to tread
This classic ground. — And am I here at last?
Wandering at will through the long porticoes,
And catching, as through some majestic grove,
Now the blue ocean, and now, chaos-like,
Mountains and mountain-gulphs! and, half-way up,
Towns like the living rock from which they grew?
A cloudy region, black and desolate,
Where once a slave withstood a world in arms.
"The air is sweet with violets, running wild
'Mid broken sculptures and fallen capitals!
Sweet as when Tully, writing down his thoughts,
Sail'd slowly by, two thousand years ago,
For Athens; when a ship, if north-east winds
Blew from the Pæstan gardens, slack'd her course.
The birds are hush'd awhile; and nothing stirs,
Save the shrill-voic'd cigala flitting round
On the rough pediment to sit and sing;
Or the green lizard rustling through the grass,
And up the fluted shaft, with short quick motion,
To vanish in the chinks that time has made!
"In such an hour as this, the sun's broad disk
Seen at his setting, and a flood of light
Filling the courts of these old sanctuaries,
(Gigantic shadows, broken and confus'd,
Across the innumerable columns flung),
In such an hour he came, who saw and told,
Led by the mighty Genius of the Place!
Walls of some capital city first appear'd,
Half raz'd, half sunk, or scatter'd as in scorn;
— And what within them? what but in the midst
These Three, in more than their original grandeur,
And, round about, no stone upon another?
As if the spoiler had fallen back in fear,
And, turning, left them to the elements."

The volume ends with a little ballad, entitled "The Boy of Egremond" — which is well enough for a Lakish ditty, but not quite worthy of the place in which we meet it.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

(June, 1815.)

Roderick: The Last of the Goths. By Robert Southey, Esq., *Poet-Laureate, and Member of the Royal Spanish Academy.* 4to. pp. 477. London: 1814.*

This is the best, we think, and the most powerful of all Mr. Southey's poems. It abounds

* I have, in my time, said petulant and provoking things of Mr. Southey: — and such as I would not say

with lofty sentiments, and magnificent imagery; and contains more rich and comprehensive descriptions — more beautiful pictures of pure affection — and more impressive representations of mental agony and exaltation than we have often met with in the compass of a single volume.

A work, of which all this can be said with justice, cannot be without great merit; and ought not, it may be presumed, to be without great popularity. Justice, however, has something more to say of it: and we are not quite sure either that it will be very popular, or that it deserves to be so. It is too monotonous — too wordy — and too uniformly stately, tragical, and emphatic. — Above all, it is now and then a little absurd — and pretty frequently not a little affected.

The author is a poet undoubtedly; but not of the highest order. There is rather more of rhetoric than of inspiration about him — and we have oftener to admire his taste and industry in borrowing and adorning, than the boldness or felicity of his inventions. He has indisputably a great gift of amplifying and exalting; but uses it, we must say, rather unmercifully. He is never plain, concise, or unaffectedly simple, and is so much bent upon making the most of every thing, that he is perpetually overdoing. His sentiments and situations are, of course, sometimes ordinary enough; but the tone of emphasis and pretension is never for a moment relaxed; and the most trivial occurrences, and fantastical distresses, are commemorated with the same vehemence and exaggeration of manner, as the most startling incidents, or the deepest and most heart-rending disasters. This want of relief and variety is sufficiently painful of itself in a work of such length; but its worst effect is, that it gives an air of falsetto and pretension to the whole strain of the composition, and makes us suspect the author of imposture and affectation, even when he has good enough cause for his agonies and raptures.

How is it possible, indeed, to commit our sympathies, without distrust, to the hands of a writer, who, after painting with infinite force the anguish of soul which pursued the fallen Roderick into the retreat to which his crimes had driven him, proceeds with redoubled emphasis to assure us, that neither his remorse nor his downfal were half so intolerable to him, as *the shocking tameness of the sea birds* who flew round about him in that utter solitude! and were sometimes so familiar as to brush his cheek with their wings?

" For his lost crown
And sceptre never had he felt a thought
Of pain: Repentance had no pangs to spare
For trifles such as these. The loss of these
Was a cheap penalty . . that he had fallen
Down to the lowest depth of wretchedness,
His hope and consolation. But to lose
His human station in the scale of things, . .
To see brute Nature scorn him, and renounce
Its homage to the human form divine! . . .
Had then almighty vengeance thus reveal'd
His punishment, and was he fallen indeed
Below fallen man, . . below redemption's reach, . .
Made lower than the beasts?" — P. 17.

This, if we were in bad humour, we should be tempted to say, was little better than drivelling; — and certainly the folly of it is greatly aggravated by the tone of intense solemnity in which it is conveyed: but the worst fault by far, and the most injurious to the effect of the author's greatest beauties, is the extreme diffuseness and verbosity of his style, and his unrelenting anxiety to leave nothing to the fancy, the feeling, or even the plain understanding of his readers — but to have every thing set down, and impressed and hammered into them, which it may any how conduce to his glory that they should comprehend. There never was any author, we are persuaded, who had so great a distrust of his readers' capacity, or such an unwillingness to leave any oppor-

now. But I am not conscious that I was ever unfair to his Poetry: and if I have noted what I thought its faults, in too arrogant and derisive a spirit, I think I have never failed to give hearty and cordial praise to its beauties — and generally dwelt much more largely on the latter than the former. Few things, at all events, would now grieve me more, than to think I might give pain to his many friends and admirers, by reprinting, so soon after his death, any thing which might appear derogatory either to his character or his genius; and therefore, though I cannot say that I have substantially changed any of the opinions I have formerly expressed as to his writings, I only insert in this publication my review of his last considerable poem: which may be taken as conveying my matured opinion of his merits — and will be felt, I trust, to have done no scanty or unwilling justice to his great and peculiar powers.

tunity of shining unimproved: and accordingly, we rather think there is no author, who, with the same talents and attainments, has been so generally thought tedious — or acquired, on the whole, a popularity so inferior to his real deservings. On the present occasion, we have already said, his deservings appear to us unusually great, and his faults less than commonly conspicuous. But though there is less childishness and trifling in this, than in any of his other productions, there is still, we are afraid, enough of tediousness and affected energy, very materially to obstruct the popularity which the force, and the tenderness and beauty of its better parts, might have otherwise commanded.

There is one blemish, however, which we think peculiar to the work before us; and that is, the outrageously religious, or rather fanatical, tone which pervades its whole structure: — the excessive horror and abuse with which the Mahometans are uniformly spoken of on account of their religion alone; and the offensive frequency and familiarity with which the name and the sufferings of our Saviour are referred to at every turn of the story. The spirit which is here evinced towards the Moors, not only by their valiant opponents, but by the author when speaking in his own person, is neither that of pious reprobation nor patriotic hatred, but of savage and bigoted persecution; and the heroic character and heroic deeds of his greatest favourites are debased and polluted by the paltry superstitions, and sanguinary fanaticism, which he is pleased to ascribe to them. This, which we are persuaded would be revolting in a nation of zealous Catholics, must be still more distasteful, we think, among sober Protestants; while, on the other hand, the constant introduction of the holiest persons, and most solemn rites of religion, for the purpose of helping on the flagging interest of a story devised for amusement, can scarcely fail to give scandal and offence to all persons of right feeling or just taste. This remark may be thought a little rigorous by those who have not looked into the work to which it is applied — for they can have no idea of the extreme frequency, and palpable extravagance, of the allusions and invocations to which we have referred. — One poor woman, for example, who merely appears to give alms to the fallen Roderick in the season of his humiliation, is very needlessly made to exclaim, as she offers her pittance,

> "Christ Jesus, for his Mother's sake,
> Have mercy on thee."

— and soon after, the King himself, when he hears one of his subjects uttering curses on his name, is pleased to say,

> "Oh, for the love of Jesus curse him not!
> O brother, do not curse that sinful soul,
> Which Jesus suffer'd on the cross to save!"

Whereupon, one of the more charitable auditors rejoins,

> "Christ bless thee, brother, for that Christian speech!"

— and so the talk goes on, through the greater part of the poem. Now, we must say we think this both indecent and ungraceful; and look upon it as almost as exceptionable a way of increasing the solemnity of poetry, as common swearing is of adding to the energy of discourse.

We are not quite sure whether we should reckon his choice of a subject, among Mr. Southey's errors on the present occasion; — but certainly no theme could well have been suggested, more utterly alien to all English prejudices, traditions, and habits of poetical contemplation, than the domestic history of the last Gothic King of Spain, — a history extremely remote and obscure in itself, and treating of persons and places and events, with which no visions or glories are associated in English imaginations. The subject, however, was selected, we suppose, during that period when a zeal for Spanish liberty and a belief in Spanish virtue, spirit and talent, were extremely fashionable in this country; and before "the universal Spanish people" had made themselves the objects of mixed contempt and compassion, by rushing prone into the basest and most insulted servitude that was ever asserted over human beings. From this degradation we do not think they will be redeemed by all the heroic acts recorded in this poem, — the interest of which, we suspect, will be considerably lowered, by the late revolution in public opinion as to the merits of the nation to whose fortunes it relates. After all, however, we think it must be allowed, that any

author who interests us in his story, has either the merit of choosing a good subject, or a still higher merit; — and Mr. Southey, in our opinion, has made his story very interesting. Nor should it be forgotten, that by the choice which he has made, he has secured immense squadrons of Moors, with their Asiatic gorgeousness, and their cymbals, turbans, and Paynim chivalry, to give a picturesque effect to his battles, — and bevies of veiled virgins and ladies in armour, — and hermits and bishops, — and mountain villagers, — and torrents and forests, and cork trees and sierras, to remind us of Don Quixote, — and store of sonorous names: — and altogether, he might have chosen worse among more familiar objects.

The scheme or mere outline of the fable is extremely short and simple. Roderick, the valiant and generous king of the Goths, being unhappily married, allows his affections to wander on the lovely daughter of Count Julian; and is so far overmastered by his passion, as, in a moment of frenzy, to offer violence to her person. Her father in revenge of this cruel wrong, invites the Moors to seize on the kingdom of the guilty monarch; — and, assuming their faith, guides them at last to a signal and sanguinary victory. Roderick, after performing prodigies of valour, in a seven-days fight, feels at length that Heaven has ordained all this misery as the penalty of his offences; and overwhelmed with remorse and inward agony, falls from his battle horse in the midst of the carnage. Stripping off his rich armour, he then puts on the dress of a dead peasant; and, pursued by revengeful furies, rushes desperately on through his lost and desolated kingdom, till he is stopped by the sea; on the rocky and lonely shore of which he passes more than a year in constant agonies of penitence and humiliation, — till he is roused at length, by visions and impulses, to undertake something for the deliverance of his suffering people. Grief and abstinence have now so changed him, that he is recognized by no one; and being universally believed to have fallen in battle, he traverses great part of his former realm, witnessing innumerable scenes of wretchedness and valour, and rousing, by his holy adjurations, all the generous spirits in Spain, to unite against the invaders. After a variety of trials and adventures, he at last recovers his good war horse, on the eve of a great battle with the infidels; and, bestriding him in his penitential robes, rushes furiously into the heart of the fight, where, kindling with the scene and the cause, he instinctively raises his ancient war cry, as he deals his resistless blows on the heads of the misbelievers; and the thrilling words of "Roderick the Goth! Roderick and victory!" resounding over the astonished field, are taken up by his inspired followers, and animate them to the utter destruction of the enemy. At the close of the day, however, when the field is won, the battle horse is found without its rider! and the sword which he wielded lying at its feet. The poem closes with a brief intimation, that it was not known till many centuries thereafter, that the heroic penitent had again sought the concealment of a remote hermitage, and ended his days in solitary penances. The poem, however, both requires and deserves a more particular analysis.

The First Book or canto opens with a slight sketch of the invasion, and proceeds to the fatal defeat and heartstruck flight of Roderick. The picture of the first descent of the Moorish invaders, is a good specimen of the author's broader and more impressive manner. He is addressing the rock of Gibraltar.

"Thou saw'st the dark blue waters flash before
Their ominous way, and whiten round their keels;
Their swarthy myriads darkening o'er thy sands.
There, on the beach, the misbelievers spread
Their banners, flaunting to the sun and breeze:
Fair shone the sun upon their proud array,
White turbans, glitt'ring armour, shields engrail'd
With gold, and scymitars of Syrian steel;
And gently did the breezes, as in sport,
Curl their long flags outrolling, and display
The blazon'd scrolls of blasphemy." — Pp. 2, 3.

The agony of the distracted king, as he flies in vain from himself through his lost and ruined kingdom; and the spectacle which every where presented itself of devastation and terror, and miserable emigration, are represented with great force of colouring. At the end of the seventh day of that solitary and despairing flight, he arrives at the portal of an ancient convent, from which all its holy tenants had retired on the approach of the Moors, except one aged priest, who had staid to deck the altar, and earn his crown of martyrdom from

the infidel host. By him Roderick is found grovelling at the foot of the cross, and drowned in bitter and penitential sorrows. He leads him in with compassionate soothings, and supplicates him before the altar to be of comfort, and to trust in mercy. The result is told with great feeling and admirable effect: and the worthy father weeps and watches with his penitent through the night: and in the morning resolves to forego the glories of martyrdom for his sake, and to bear him company in the retreat to which he is hastening. They set out together, and fix themselves in a little rocky bay, opening out to the lonely roar of the Atlantic.

"Behind them was the desert, off'ring fruit
And water for their need; on either side
The white sand sparkling to the sun; in front,
Great Ocean with its everlasting voice,
As in perpetual jubilee, proclaim'd
The wonders of the Almighty, filling thus
The pauses of their fervent orisons.
Where better could the wanderers rest than here?"
P. 14.

The Second Book begins with stating, that Roderick passed twelve months in penance and austerities, in this romantic retreat. — At the end of that time his ghostly father dies; and his agonies become more intolerable, in the utter desolation to which he is now left. The author, however, is here a little unlucky in two circumstances, which he imagines and describes at great length, as aggravating his unspeakable misery; — one is the tameness of the birds — of which we have spoken already — the other is the reflection which he very innocently puts into the mouth of the lonely king, that all the trouble he has taken in digging his own grave will now be thrown away, as there will probably be nobody to stretch him out, and cover him decently up in it! However, he is clearly made out to be very miserable, and prays for death, or for the imposition of some more active penance —

—— "any thing
But stillness, and this dreadful solitude!"

At length he is visited, in his sleep, by a vision of his tender mother; who gives him her blessing in a gentle voice, and says, "Jesus have mercy on thee." The air and countenance of this venerable shade, as she bent in sorrow over her unhappy son, are powerfully depicted in the following allusion to her domestic calamities. He traced there, it seems, not only the settled sadness of her widowhood —

"But a more mortal wretchedness than when
Witiza's ruffians and the red-hot brass
Had done their work, and in her arms she held
Her eyeless husband; wip'd away the sweat
Which still his tortures forc'd from every pore;
Cool'd his scorch'd lids with medicinal herbs,
And pray'd the while for patience for herself
And him, — and pray'd for vengeance too! and found
Best comfort in her curses."—Pp. 23, 24.

While he gazes on this piteous countenance, the character of the vision is suddenly altered; and the verses describing the alteration afford a good specimen both of Mr. Southey's command of words, and of the profusion with which he sometimes pours them out on his readers.

——— "And lo! her form was chang'd!
Radiant in arms she stood! a bloody Cross
Gleam'd on her breastplate; in her shield display'd
Erect a Lion ramp'd; her helmed head
Rose like the Berecynthian Goddess crown'd
With towers, and in her dreadful hand the sword,
Red as a fire-brand blaz'd! Anon the tramp
Of horsemen, and the din of multitudes
Moving to mortal conflict, rung around;
The battle-song, the clang of sword and shield,
War-cries and tumult, strife and hate and rage,
Blasphemous prayers, confusion, agony,
Rout and pursuit, and death! and over all
The shout of Victory . . . of Spain and Victory!"
Pp. 24, 25.

In awaking from this prophetic dream, he resolves to seek occasion of active service, in such humble capacity as becomes his fallen fortune; and turns from this first abode of his penitence and despair.

The Third Book sets him on his heroic pilgrimage; and opens with a fine picture.

"'Twas now the earliest morning; soon the Sun,
Rising above Albardos, pour'd his light
Amid the forest, and with ray aslant
Ent'ring its depth illum'd the branchless pines;
Brighten'd their bark, ting'd with a redder hue
Its rusty stains, and cast along the floor
Long lines of shadow, where they rose erect,
Like pillars of the temple. With slow foot
Roderick pursued his way." — P. 27.

We do not know that we could extract from the whole book a more characteristic passage

than that which describes his emotion on his first return to the sight of man, and the altered aspect of his fallen people. He approaches to the walls of Leyria.

—— "The sounds, the sight
Of turban, girdle, robe, and scymitar,
And tawny skins, awoke contending thoughts
Of anger, shame, and anguish in the Goth!
The unaccustom'd face of human-kind
Confused him now, and through the streets he went
With hagged mien, and countenance like one
Craz'd or bewilder'd.
"One stopt him short,
Put alms into his hand, and then desir'd,
In broken Gothic speech, the moon-struck man
To bless him. With a look of vacancy
Roderick receiv'd the alms; his wand'ring eye
Fell on the money; and the fallen King,
Seeing his own royal impress on the piece,
Broke out into a quick convulsive voice,
That seem'd like laughter first, but ended soon
In hollow groans supprest!
A Christian woman spinning at her door
Beheld him, and with sudden pity touch'd
She laid her spindle by, and running in
Took bread, and following after call'd him back,
And placing in his passive hands the loaf,
She said, Christ Jesus for his Mother's sake
Have mercy on thee! With a look that seem'd
Like idiotcy he heard her, and stood still,
Staring awhile; then bursting into tears
Wept like a child!
"But when he reach'd
The open fields, and found himself alone
Beneath the starry canopy of Heaven,
The sense of solitude, so dreadful late,
Was then repose and comfort. There he stopt
Beside a little rill, and brake the loaf;
And shedding o'er that unaccustom'd food
Painful but quiet tears, with grateful soul
He breathed thanksgiving forth; then made his bed
On heath and myrtle." — Pp. 28—30.

After this, he journeys on through deserted hamlets and desolated towns, till, on entering the silent streets of Auria, yet black with conflagration, and stained with blood, the vestiges of a more heroic resistance appear before him.

"Helmet and turban, scymitar and sword,
Christian and Moor in death promiscuous lay
Each where they fell; and blood-flakes, parch'd and
crack'd
Like the dry slime of some receding flood;
And half-burnt bodies, which allur'd from far
The wolf and raven, and to impious food
Tempted the houseless dog." — P. 36.

While he is gazing on this dreadful scene with all the sympathies of admiration and sorrow, a young and lovely woman rushes from the ruins, and implores him to assist her in burying the bodies of her child, husband, and parents, who all lie mangled at her feet. He sadly complies; and listens, with beating heart and kindling eyes, to the vehement narrative and lofty vow of revenge with which this heroine closes her story. The story itself is a little commonplace; turning mainly upon her midnight slaughter of the Moorish captain, who sought to make love to her after the sacrifice of all her family; but the expression of her patriotic devotedness and religious ardour of revenge, is given with great energy; as well as the effect which it produces on the waking spirit of the king. He repeats the solemn vow which she has just taken, and consults her as to the steps that may be taken for rousing the valiant of the land to their assistance. The high-minded Amazon then asks the name of her first proselyte.

——— "'Ask any thing but that!'
The fallen king replied. 'My name was lost
When from the Goths the sceptre past away!'"

She rejoins, rather less felicitously, "Then be thy name *Maccabee;*" and sends him on an embassage to a worthy abbot among the mountains; to whom he forthwith reports what he had seen and witnessed. Upon hearing the story of her magnanimous devotion, the worthy priest instantly divines the name of the heroine.

"Oh none but Adosinda! .. none but she, ..
None but that noble heart, which was the heart
Of Auria while it stood — its life and strength,
More than her father's presence, or the arm
Of her brave lord, all valiant as he was.
Hers was the spirit which inspired old age,
Ambitious boyhood, girls in timid youth,
And virgins in the beauty of their spring,
And youthful mothers, doting like herself
With ever-anxious love: she breath'd through all
That zeal and that devoted faithfulness,
Which to the invader's threats and promises
Turn'd a deaf ear alike," &c. — Pp. 53, 54.

The King then commuhes on the affairs of Spain with this venerable ecclesiastic and his associates, who are struck with wonder at the lofty mien which still shines through his sunk and mortified frame.

"They scann'd his countenance: but not a trace
Betray'd the royal Goth! sunk was that eye
Of sovereignty; and on the emaciate cheek
Had penitence and anguish deeply drawn
Their furrows premature, . . . forestalling time,
And shedding upon thirty's brow, more snows
Than threescore winters in their natural course
Might else have sprinkled there." — P. 57.

At length the prelate lays his consecrating hands on him; and sends him to Pelayo, the heir-apparent of the sceptre, then a prisoner or hostage at the court of the Moorish prince, to say that the mountaineers are still unsubdued, and look to him to guide them to vengeance.

These scenes last through two books; and at the beginning of the Fifth, Roderick sets out on his mission. Here, while he reposes himself in a rustic inn, he hears the assembled guests at once lamenting the condition of Spain, and imprecating curses on the head of its guilty king. He says a few words vehemently for himself; and is supported by a venerable old man, in whom he soon recognizes an ancient servant of his mother's house—the guardian and playmate of his infant days. Secure from discovering himself, he musters courage to ask if his mother be still alive; and is soothed to milder sorrow by learning that she is. At dawn he resumes his course; and kneeling at a broken crucifix on the road, is insulted by a Moor, who politely accosts him with a kick, and the dignified address of "God's curse confound thee!" for which Roderick knocks him down, and stabs him with his own dagger. The worthy old man, whose name is Siverian, comes up just as this feat is performed, and is requested to assist in "hiding the carrion;" after which they proceed lovingly together. On their approach to Cordoba, the old man calls sadly to mind the scene which he had witnessed at his last visit to that place, some ten years before, when Roderick, in the pride of his youthful triumph, had brought the haughty foe of his father to the grave where his ashes were interred, and his gentle mother came to see that expiation made. The King listens to this commemoration of his past glories with deep, but suppressed emotion; and, entering the chapel, falls prostrate on the grave of his father. A majestic figure starts forward at that action, in the dress of penitence and mourning; and the pilgrims recognize Pelayo, to whom they both come commissioned. This closes the Sixth Book.

The Seventh contains their account of the state of affairs, and Pelayo's solemn acceptance of the dangerous service of leading the meditated insurrection. The abdicated monarch then kneels down and hails him King of Spain! and Siverian, though with mournful remembrances, follows the high example.

The Eighth Book continues this midnight conversation; and introduces the young Alphonso, Pelayo's fellow-prisoner at the Moorish court, who is then associated to their counsels, and enters with eager delight into their plans of escape. These two books are rather dull; though not without force and dignity. The worst thing in them is a bit of rhetoric of Alphonso, who complains that his delight in watching the moon setting over his native hills was all spoiled, on looking up and seeing the Moorish crescent on the towers!

The Ninth Book introduces an important person — Florinda, the unhappy daughter of Count Julian. She sits muffled by Pelayo's way, as he returns from the chapel, and begs a boon of him in name of Roderick, the chosen friend of his youth. He asks who it is that adjures him by that beloved but now unuttered name: —

"She bar'd her face, and, looking up, replied,
Florinda! . . Shrinking, then, with both her hands
She hid herself, and bow'd her head abas'd
Upon her knee! ——
Pelayo stood confus'd: He had not seen
Count Julian's daughter since, in Rod'rick's court,
Glittering in beauty and in innocence,
A radiant vision, in her joy she mov'd!
More like a poet's dream, or form divine,
Heaven's prototype of perfect womanhood,
So lovely was the presence, . . than a thing
Of earth and perishable elements." — P. 110.

She then tells him that, wretched as she is, the renegade Orpas seeks her hand; and begs his assistance to send her beyond his reach, to a Christian land. He promises that she shall share his own fate; and they part till evening.

The Tenth Book sends all the heroic party upon their night pilgrimage to the mountains of Asturia. Roderick and Siverian had gone before. Pelayo, with Alphonso and Florinda, follow in the disguise of peasants. Their mil-

night march, in that superb climate, is well described:—

——"The favouring moon arose,
To guide them on their flight through upland paths
Remote from frequentage, and dales retir'd,
Forest and mountain glen. Before their feet
The fire-flies, swarming in the woodland shade,
Sprung up like sparks, and twinkled round their way;
The timorous blackbird, starting at their step,
Fled from the thicket, with shrill note of fear;
And far below them in the peopled dell,
When all the soothing sounds of eve had ceas'd,
The distant watch-dog's voice at times was heard,
Answering the nearer wolf. All through the night
Among the hills they travell'd silently;
Till when the stars were setting, at what hour
The breath of heaven is coldest, they beheld
Within a lonely grove the expected fire,
Where Rod'rick and his comrade anxiously
Look'd for the appointed meeting."

"Bright rose the flame replenish'd; it illum'd
The cork-tree's furrow'd rind, its rifts and swells
And redder scars, .. and where its aged boughs
O'erbower'd the travellers, cast upon the leaves
A floating, grey, unrealising gleam."—Pp. 117, 118.

The rest soon sink in serene and troubled sleep: but Roderick and Florinda, little dreaming of each other's presence, are kept awake by bitter recollections. At last she approaches him; and, awed by the sanctity of his air and raiment, kneels down before him, and asks if he knows who the wretch is who thus grovels before him. He answers that he does not:—

"Then said she, 'Here thou seest
One who is known too fatally for all, ..
The daughter of Count Julian!' ... Well it was
For Rod'rick that no eye beheld him now!
From head to foot a sharper pang than death
Thrill'd him; his heart, as at a mortal stroke,
Ceas'd from its functions; his breath fail'd."—P. 120.

The darkness and her own emotions prevent her, however, from observing him, and she proceeds:—

"'Father!' at length she said, 'all tongues amid
This general ruin shed their bitterness
On Rod'rick; load his memory with reproach,
And with their curses persecute his soul.' ...
'Why shouldst thou tell me this?' exclaimed the Goth,
From his cold forehead wiping as he spake
The death-like moisture: .. 'Why of Rod'rick's guilt
Tell me? Or thinkest thou I know it not?
Alas! who hath not heard the hideous tale
Of Rod'rick's shame!'"——

"'There!' she cried,
Drawing her body backward where she knelt,
And stretching forth her arms with head uprais'd, ..
'There! it pursues me still! .. I came to thee,
Father, for comfort—and thou heapest fire
Upon my head! But hear me patiently,
And let me undeceive thee! Self-abas'd,
Not to arraign another do I come! ..
I come a self-accuser, self-condemn'd,
To take upon myself the pain deserv'd;
For I have drank the cup of bitterness,
And having drank therein of heavenly grace,
I must not put away the cup of shame.'

"Thus as she spake she falter'd at the close,
And in that dying fall her voice sent forth
Somewhat of its original sweetness. 'Thou! ..
Thou self-abas'd!' exclaim'd the astonish'd King; ..
'Thou self-condemn'd! .. The cup of shame for thee!
Thee .. thee, Florinda!' .. But the very excess
Of passion check'd his speech."—Pp. 121, 122.

Still utterly unconscious of her strange confessor, she goes on to explain herself:—

——"'I lov'd the King! ..
Tenderly, passionately—madly lov'd him!
Sinful it was to love a child of earth
With such entire devotion as I lov'd
Rod'rick, the heroic Prince, the glorious Goth!
He was the sunshine of my soul! and like
A flower, I liv'd and flourish'd in his light.
Oh bear not with me thus impatiently!
No tale of weakness this, that in the act
Of penitence, indulgent to itself,
With garrulous palliation half repeats
The sin it ill repents. I will be brief.'"—Pp. 123, 124.

She then describes the unconscious growth of their mutual passion—enlarges upon her own imprudence in affording him opportunities of declaring it—and expresses her conviction, that the wretched catastrophe was brought about, not by any premeditated guilt, but in a moment of delirium, which she had herself been instrumental in bringing on:—

"'Here then, O Father, at thy feet I own
Myself the guiltier; and full well I knew
These were his thoughts! But vengeance master'd me,
And in my agony I curst the man
Whom I lov'd best.'
'Dost thou recall that curse?'
Cried Rod'rick, in a deep and inward voice,
Still with his head depress'd, and covering still
His countenance. 'Recall it?' she exclaim'd!
'Father! I came to thee because I gave
The reins to wrath too long, .. because I wrought
His ruin, death, and infamy... O God,
Forgive the wicked vengeance thus indulged!
As I forgive the King!'"—P. 132.

Roderick again stops her enthusiastic self-accusation, and rejects her too generous vindication of the King;—and turning to Siverian, adds —

——"'To that old man, said he,
'And to the mother of the unhappy Goth,
Tell, if it please thee, not what thou hast pour'd
Into my secret ear, but that the child
For whom they mourn with anguish unallay'd,
Sinn'd not from vicious will, or heart corrupt,
But fell by fatal circumstance betray'd!
And if, in charity to them, thou say'st
Something to palliate, something to excuse
An act of sudden frenzy, when the fiend
O'ercame him, thou wilt do for Roderick
All he could ask thee, all that can be done
On earth, and all his spirit could endure!'
Then, vent'ring towards her an imploring look,
'Wilt thou join with me for his soul in prayer?'
He said, and trembled as he spake. That voice
Of sympathy was like Heaven's influence,
Wounding at once and comforting the soul.
'O Father! Christ requite thee!' she exclaim'd;
'Thou hast set free the springs which with'ring griefs
Have closed too long.'"——

"Then in a firmer speech,
'For Rod'rick, for Count Julian, and myself,
Three wretchedest of all the human race!
Who have destroy'd each other and ourselves,
Mutually wrong'd and wronging—let us pray!'"
Pp. 133, 134.

There is great power, we think, and great dramatic talent, in this part of the poem. The meeting of Roderick and Florinda was a touchstone for a poet who had ventured on such a subject; and Mr. Southey, we must say, has come out of the test, of standard weight and purity.

The Eleventh Book brings them in safety to the castle of Count Pedro, the father of the young Alphonso, formerly the feudal foe, but now the loyal soldier of Pelayo. They find him arming in his courts, with all his vassals, to march instantly against the Moors: and their joyful welcome, and the parental delight of father and mother at the return of their noble boy, are very beautifully described.

The Twelfth Canto continues these preparations. —The best part of it is the hasty and hopeful investiture of the young Alphonso with the honours of knighthood. The mixture of domestic affection with military ardour, and the youthful innocence, ingenuous modesty, and unclouded hopes of that blooming age, are feelingly combined in the following amiable picture, in which the classical reader will recognize many touches of true *Homeric* description: —

"Rejoicing in their task,
The servants of the house with emulous love
Dispute the charge. One brings the cuirass, one
The buckler; this exultingly displays
The sword, his comrade lifts the helm on high:
Greek artists in the imperial city forged
That splendid armour, perfect in their craft;
With curious skill they wrought it, framed alike
To shine amid the pageantry of war,
And for the proof of battle. Many a time
Alphonso from his nurse's lap had stretch'd
His infant hands toward it eagerly,
Where gleaming to the central fire it hung
High in the hall.——
No season this for old solemnities!
For wassailry and sport; . . the bath, the bed,
The vigil, . . all preparatory rites
Omitted now, . . here in the face of Heaven
Before the vassals of his father's house,
With them in instant peril to partake
The chance of life or death, the heroic boy
Dons his first arms! the coated scales of steel
Which o'er the tunic to his knees depend;
The hose, the sleeves of mail: bareheaded then
He stood. But when Count Pedro took the spurs,
And bent his knee, in service to his son,
Alphonso from that gesture half drew back,
Starting in rev'rence, and a deeper hue
Spread o'er the glow of joy which flush'd his cheeks.
'Do *thou* the rest, Pelayo!' said the Count;
'So shall the ceremony of this hour
Exceed in honour what in form it lacks.'"
Pp. 147—149.

The ceremony is followed by a solemn vow of fidelity to Spain, and eternal war with the Infidel, administered by Roderick, and devoutly taken by the young Knight, and all his assembled followers.

The Thirteenth Book contains a brief account of the defeat of a Moorish detachment by this faithful troop; and of the cowardice and rebuke of Count Eudon, who had tamely yielded to the invaders, and is dismissed with scorn to the castle which his brave countrymen had redeemed. They then proceed to guard or recover the castle of Pelayo.

The Fourteenth Book describes their happy arrival at that fortress, at the fall of evening; where, though they do not find his wife and daughters, who had retired for safety to a sacred cave in the mountains, they meet a joyful and triumphant band of his retainers, returning from a glorious repulse of the Moors,

and headed by the inspiring heroine Adosinda; who speedily recognizes in Roderick her mournful assistant and first proselyte at Auria, while he at the same moment discovers, among the ladies of her train, the calm and venerable aspect of his beloved mother, Rusilla.

The Fifteenth Book contains the history of his appearance before that venerated parent. Unable to sleep, he had wandered forth before dawn —

— "that morn
With its cold dews might bathe his throbbing brow,
And with its breath allay the fev'rish heat
That burnt within. Alas! the gales of morn
Reach not the fever of a wounded heart!
How shall he meet his mother's eye, how make
His secret known, and from that voice rever'd
Obtain forgiveness!" — P. 179.

While he is meditating under what pretext to introduce himself, the good Siverian comes to say, that his lady wishes to see the holy father who had spoken so charitably of her unhappy son. — The succeeding scene is very finely conceived, and supported with great judgment and feeling.

"Count Julian's daughter with Rusilla sate;
Both had been weeping, both were pale, but calm.
With head as for humility abased
Rod'rick approach'd, and bending, on his breast
He cross'd his humble arms. Rusilla rose
In reverence to the priestly character,
And with a mournful eye regarding him,
Thus she began: 'Good Father, I have heard
From my old faithful servant and true friend,
Thou didst reprove the inconsiderate tongue,
That in the anguish of its spirit pour'd
A curse upon my poor unhappy child!
O Father Maccabee, this is a hard world,
And hasty in its judgments! Time has been,
When not a tongue within the Pyrenees
Dared whisper in dispraise of Rod'rick's name.
Now, if a voice be raised in his behalf,
'Tis noted for a wonder; and the man
Who utters the strange speech shall be admired
For such excess of Christian charity.
Thy Christian charity hath not been lost; . . .
Father, I feel its virtue: . . . it hath been
Balm to my heart! . . With words and grateful tears, . . .
All that is left me now for gratitude, . . .
I thank thee! and beseech thee in thy prayers
That thou wilt still remember Rod'rick's name.'"
Pp. 180, 181.

The all-enduring King shudders at these words of kindness; — but repressing his emotion —

"'O venerable Lady,' he replied,
'If aught may comfort that unhappy soul
It must be thy compassion, and thy prayers.
She whom he most hath wrong'd, she who alone
On earth can grant forgiveness for his crime,
She hath forgiven him! and thy blessing now
Were all that he could ask, . . . all that could bring
Profit or consolation to his soul,
If he hath been, as sure we may believe,
A penitent sincere.'" — P. 182.

Florinda then asks his prayers for her unhappy and apostate father; and his advice as to the means of rejoining him.

"While thus Florinda spake, the dog who lay
Before Rusilla's feet, eyeing him long
And wistfully, had recognis'd at length,
Changed as he was and in those sordid weeds,
His royal master! And he rose and lick'd
His wither'd hand; and earnestly look'd up
With eyes whose human meaning did not need
The aid of speech; and moan'd, as if at once
To court and chide the long-withheld caress!
A feeling uncommix'd with sense of guilt
Or shame, yet painfullest, thrill'd through the King;
But he, to self-control now long inured,
Repress his rising heart," &c. — P. 186.

He makes a short and pious answer to the desolate Florinda; — and then —

"Deliberately, in self possession, still,
Himself from that most painful interview
Dispeeding, he withdrew. The watchful dog
Follow'd his footsteps close. But he retired
Into the thickest grove; there giving way
To his o'erburthen'd nature from all eyes
Apart, he cast himself upon the ground,
And threw his arms around the dog! and cried,
While tears stream'd down, 'Thou, Theron, then hast known
Thy poor lost master, . . . Theron, none but thou!'"
P. 187.

The Sixteenth Book contains the re-union of Pelayo's family in the cave of Covadonga. His morning journey to the place of this glad meeting, through the enchanting scenery of his native hills, and with the joyous company of self-approving thoughts, is well described.

Arrived at last upon the lonely platform which masks the cave in which the springs burst out, and his children are concealed, he sounds his bugle note; and the rock gives up its inhabitants! There is something animating and impressive, but withal a little too classical and rapturous, in the full-length picture of this delightful scene.

"But when a third and broader blast
Rung in the echoing archway, ne'er did wand,
With magic power endued, call up a sight
So strange, as sure in that wild solitude
It seem'd when from the bowels of the rock,
The mother and her children hasten'd forth!
She in the sober charms and dignity
Of womanhood mature, nor verging yet
Upon decay; in gesture like a queen,
Such inborn and habitual majesty
Ennobled all her steps:... Favila such
In form and stature, as the Sea Nymph's son,
When that wise Centaur, from his cave, well-pleas'd
Beheld the boy divine his growing strength
Against some shaggy lionet essay!
And fixing in the half-grown mane his hands,
Roll with him in fierce dalliance interwin'd!
But like a creature of some higher sphere
His sister came. She scarcely touch'd the rock,
So light was Hermesind's aërial speed.
Beauty and grace and innocence in her
In heavenly union shone. One who had held
The faith of elder Greece, would sure have thought
She was some glorious nymph of seed divine,
Oread or Dryad, of Diana's train
The youngest and the loveliest! yea she seem'd
Angel, or soul beatified, from realms
Of bliss, on errand of parental love
To earth re-sent."—Pp. 197, 198.

"Many a slow century, since that day, hath fill'd
Its course, and countless multitudes have trod
With pilgrim feet that consecrated cave;
Yet not in all those ages, amid all
The untold concourse, hath one breast been swoln
With such emotions as Pelayo felt
That hour."—P. 201.

The Seventeenth Book brings back the story to Roderick; who, with feelings more reconciled, but purposes of penitence and mortification as deep as ever, and as resolved, muses by the side of the stream, on past and future fortunes.

"Upon a smooth grey stone sate Rod'rick there;
The wind above him stirr'd the hazel boughs
And murm'ring at his feet the river ran.
He sate with folded arms and head declin'd
Upon his breast, feeding on bitter thoughts,
Till Nature gave him, in the exhausted sense
Of woe, a respite something like repose!
And then the quiet sound of gentle winds
And waters with their lulling consonance
Beguil'd him of himself. Of all within
Oblivious there he sate; sentient alone
Of outward nature,.. of the whisp'ring leaves
That sooth'd his ear,.. the genial breath of heaven
That fann'd his cheek,.. the stream's perpetual flow,
That, with its shadows, and its glancing lights,
Dimples and thread-like motions infinite,
For ever varying and yet still the same,
Like time toward eternity, ran by.
Resting his head upon his Master's knees,
Upon the bank beside him Theron lay."
Pp. 205, 206.

In this quiet mood, he is accosted by Siverian, who entertains him with a long account of Pelayo's belief in the innocence, or comparative innocence, of their beloved Roderick; and of his own eager and anxious surmises that he may still be alive.

The Eighteenth Book, which is rather long and heavy, contains the account of Pelayo's coronation. The best part of it, perhaps, is the short sketch of his lady's affectionate exultation in his glory. When she saw the preparations that announced this great event—

——"her eyes
Brighten'd. The quicken'd action of the blood
Ting'd with a deeper hue her glowing cheek;
And on her lips there sate a smile, which spake
The honourable pride of perfect love;
Rejoicing, for her husband's sake, to share
The lot he chose, the perils he defied,
The lofty fortune which their faith foresaw."—P. 218.

Roderick bears a solemn part in the lofty ceremonies of this important day; and, with a calm and resolute heart, beholds the allegiance of his subjects transferred to his heroic kinsman.

The Nineteenth Book is occupied with an interview between Roderick and his mother, who has at last recognized him; and even while she approves of his penitential abandonment of the world, tempts him with bewitching visions of recovered fame and glory, and of atonement made to Florinda, by placing her in the rank of his queen. He continues firm, however, in his lofty purpose, and the pious Princess soon acquiesces in those pious resolutions; and, engaging to keep his secret, gives him her blessing, and retires.

The Twentieth Book conducts us to the Moorish camp and the presence of Count Julian. Orpas, a baser apostate, claims the promised hand of Florinda; and Julian appeals to the Moorish Prince, whether the law of Mahomet admits of a forced marriage. The Prince attests that it does not; and then Julian, who has just learned that his daughter was in the approaching host of Pelayo, obtains leave to despatch a messenger to invite her to his arms.

The Twenty-first Book contains the meeting of Julian with his daughter and Roderick; under whose protection she comes at evening to the Moorish camp, and finds her father at his ablutions at the door of his tent, by the side of a clear mountain spring. On her approach, he clasps her in his arms with overflowing love.

"'Thou hast not then forsaken me, my child.
Howe'er the inexorable will of Fate
May in the world which is to come divide
Our everlasting destinies, in this
Thou wilt not, O my child, abandon me!'
And then with deep and interrupted voice,
Nor seeking to restrain his copious tears,
'My blessing be upon thy head!' he cried,
'A father's blessing! though all faiths were false,
It should not lose its worth?' . . . . She lock'd her hands
Around his neck, and gazing in his face
Through streaming tears, exclaim'd, 'Oh never more,
Here or hereafter, never let us part!'"—P. 258.

He is at first offended with the attendance and priestly habit of Roderick, and breaks out into some infidel taunts upon creeds and churchmen; but is forced at length to honour the firmness, the humility, and candour of this devoted Christian. He poses him, however, in the course of their discussion, by rather an unlucky question.

"'Thou preachest that all sins may be effac'd:
Is there forgiveness, Christian, in thy creed
For Rod'rick's crime?' . . 'For Rod'rick, and for thee,
Count Julian!' said the Goth; and as he spake
Trembled through every fibre of his frame,
'The gate of Heaven is open!' Julian threw
His wrathful hand aloft, and cried, 'Away!
Earth could not hold us both; nor can one Heaven
Contain my deadliest enemy and me!'"—P. 269.

This ethical dialogue is full of lofty sentiment and strong images; but is, on the whole, rather tedious and heavy. One of the newest pictures is the following; and the sweetest scene, perhaps, that which closes the book immediately after:

"'Methinks if ye would know
How visitations of calamity
Affect the pious soul, 'tis shown ye there!
Look yonder at that cloud, which through the sky
Sailing alone, doth cross in her career
The rolling moon! I watch'd it as it came,
And deem'd the deep opaque would blot her beams;
But, melting like a wreath of snow, it hangs
In folds of wavy silver round, and clothes
The orb with richer beauties than her own,
Then passing, leaves her in her light serene.'—
"Thus having said, the pious suff'rer sate,
Beholding with fix'd eyes that lovely orb,
Which through the azure depth alone pursues
Her course appointed; with indiff'rent beams
Shining upon the silent hills around,
And the dark tents of that unholy host,
Who, all unconscious of impending fate,
Take their last slumber there. The camp is still!
The fires have moulder'd; and the breeze which stirs
The soft and snowy embers, just lays bare
At times a red and evanescent light,
Or for a moment wakes a feeble flame.
They by the fountain hear the stream below,
Whose murmurs, as the wind arose or fell,
Fuller or fainter reach the ear attun'd.
And now the nightingale, not distant far,
Began her solitary song; and pour'd
To the cold moon a richer, stronger strain
Than that with which the lyric lark salutes
The new-born day. Her deep and thrilling song
Seem'd with its piercing melody to reach
The soul; and in mysterious unison
Blend with all thoughts of gentleness and love.
Their hearts were open to the healing power
Of nature; and the splendour of the night,
The flow of waters, and that sweetest lay,
Came to them like a copious evening dew,
Falling on vernal herbs which thirst for rain."
Pp. 274—276.

The Twenty-second Book is fuller of business than of poetry. The vindictive Orpas persuades the Moorish leader, that Julian meditates a defectiom from his cause; and, by working on his suspicious spirit, obtains his consent to his assassination on the first convenient opportunity.

The Twenty-third Book recounts the carnage and overthrow of the Moors in the Straits of Covadonga. Deceived by false intelligence, and drunk with deceitful hope, they advance up the long and precipitous defile, along the cliffs and ridges of which Pelayo had not only stationed his men in ambush, but had piled huge stones and trunks of trees, ready to be pushed over upon the ranks of the enemy in the lower pass. A soft summer mist hanging upon the side of the cliffs helps to conceal these preparations; and the whole line of the Infidel is irretrievably engaged in the gulf, when Adosinda appears on a rock in the van, and, with her proud defiance, gives the word, which is the signal for the assault. The whole description is, as usual, a little overworked, but is unquestionably striking and impressive.

—— "As the Moors
Advanced, the chieftain in the van was seen,
Known by his arms, and from the crag a voice
Pronounc'd his name, .. 'Alcahman, hoa! look up!
Alcahman!' As the floating mist drew up
It had divided there, and open'd round
The Cross; part clinging to the rock beneath,
Hov'ring and waving; part in fleecy folds,
A canopy of silver, light condens'd
To shape and substance. In the midst there stood
A female form, one hand upon the Cross,
The other rais'd in menacing act. Below
Loose flow'd her raiment, but her breast was arm'd,
And helmeted her head. The Moor turn'd pale,
For on the walls of Auria he had seen
That well-known figure, and had well believ'd
She rested with the dead. 'What, hoa!' she cried,
'Alcahman! In the name of all who fell
At Auria in the massacre, this hour
I summon thee before the throne of God,
To answer for the innocent blood! This hour!
Moor, Miscreant, Murderer, Child of Hell! this hour
I summon thee to judgment... In the name
Of God! for Spain and Vengeance!'
From voice to voice on either side it past
With rapid repetition, .. 'In the name
Of God! for Spain and Vengeance!' and forthwith
On either side, along the whole defile,
The Asturians shouting, in the name of God,
Set the whole ruin loose; huge trunks and stones,
And loosen'd crags! Down, down they roll'd with rush,
And bound, and thund'ring force. Such was the fall
As when some city by the labouring earth
Heav'd from its strong foundations is cast down,
And all its dwellings, towers and palaces,
In one wide desolation prostrated.
From end to end of that long strait, the crash
Was heard continuous, and commixt with sounds
More dreadful, shrieks of horror and despair,
And death, .. the wild and agonizing cry
Of that whole host, in one destruction whelm'd."
Pp. 298, 299.

The Twenty-fourth Book is full of tragical matter, and is perhaps the most interesting of the whole piece. A Moor, on the instigation of Orpas and Abulcacem, pierces Julian with a mortal wound; who thereupon exhorts his captains, already disgusted with the jealous tyranny of the Infidel, to rejoin the standard and the faith of their country; and then requests to be borne into a neighbouring church, where Florinda has been praying for his conversion.

—— "They rais'd him from the earth;
He, knitting as they lifted him his brow,
Drew in through open lips and teeth firm-clos'd
His painful breath, and on his lance laid hand,
Lest its long shaft should shake the mortal wound.
Gently his men with slow and steady step
Their suff'ring burthen bore; and in the Church,
Before the altar, laid him down, his head
Upon Florinda's knees."—Pp. 307, 308.

He then, on the solemn adjuration of Roderick, renounces the bloody faith to which he had so long adhered; and reverently receives at his hand the sacrament of reconciliation and peace. There is great feeling and energy we think in what follows: —

"That dread office done,
Count Julian with amazement saw the Priest
Kneel down before him. 'By the sacrament,
Which we have here partaken!' Roderick cried,
'In this most awful moment. By that hope, ..
That holy faith which comforts thee in death,
Grant thy forgiveness, Julian, ere thou diest!
Behold the man who most hath injur'd thee!
Roderick! the wretched Goth, the guilty cause
Of all thy guilt, .. the unworthy instrument
Of thy redemption, .. kneels before thee here,
And prays to be forgiven!'
'Roderick!' exclaim'd
The dying Count, .. 'Roderick!' .. and from the floor,
With violent effort, half he rais'd himself;
The spear hung heavy in his side! and pain
And weakness overcame him, that he fell
Back on his daughter's lap. 'O Death,' cried he, ..
Passing his hand across his cold damp brow, ..
'Thou tamest the strong limb, and conquerest
The stubborn heart! But yesterday I said
One Heaven could not contain mine enemy
And me; and now I lift my dying voice
To say, Forgive me, Lord! as I forgive
Him who hath done the wrong!' .. He clos'd his eyes
A moment; then with sudden impulse cried, ..
'Rod'rick, thy wife is dead! — the Church hath power
To free thee from thy vows! The broken heart
Might yet be heal'd, the wrong redress'd, the throne
Rebuilt by that same hand which pull'd it down!
And these curst Africans ... Oh for a month
Of that waste life which millions misbestow! ...'"
Pp. 311, 312.

Returning weakness then admonishes him, however, of the near approach of death; and he begs the friendly hand of Roderick to cut short his pangs, by drawing forth the weapon which clogs the wound in his side. He then gives him his hand in kindness — blesses and kisses his heroic daughter, and expires. The concluding lines are full of force and tenderness.

"When from her father's body she arose,
Her cheek was flush'd, and in her eyes there beam'd
A wilder brightness. On the Goth she gaz'd!
While underneath the emotions of that hour
Exhausted life gave way! 'O God!' she said,
Lifting her hands, 'thou hast restor'd me all, ..
All .. in one hour!' .... and round his neck she threw
Her arms and cried, 'My Roderick! mine in Heaven!'
Groaning, he clasp't her close! and in that act
And agony her happy spirit fled!" — P. 313.

The Last Book describes the recognition and exploits of Roderick in the last of his battles. After the revolt of Julian's army, Orpas, by whose counsels it had been chiefly occasioned, is sent forward by the Moorish leader, to try to win them back; and advances in front of the line, demanding a parley, mounted on the beautiful Orelio, the famous war horse of Roderick, who, roused at that sight, obtains leave from Pelayo to give the renegade his answer; and after pouring out upon him some words of abuse and scorn, seizes the reins of his trusty steed; and

—— "'How now,' he cried,
'Orelio! old companion, .. my good horse! ..
Off with this recreant burthen!' ... And with that
He rais'd his hand, and rear'd, and back'd the steed,
To that remember'd voice and arm of power
Obedient. Down the helpless traitor fell,
Violently thrown: and Roderick over him
Thrice led, with just and unrelenting hand,
The trampling hoofs. 'Go, join Witiza now,
Where he lies howling,' the avenger cried,
'And tell him Roderick sent thee!'"—Pp. 318, 319.

He then vaults upon the noble horse; and fitting Count Julian's sword to his grasp, rushes in the van of the Christian army into the thick array of the Infidel, — where, unarmed as he is, and clothed in his penitential robes of waving black, he scatters death and terror around him, and cuts his way clean through the whole host of his opponents. He there descries the army of Pelayo advancing to co-operate; and as he rides up to them with his wonted royal air and gesture, and on his well-known steed of royalty, both the King and Siverian are instantaneously struck with the apparition; and marvel that the weeds of penitence should so long have concealed their sovereign. Roderick, unconscious of this recognition, briefly informs them of what has befallen, and requests the honourable rights of Christian sepulture for the unfortunate Julian and his daughter.

"'In this, — *and all things else*,' —
Pelayo answer'd, looking wistfully
Upon the Goth, 'thy pleasure shall be done!'
Then Rod'rick saw that he was known — and turn'd
His head away in silence. But the old man
Laid hold upon his bridle, and look'd up
In his master's face — weeping and silently!
Thereat the Goth with fervent pressure took
His hand, and bending down toward him, said,
'My good Siverian, go not thou this day
To war! I charge thee keep thyself from harm!
Thou art past the age for combats; and with whom
Hereafter should thy mistress talk of me,
If thou wert gone?'" — P. 339.

He then borrows the defensive armour of this faithful servant; and taking a touching and affectionate leave of him, vaults again on the back of Orelio; and placing himself without explanation in the van of the army, leads them on to the instant assault. The renegade leaders fall on all sides beneath his resistless blows.

—— "And in the heat of fight
Rejoicing and forgetful of all else,
Set up his cry, as he was wont in youth,
'Rod'rick the Goth!' ... his war-cry, known so well!
Pelayo eagerly took up the word,
And shouted out his kinsman's name belov'd,
'Rod'rick the Goth! Rod'rick and Victory!
Rod'rick and Vengeance!' Odoar gave it forth;
Urban repeated it; and through his ranks
Count Pedro sent the cry. Not from the field
Of his great victory, when Witiza fell,
With louder acclamations had that name
Been borne abroad upon the winds of heaven."

—— "O'er the field it spread,
All hearts and tongues uniting in the cry;
Mountains, and rocks, and vales, re-echo'd round;
And he rejoicing in his strength rode on,
Laying on the Moors with that good sword; and smote,
And overthrew, and scatter'd, and destroy'd,
And trampled down! and still at every blow
Exultingly he sent the war-cry forth,
'Rod'rick the Goth! Rod'rick and Victory!
Rod'rick and Vengeance!'" —Pp. 334, 335.

The carnage at length is over, and the field is won! — but where is he to whose name and example the victory is owing?

—— "Upon the banks
Of Sella was Orelio found; his legs
And flanks incarnadin'd, his poitrel smear'd
With froth, and foam, and gore, his silver mane

Sprinkled with blood, which hung on every hair,
Aspers'd like dew-drops: trembling there he stood
From the toil of battle; and at times sent forth
His tremulous voice far-echoing loud and shrill;
A frequent anxious cry, with which he seem'd
To call the master whom he lov'd so well,
And who had thus again forsaken him.
Siverian's helm and cuirass on the grass
Lay near; and Julian's sword, its hilt and chain
Clotted with blood! But where was he whose hand
Had wielded it so well that glorious day? . . .
Days, months, and years, and generations pass'd,
And centuries held their course, before, far off
Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls,
A humble Tomb was found, which bore inscrib'd
In ancient characters, King Rod'rick's name?"

Pp. 339, 340.

These copious extracts must have settled our readers' opinion of this poem; and though they are certainly taken from the better parts of it, we have no wish to disturb the forcible impression which they must have been the means of producing. Its chief fault undoubtedly is the monotony of its tragic and solemn tone — the perpetual gloom with which all its scenes are overcast — and the tediousness with which some of them are developed. There are many dull passages, in short, and a considerable quantity of heavy reading — some silliness, and a good deal of affectation. But the beauties, upon the whole, preponderate; — and these, we hope, speak for themselves in the passages we have already extracted.

The versification is smooth and melodious, though too uniformly drawn out into a long and linked sweetness. The diction is as usual more remarkable for copiousness than force; — and though less defaced than formerly with phrases of affected simplicity and infantine pathos, is still too much speckled with strange words; which, whether they are old or new, are not English at the present day — and we hope never will become so. What use or ornament does Mr. Southey expect to derive for his poetry from such words as *avid* and *aureate*, and *auriphrygiate?* or *leman* and *weedery*, *frequentage* and *youthhead*, and twenty more as pedantic and affected? What good is there either, we should like to know, in talking of "oaken galilees," or "incarnadined poitrels," or "all-able Providence," and such other points of learning? — If poetry is intended for general delight, ought not its language to be generally intelligible?

LORD BYRON.

(December, 1816.)

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto the Third. By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 79. London: 1816.

The Prisoner of Chillon, and other Poems. By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 60. London: 1816.*

If the finest poetry be that which leaves the deepest impression on the minds of its readers — and this is not the worst test of its excellence—Lord Byron, we think, must be allowed to take precedence of all his distinguished contemporaries. He has not the variety of Scott — nor the delicacy of Campbell — nor the absolute truth of Crabbe — nor the polished sparkling of Moore; but in force of diction, and inextinguishable energy of sentiment, he clearly surpasses them all. "Words that breathe, and thoughts that burn," are not merely the ornaments, but the common staple of his poetry; and he is not inspired or impressive only in some happy passages, but through the whole body and tissue of his composition. It was an unavoidable condition, perhaps, of this higher excellence, that his scene should be narrow, and his persons few. To compass such ends as he had in view, it was necessary to reject all ordinary agents, and all trivial combinations. He could not possibly be amusing, or ingenious, or playful; or hope to maintain the requisite pitch of interest by the recitation of sprightly adventures, or the opposition of common characters. To produce great effects, in short, he felt that it was necessary to deal only with the greater passions — with the exaltations of a daring fancy, and the errors of a lofty intellect—with

* I have already said so much of Lord Byron with reference to his Dramatic productions, that I cannot now afford to republish more than one other paper, on the subject of his Poetry in general: and I select this, rather because it refers to a greater variety of these compositions, than because it deals with such as are either absolutely the best, or the most characteristic of his genius. The truth is, however, that all his writings are characteristic; and lead, pretty much alike, to those views of the dark and the bright parts of his nature, which have led me, I fear (though almost irresistibly), into observations more personal to the character of the author, than should generally be permitted to a mere literary censor.

the pride, the terrors, and the agonies of strong emotion — the fire and air alone of our human elements.

In this respect, and in his general notion of the end and the means of poetry, we have sometimes thought that his views fell more in with those of the Lake poets, than of any other existing party in the poetical commonwealth: and, in some of his later productions, especially, it is impossible not to be struck with his occasional approaches to the style and manner of this class of writers. Lord Byron, however, it should be observed, like all other persons of a quick sense of beauty, and sure enough of their own originality to be in no fear of paltry imputations, is a great mimic of styles and manners, and a great borrower of external character. He and Scott, accordingly, are full of imitations of all the writers from whom they have ever derived gratification; and the two most original writers of the age might appear, to superficial observers, to be the most deeply indebted to their predecessors. In this particular instance, we have no fault to find with Lord Byron: for undoubtedly the finer passages of Wordsworth and Southey have in them wherewithal to lend an impulse to the utmost ambition of rival genius; and their diction and manner of writing is frequently both striking and original. But we must say, that it would afford us still greater pleasure to find these tuneful gentlemen returning the compliment which Lord Byron has here paid to their talents; and forming themselves on the model rather of his imitations, than of their own originals. In those imitations they will find that, though he is sometimes abundantly mystical, he never, or at least very rarely, indulges in absolute nonsense—never takes his lofty flights upon mean or ridiculous occasions—and, above all, never dilutes his strong conceptions, and magnificent imaginations, with a flood of oppressive verbosity. On the contrary, he is, of all living writers, the most concise and condensed; and, we would fain hope, may go far, by his example, to redeem the great reproach of our modern literature—its intolerable prolixity and redundance. In his nervous and manly lines, we find no elaborate amplification of common sentiments — no ostentatious polishing of pretty expressions; and we really think that the brilliant success which has rewarded his disdain of those paltry artifices, should put to shame for ever that puling and self-admiring race, who can live through half a volume on the stock of a single thought, and expatiate over diverse fair quarto pages with the details of one tedious description. In Lord Byron, on the contrary, we have a perpetual stream of thick-coming fancies — an eternal spring of fresh-blown images, which seem called into existence by the sudden flash of those glowing thoughts and overwhelming emotions, that struggle for expression through the whole flow of his poetry — and impart to a diction that is often abrupt and irregular, a force and a charm which frequently realize all that is said of inspiration.

With all these undoubted claims to our admiration, however, it is impossible to deny that the noble author before us has still something to learn, and a good deal to correct. He is frequently abrupt and careless, and sometimes obscure. There are marks, occasionally, of effort and straining after an emphasis, which is generally spontaneous; and, above all, there is far too great a monotony in the moral colouring of his pictures, and too much repetition of the same sentiments and maxims. He delights too exclusively in the delineation of a certain morbid exaltation of character and of feeling — a sort of demoniacal sublimity, not without some traits of the ruined Archangel. He is haunted almost perpetually with the image of a being feeding and fed upon by violent passions, and the recollections of the catastrophes they have occasioned: and, though worn out by their past indulgence, unable to sustain the burden of an existence which they do not continue to animate: — full of pride, and revenge, and obduracy — disdaining life and death, and mankind and himself — and trampling, in his scorn, not only upon the falsehood and formality of polished life, but upon its tame virtues and slavish devotion: yet envying, by fits, the very beings he despises, and melting into mere softness and compassion, when the helplessness of childhood or the frailty of woman make an appeal to his generosity. Such is the person with whom we are called upon almost exclusively to sympathize in all the greater productions of this distinguished writer: — in Childe Harold — in the Corsair — in Lara

—in the Siege of Corinth—in Parisina, and in most of the smaller pieces.

It is impossible to represent such a character better than Lord Byron has done in all these productions—or indeed to represent any thing more terrible in its anger, or more attractive in its relenting. In point of effect, we readily admit, that no one character can be more poetical or impressive: — but it is really too much to find the scene perpetually filled by one character — not only in all the acts of each several drama, but in all the different dramas of the series; — and, grand and impressive as it is, we feel at last that these very qualities make some relief more indispensable, and oppress the spirits of ordinary mortals with too deep an impression of awe and repulsion. There is too much guilt, in short, and too much gloom, in the leading character; — and though it be a fine thing to gaze, now and then, on stormy seas, and thunder-shaken mountains, we should prefer passing our days in sheltered valleys, and by the murmur of calmer waters.

We are aware that these metaphors may be turned against us — and that, without metaphor, it may be said that men do not *pass their days* in reading poetry — and that, as they may look into Lord Byron only about as often as they look abroad upon tempests, they have no more reason to complain of him for being grand and gloomy, than to complain of the same qualities in the glaciers and volcanoes which they go so far to visit. Painters, too, it may be said, have often gained great reputation by their representations of tigers and other ferocious animals, or of caverns and banditti — and poets should be allowed, without reproach, to indulge in analogous exercises. We are far from thinking that there is no weight in these considerations; and feel how plausibly it may be said, that we have no better reason for a great part of our complaint, than that an author, to whom we are already very greatly indebted, has chosen rather to please himself, than us, in the use he makes of his talents.

This, no doubt, seems both unreasonable and ungrateful: but it is nevertheless true, that a public benefactor becomes a debtor to the public; and is, in some degree, responsible for the employment of those gifts which seem to be conferred upon him, not merely for his own delight, but for the delight and improvement of his fellows through all generations. Independent of this, however, we think there is a reply to the apology. A great living poet is not like a distant volcano, or an occasional tempest. He is a volcano in the heart of our land, and a cloud that hangs over our dwellings; and we have some reason to complain, if, instead of genial warmth and grateful shade, he voluntarily darkens and inflames our atmosphere with perpetual fiery explosions and pitchy vapours. Lord Byron's poetry, in short, is too attractive and too famous to lie dormant or inoperative; and, therefore, if it produce any painful or pernicious effects, there will be murmurs, and ought to be suggestions of alteration. Now, though an artist may draw fighting tigers and hungry lions in as lively and natural a way as he can, without giving any encouragement to human ferocity, or even much alarm to human fear, the case is somewhat different, when a poet represents men with tiger-like dispositions: — and yet more so, when he exhausts the resources of his genius to make this terrible being interesting and attractive, and to represent all the lofty virtues as the natural allies of his ferocity. It is still worse when he proceeds to show, that all these precious gifts of dauntless courage, strong affection, and high imagination, are not only akin to guilt, but the parents of misery; — and that those only have any chance of tranquillity or happiness in this world, whom it is the object of his poetry to make us shun and despise.

These, it appears to us, are not merely errors in taste, but perversions of morality; and, as a great poet is necessarily a moral teacher, and gives forth his ethical lessons, in general, with far more effect and authority than any of his graver brethren, he is peculiarly liable to the censures reserved for those who turn the means of improvement to purposes of corruption.

It may no doubt be said that poetry in general tends less to the useful than the splendid qualities of our nature — that a character poetically good has long been distinguished from one that is morally so — and that, ever since the time of Achilles, our sympathies, on such occasions, have been chiefly engrossed by persons whose deportment is by no means exem-

plary; and who in many points approach to the temperament of Lord Byron's ideal hero. There is some truth in this suggestion also. But other poets, in the *first* place, do not allow their favourites so outrageous a monopoly of the glory and interest of the piece—and sin less therefore against the laws either of poetical or distributive justice. In the *second* place, their heroes are not, generally, either so bad or so good as Lord Byron's—and do not indeed very much exceed the standard of truth and nature, in either of the extremes. His, however, are as monstrous and unnatural as centaurs, and hippogriffs—and must ever figure in the eye of sober reason as so many bright and hateful impossibilities. But the most important distinction is, that the other poets who deal in peccant heroes, neither feel nor express that ardent affection for them, which is visible in the whole of this author's delineations; but merely make use of them as necessary agents in the extraordinary adventures they have to detail, and persons whose mingled vices and virtues are requisite to bring about the catastrophe of their story. In Lord Byron, however, the interest of the story, where there happens to be one, which is not always the case, is uniformly postponed to that of the character itself—into which he enters so deeply, and with so extraordinary a fondness, that he generally continues to speak in its language, after it has been dismissed from the stage; and to inculcate, on his own authority, the same sentiments which had been previously recommended by its example. We do not consider it as unfair, therefore, to say that Lord Byron appears to us to be the zealous apostle of a certain fierce and magnificent misanthropy; which has already saddened his poetry with too deep a shade, and not only led to a great misapplication of great talents, but contributed to render popular some very false estimates of the constituents of human happiness and merit. It is irksome, however, to dwell upon observations so general—and we shall probably have better means of illustrating these remarks, if they are really well founded, when we come to speak of the particular publications by which they have now been suggested.

We had the good fortune, we believe, to be among the first who proclaimed the rising of a new luminary, on the appearance of Childe Harold on the poetical horizon,—and we pursued his course with due attention through several of the constellations. If we have lately omitted to record his progress with the same accuracy, it is by no means because we have regarded it with more indifference, or supposed that it would be less interesting to the public—but because it was so extremely conspicuous as no longer to require the notices of an official observer. In general, we do not think it necessary, nor indeed quite fair, to oppress our readers with an account of works, which are as well known to them as to ourselves; or with a repetition of sentiments in which all the world is agreed. Wherever a work, therefore, is very popular, and where the general opinion of its merits appears to be substantially right, we think ourselves at liberty to leave it out of our chronicle, without incurring the censure of neglect or inattention. A very rigorous application of this maxim might have saved our readers the trouble of reading what we now write—and, we confess the truth, we write it rather to gratify ourselves, than with the hope of giving them much information. At the same time, some short notice of the progress of such a writer ought, perhaps, to appear in his contemporary journals, as a tribute due to his eminence;—and a zealous critic can scarcely set about examining the merits of any work, or the nature of its reception by the public, without speedily discovering very urgent cause for his admonitions, both to the author and his admirers.

Our last particular account was of the Corsair;—and though from that time to the publication of the pieces, the titles of which we have prefixed, the noble author has produced as much poetry as would have made the fortune of any other person, we can afford to take but little notice of those intermediate performances; which have already passed their ordeal with this generation, and are fairly committed to the final judgment of posterity. Some slight reference to them, however, may be proper, both to mark the progress of the author's views, and the history of his fame.

Lara was obviously the sequel of the *Corsair*—and maintained, in general, the same tone of deep interest and lofty feeling;—though the disappearance of Medora from the

scene deprives it of the enchanting sweetness by which its terrors were there redeemed, and makes the hero on the whole less captivating. The character of Lara, too, is rather too laboriously finished, and his nocturnal encounter with the apparition is worked up too ostentatiously. There is infinite beauty in the sketch of the dark page — and in many of the moral or general reflections which are interspersed with the narrative. The death of Lara, however, is by far the finest passage in the poem, and is fully equal to any thing else which the author has ever written. Though it is not under our immediate cognisance, we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing the greater part of the passage — in which the physical horror of the event, though described with a terrible force and fidelity, is both relieved and enhanced by the beautiful pictures of mental energy and redeeming affection with which it is combined. Our readers will recollect, that this gloomy and daring chief was mortally wounded in battle, and led out of it, almost insensible, by that sad and lovely page, whom no danger could ever separate from his side. On his retreat, slaughter and desolation fall on his disheartened followers; and the poet turns from the scene of disorder —

"Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been,
A breathing but devoted warrior lay:
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away!
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,
And with his scarf would staunch the tides that rush,
With each convulsion, in a blacker gush;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow:
He scarce can speak; but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page;
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees;
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

"The foe arrives, who long had search'd the field,
Their triumph nought till Lara too should yield;
They would remove him; but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate:
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state: he answers not;
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled: — each remaining word,
They understood not, if distinctly heard;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung,"
&c.

"Their words though faint were many — from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone;
From this, you might have deem'd young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's, by his voice and breath;
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murm'ring death gasp'd hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once as Kaled's answ'ring accents ceast,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East.—

"But gasping heav'd the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretch'd flutt'ring, and his head dropp'd o'er
The weak, yet still untiring knee that bore!
He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more! but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp! but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
'It beats!' Away, thou dreamer! he is gone!
It once *was* Lara which thou look'st upon.

"He gaz'd, as if not yet had pass'd away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have rous'd him from his trance,
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;
And when, in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down, like earth to earth, upon the plain!
He did not dash himself thereby; nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze; but reel'd and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he lov'd so well!
Than that *He* lov'd! Oh! never yet beneath
The breast of *Man* such trusty love may breathe!
That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret, long and yet but half-conceal'd;
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex confest!
And life return'd, and Kaled felt no shame—
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame?"

We must stop here; — but the whole sequel of the poem is written with equal vigour and feeling; and may be put in competition with

any thing that poetry has ever produced, in point either of pathos or energy.

The SIEGE OF CORINTH is next in the order of time; and though written, perhaps, with too visible a striving after effect, and not very well harmonized in all its parts, we cannot help regarding it as a magnificent composition. There is less misanthropy in it than in any of the rest; and the interest is made up of alternate representations of soft and solemn scenes and emotions—and of the tumult, and terrors, and intoxication of war. These opposite pictures are perhaps too violently contrasted, and, in some parts, too harshly coloured; but they are in general exquisitely designed, and executed with the utmost spirit and energy. What, for instance, can be finer than the following night-piece? The renegade had left his tent in moody musing, the night before the final assault on the Christian walls.

"'Tis midnight! On the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down!
Blue roll the waters; blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gaz'd upon them shining,
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there,
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves,
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer."—

The transition to the bustle and fury of the morning muster, as well as the moving picture of the barbaric host, is equally admirable.

"The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle grey,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day!
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barb'rous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
And the clash, and the shout, 'They come, they come!'
The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground, and the sword
From its sheath! and they form—and but wait for the word.
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curv'd is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before!
Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare;
So is the blade of his scimitar!
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fir'd, then on!
Leave not in Corinth a living one—
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls!
God and the Prophet!—Alla Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!

"As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent!
Many a bosom, sheath'd in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they mov'd no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain!
As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,—
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreath'd and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long, and oft renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude!
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd, by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory!
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after-carnage done.

Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plunder'd dome:
Hark to the haste of flying feet!
That splash in the blood of the slippery street!"

Parisina is of a different character. There is no tumult or stir in this piece. It is all sadness, and pity, and terror. The story is told in half a sentence. The Prince of Esté has married a lady who was originally destined for his favourite natural son. He discovers a criminal attachment between them; and puts the issue and invader of his bed to death, before the face of his unhappy paramour. There is too much of horror, perhaps, in the circumstances; but the writing is beautiful throughout; and the whole wrapped in a rich and redundant veil of poetry, where every thing breathes the pure essence of genius and sensibility. The opening verses, though soft and voluptuous, are tinged with the same shade of sorrow which gives its character and harmony to the whole poem.

" It is the hour when from the boughs,
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word;
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear!
Each flower the dews have lightly wet;
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.
But it is not to list to the waterfall
That Parisina leaves her hall," &c.

" With many a ling'ring look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past!
And though they hope and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last.
The frequent sigh — the long embrace —
The lip that there would cling for ever,
While gleams on Parisina's face
The heaven she fears will not forgive her!
As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar."

The arraignment and condemnation of the guilty pair, with the bold, high-toned, and yet temperate defence of the son, are managed with admirable talent; and yet are less touching than the mute despair of the fallen beauty, who stands in speechless agony beside them.

" Those lids o'er which the violet vein —
Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
Shining through the smoothest white
That e'er did softest kiss invite —
Now seem'd with hot and livid glow
To press, not shade, the orbs below;
Which glance so heavily, and fill,
As tear on tear grows gath'ring still. —

" Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew —
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood;
But every now and then a tear
So large and slowly gather'd, slid
From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
To speak she thought — the imperfect note
Was chok'd within her swelling throat,
Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
It ceas'd — again she thought to speak,
Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
And to the earth she fell, like stone
Or statue from its base o'erthrown."

The grand part of this poem, however, is that which describes the execution of the rival son, and in which, though there is no pomp, either of language or of sentiment, and every thing, on the contrary, is conceived and expressed with studied simplicity and directness, there is a spirit of pathos and poetry to which it would not be easy to find many parallels.

" The convent bells are ringing!
But mournfully and slow!
In the grey square turret swinging
With a deep sound to and fro!
Heavily to the heart they go!
Hark! the hymn is singing!—
The song for the dead below,
Or the living who shortly shall be so!
For a departing Being's soul
The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
He is near his mortal goal;
Kneeling at the Friar's knee;
Sad to hear — and piteous to see! —
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around —
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father!

" It is a lovely hour as yet
Before the summer sun shall set,
Which rose upon that heavy day,
And mock'd it with his steadiest ray;
And his evening beams are shed
Full on Hugo's fated head!

As his last confession pouring
To the monk, his doom deploring
In penitential holiness,
He bends to hear his accents bless
With absolution, such as may
Wipe our mortal stains away!
That high sun on his head did glisten!
As he there did bow and listen!—
And the rings of chesnut hair
Curled half down his neck so bare;
But brighter still the beam was thrown
Upon the axe which near him shone
With a clear and ghastly glitter! ——
Oh! that parting hour was bitter!
Even the stern stood chill'd with awe:
Dark the crime and just the law —
Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

"The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son — and daring lover!
His beads and sins are all recounted;
His hours to their last minute mounted —
His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd!
'Tis done — all closely are they shorn —
The vest which till this moment worn —
The scarf which Parisina gave —
Must not adorn him to the grave,
Even that must now be thrown aside,
And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied;
But no — that last indignity
Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
'No! — yours my forfeit blood and breath —
These hands are chain'd — but let me die
At least with an unshackled eye —
Strike!' — and as the word he said,
Upon the block he bow'd his head;
These the last accents Hugo spoke:
'Strike!' — and flashing fell the stroke! —
Roll'd the head — and, gushing, sunk
Back'd the stain'd and heaving trunk,
In the dust, — which each deep vein
Slak'd with its ensanguin'd rain!
His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
Convuls'd and quick — then fix for ever."

Of the Hebrew Melodies — the Ode to Napoleon, and some other smaller pieces that appeared about the same time, we shall not now stop to say any thing. They are obviously inferior to the works we have been noticing, and are about to notice, both in general interest, and in power of poetry — though some of them, and the Hebrew Melodies especially, display a skill in versification, and a mastery in diction, which would have raised an inferior artist to the very summit of distinction.

Of the verses entitled "Fare thee well,"— and some others of a similar character, we shall say nothing but that, in spite of their beauty, it is painful to read them — and infinitely to be regretted that they should have been given to the public. It would be a piece of idle affectation to consider them as mere effusions of fancy, or to pretend ignorance of the subjects to which they relate — and with the knowledge which all the world has of these subjects, we must say, that not even the example of Lord Byron himself, can persuade us that they are fit for public discussion. We come, therefore, to the consideration of the noble author's most recent publications.

The most considerable of these, is the Third Canto of Childe Harold; a work which has the disadvantage of all continuations, in admitting of little absolute novelty in the plan of the work or the cast of its character, and must, besides, remind all Lord Byron's readers of the extraordinary effect produced by the sudden blazing forth of his genius, upon their first introduction to that title. In spite of all this, however, we are persuaded that this Third Part of the poem will not be pronounced inferior to either of the former; and, we think, will probably be ranked above them by those who have been most delighted with the whole. The great success of this singular production, indeed, has always appeared to us an extraordinary proof of its merits; for with all its genius, it does not belong to a sort of poetry that rises easily to popularity. — It has no story or action — very little variety of character — and a great deal of reasoning and reflection of no very attractive tenor. It is substantially a contemplative and ethical work, diversified with fine description, and adorned or overshadowed by the perpetual presence of one emphatic person, who is sometimes the author, and sometimes the object, of the reflections on which the interest is chiefly rested. It required, no doubt, great force of writing, and a decided tone of originality to recommend a performance of this sort so powerfully as this has been recommended to public notice and admiration — and those high characteristics belong perhaps still more eminently to the part that is now before us, than to any of the former. There is the same stern and lofty disdain of mankind, and their ordinary pursuits and enjoyments; with the same bright

gaze on nature, and the same magic power of giving interest and effect to his delineations—but mixed up, we think, with deeper and more matured reflections, and a more intense sensibility to all that is grand or lovely in the external world. — Harold, in short, is somewhat older since he last appeared upon the scene — and while the vigour of his intellect has been confirmed, and his confidence in his own opinions increased, his mind has also become more sensitive; and his misanthropy, thus softened over by habits of calmer contemplation, appears less active and impatient, even although more deeply rooted than before. Undoubtedly the finest parts of the poem before us, are those which thus embody the weight of his moral sentiments; or disclose the lofty sympathy which binds the despiser of Man to the glorious aspects of Nature. It is in these, we think, that the great attractions of the work consist, and the strength of the author's genius is seen. The narrative and mere description are of far inferior interest. With reference to the sentiments and opinions, however, which thus give its distinguishing character to the piece, we must say, that it seems no longer possible to ascribe them to the ideal person whose name it bears, or to any other than the author himself. — Lord Byron, we think, has formerly complained of those who identified him with his hero, or supposed that Harold was but the expositor of his own feelings and opinions; —and in noticing the former portions of the work, we thought it unbecoming to give any countenance to such a supposition. — In this last part, however, it is really impracticable to distinguish them. — Not only do the author and his hero travel and reflect together — but, in truth, we scarcely ever have any distinct intimation to which of them the sentiments so energetically expressed are to be ascribed; and in those which are unequivocally given as those of the noble author himself, there is the very same tone of misanthropy, sadness, and scorn, which we were formerly willing to regard as a part of the assumed costume of the Childe. We are far from supposing, indeed, that Lord Byron would disavow any of these sentiments; and though there are some which we must ever think it most unfortunate to entertain, and others which it appears improper to have published, the greater part are admirable, and cannot be perused without emotion, even by those to whom they may appear erroneous.

The poem opens with a burst of grand poetry, and lofty and impetuous feeling, in which the author speaks undisguisedly in his own person.

"Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me, as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome, to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvass fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam, to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

"In my youth's summer, I did sing of One,
The wand'ring outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards. In that tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life, — where not a flower appears.

"Since my young days of passion — joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar. It may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness! — so it fling
Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme."

After a good deal more in the same strain, he proceeds:

"Yet must I think less wildly: — I *have* thought
Too long and darkly; till my brain became
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd." —

"Something too much of this: — but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal!
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last."

The character and feelings of this unjoyous personage are then depicted with great force and fondness; — and at last he is placed upon the plain of Waterloo.

"In 'pride of place' where late the Eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierc'd by the shaft of banded nations through!"—

"Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters; — but is Earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
What! shall reviving Thraldom again be
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage?" ——

"If not, o'er *one* fall'n despot boast no more!"

There can be no more remarkable proof of the greatness of Lord Byron's genius than the spirit and interest he has contrived to communicate to his picture of the often-drawn and difficult scene of the breaking up from Brussels before the great battle. It is a trite remark, that poets generally fail in the representation of great events, when the interest is recent, and the particulars are consequently clearly and commonly known; and the reason is obvious: for as it is the object of poetry to make us feel for distant or imaginary occurrences nearly as strongly as if they were present and real, it is plain that there is no scope for her enchantments, where the impressive reality, with all its vast preponderance of interest, is already before us, and where the concern we take in the gazette far outgoes any emotion that can be conjured up in us by the help of fine descriptions. It is natural, however, for the sensitive tribe of poets, to mistake the common interest which they then share with the unpoetical part of their countrymen, for a vocation to versify; and so they proceed to pour out the lukewarm distillations of their phantasies upon the unchecked effervescence of public feeling! All our bards, accordingly, great and small, and of all sexes, ages, and professions, from Scott and Southey, down to hundreds without names or additions, have adventured upon this theme — and failed in the management of it! And while they yielded to the patriotic impulse, as if they had all caught the inspiring summons —

"Let those rhyme now who never rhym'd before,
And those who always rhyme, rhyme now the more —"

The result has been, that scarcely a line to be remembered had been produced on a subject which, probably, was thought, of itself, a secure passport to immortality. It required some courage to venture on a theme beset with so many dangers, and deformed with the wrecks of so many former adventurers; — and a theme, too, which, in its general conception, appeared alien to the prevailing tone of Lord Byron's poetry. See, however, with what easy strength he enters upon it, and with how much grace he gradually finds his way back to his own peculiar vein of sentiment and diction.

"There was a sound of revelry by night;
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her beauty and her chivalry; and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men.
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!"

"Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gath'ring tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings; such as press
The life from out young hearts; and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated: — who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise?

"And there was mounting in hot haste; the steed,
The must'ring squadron, and the clatt'ring car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed.
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder, peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Rous'd up the soldier ere the morning star."

"And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass!
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass,
Which now beneath them, but *above* shall grow
In its next verdure! when this fiery mass
Of living valour rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low."

After some brief commemoration of the worth and valour that fell in that bloody field, the author turns to the many hopeless mourners that survive to lament their extinction; the many broken-hearted families, whose incurable sorrow is enhanced by the national exultation that still points, with importunate joy, to the scene of their destruction. There is a richness and energy in the follow-

ing passage which is peculiar to Lord Byron, among all modern poets,—a throng of glowing images, poured forth at once, with a facility and profusion which must appear mere wastefulness to more economical writers, and a certain negligence and harshness of diction, which can belong only to an author who is oppressed with the exuberance and rapidity of his conceptions.

"The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for! though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing; and the name
So honour'd but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

"They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn!
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthral;
The day drags though, though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

"Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign,—for such things are untold."

There is next an apostrophe to Napoleon, graduating into a series of general reflections, expressed with infinite beauty and earnestness, and illustrated by another cluster of magical images;—but breathing the very essence of misanthropical disdain, and embodying opinions which we conceive not to be less erroneous than revolting. After noticing the strange combination of grandeur and littleness which seemed to form the character of that greatest of all captains and conquerors, the author proceeds,—

"Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smil'd
With a sedate and all enduring eye;—
When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him pil'd.

"Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn which could contemn
Men and their thoughts. 'Twas wise to feel; not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow:
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose!—
So hath it prov'd to thee, and all such lot who choose.

"But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane! There is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure; nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

"This makes the madmen, who have made men mad
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems,—to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things,
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

"Their breath is agitation; and their life,
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last;
And yet so nurs'd and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die!
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering! or a sword laid by
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

"He who ascends the mountain-tops shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
He who *surpasses* or *subdues* mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks; and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led."

This is splendidly written, no doubt—but we trust it is not true; and as it is delivered

with much more than poetical earnestness, and recurs, indeed, in other forms in various parts of the volume, we must really be allowed to enter our dissent somewhat at large. With regard to conquerors, we wish with all our hearts that the case were as noble as the author represents it: but we greatly fear they are neither half so unhappy, nor half so much hated as they should be. On the contrary, it seems plain enough that they are very commonly idolized and admired, even by those on whom they trample; and we suspect, moreover, that in general they actually pass their time rather agreeably, and derive considerable satisfaction from the ruin and desolation of the world. From Macedonia's madman to the Swede — from Nimrod to Bonaparte, the hunters of men have pursued their sport with as much gaiety, and as little remorse, as the hunters of other animals — and have lived as cheerily in their days of action, and as comfortably in their repose, as the followers of better pursuits. For this, and for the fame which they have generally enjoyed, they are obviously indebted to the great interests connected with their employment, and the mental excitement which belongs to its hopes and hazards. It would be strange, therefore, if the other active, but more innocent spirits, whom Lord Byron has here placed in the same predicament, and who share all *their* sources of enjoyment, without the guilt and the hardness which they cannot fail of contracting, should be more miserable or more unfriended than those splendid curses of mankind: — and it would be *passing strange*, and pitiful, if the most precious gifts of Providence should produce only unhappiness, and mankind regard with hostility their greatest benefactors.

We do not believe in any such prodigies. Great vanity and ambition may indeed lead to feverish and restless efforts — to jealousies, to hate, and to mortification — but these are only their effects when united to inferior abilities. It is not those, in short, who actually surpass mankind, that are unhappy; but those who struggle in vain to surpass them: and this moody temper, which eats into itself from within, and provokes fair and unfair opposition from without, is generally the result of pretensions which outgo the merits by which they are supported; and disappointments, that may be clearly traced, not to the excess of genius, but its defect.

It will be found, we believe, accordingly, that the master spirits of their age have always escaped the unhappiness which is here supposed to be the inevitable lot of extraordinary talents; and that this strange tax upon genius has only been levied from those who held the secondary shares of it. Men of truly great powers of mind have generally been cheerful, social, and indulgent; while a tendency to sentimental whining, or fierce intolerance, may be ranked among the surest symptoms of little souls and inferior intellects. In the whole list of our English poets, we can only remember Shenstone and Savage — two, certainly, of the lowest — who were querulous and discontented. Cowley, indeed, used to call himself melancholy; — but he was not in earnest; and, at any rate, was full of conceits and affectations; and has nothing to make us proud of him. Shakspeare, the greatest of them all, was evidently of a free and joyous temperament; — and so was Chaucer, their common master. The same disposition appears to have predominated in Fletcher, Jonson, and their great contemporaries. The genius of Milton partook something of the austerity of the party to which he belonged, and of the controversies in which he was involved, but even when fallen on evil days and evil tongues, his spirit seems to have retained its serenity as well as its dignity; and in his private life, as well as in his poetry, the majesty of a high character is tempered with great sweetness, genial indulgences, and practical wisdom. In the succeeding age our poets were but too gay; and though we forbear to speak of living authors, we know enough of them to say with confidence, that to be miserable or to be hated is not now, any more than heretofore, the common lot of those who excel.

If this, however, be the case with poets, confessedly the most irritable and fantastic of all men of genius — and of poets, too, bred and born in the gloomy climate of England, it is not likely that those who have surpassed their fellows in other ways, or in other regions, have been more distinguished for unhappiness. Were Socrates and Plato, the greatest philosophers of antiquity, remarkable for unsocial or gloomy tempers? — was Bacon, the greatest

in modern times? — was Sir Thomas More — or Erasmus — or Hume — or Voltaire? — was Newton — or Fenelon? — was Francis I. — or Henry IV., the paragon of kings and conquerors? — was Fox, the most ardent, and, in the vulgar sense, the least successful of statesmen? These, and men like these, are undoubtedly the lights and the boast of the world. Yet there was no alloy of misanthropy or gloom in their genius. They did not disdain the men they had surpassed; and neither feared nor experienced their hostility. Some detractors they might have, from envy or misapprehension; but, beyond all doubt, the prevailing sentiments in respect to them have always been those of gratitude and admiration; and the error of public judgment, where it has erred, has much oftener been to overrate than to undervalue the merits of those who had claims on their good opinion. On the whole, we are far from thinking that eminent men are actually happier than those who glide through life in peaceful obscurity: but it is their eminence, and the consequences of it, rather than the mental superiority by which it is obtained, that interferes with their enjoyment. Distinction, however won, usually leads to a passion for more distinction; and is apt to engage us in laborious efforts and anxious undertakings; and those, even when successful, seldom repay, in our judgment at least, the ease, the leisure, and tranquillity, of which they require the sacrifice: but it really passes our imagination to conceive, that the very highest degrees of intellectual vigour, or fancy, or sensibility, should of themselves be productive either of unhappiness or general dislike.

Harold and his poet next move along the lovely banks of the Rhine, to which, and all their associated emotions, due honour is paid in various powerful stanzas. We pass on, however, to the still more attractive scenes of Switzerland. The opening is of suitable grandeur.

"But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls,
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche — the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below."

On this magnificent threshold, the poet pauses, to honour the patriot field of Morat, and the shrine of the priestess of Aventicum; and then, in congratulating himself on his solitude, once more moralizes his song, with something of an apology for its more bitter misanthropies.

"To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind;
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng," &c.

"The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness; on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite,
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er shall be.

"Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake."

The cliffs of Meillerie, and the groves of Clarens, of course conjure up the shade of Rousseau; whom he characterizes very strongly, but charitably, in several enchanting stanzas; — one or two of which we shall cite as a specimen of the kindred rapture with which the Poet here honours the Apostle of Love.

"His love was passion's essence! As a tree
On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty; which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

"*This* breath'd itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet," &c.

"Clarens! sweet Clarens, birth-place of deep Love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought!
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above
The very Glaciers have his colours caught,
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly! The rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love; who sought

In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

"All things are here of *him;* from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude."

Our readers may think, perhaps, that there is too much sentiment and reflection in these extracts; and wish for the relief of a little narative or description: but the truth is, that there is no narrative in the poem, and that all the descriptions are blended with the expressions of deep emotion. The following picture, however, of an evening calm on the lake of Geneva, we think, must please even the lovers of pure description —

"Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wide world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction! Once I lov'd
Torn ocean's roar; but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet, as if a sister's voice reprov'd,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so mov'd.

"It is the hush of night; and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep! and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more!

"At intervals, some bird from out the brakes,
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill;
But that is fancy! — for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her hues."

The following sketch of a midsummer night's thunder-storm in the same sublime region, is still more striking and original: —

"The sky is chang'd! — and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong!
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

"And this is in the night: — Most glorious n ght!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea!
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black, — and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth."

In passing Ferney and Lausanne, there is a fine account of Voltaire and Gibbon; but we have room for but one more extract, and must take it from the characteristic reflections with which the piece is concluded. These, like most of the preceding, may be thought to savour too much of egotism: but this is of the essence of such poetry; and if Lord Byron had only been happier, or in better humour with the world, we should have been delighted with the confidence he has here reposed in his readers: — as it is, it sounds too like the last disdainful address of a man who is about to quit a world which has ceased to have any attractions — like the resolute speech of Pierre —

"For this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now." —

The reckoning, however, is steadily and sternly made; and though he does not spare himself, we must say that the world comes off much the worst in the comparison. The passage is very singular, and written with much force and dignity.

"Thus far I have proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices. — To feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be; — and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught, —
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal, —
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul! — No matter! — it is taught.

"I have not lov'd the world — nor the world me!
I have not flatter'd its rank breath; nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee, —
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, — nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo. In the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I stood
Among them, but not of them," &c.

"I have not lov'd the world, nor the world me! —
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things, — hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing! I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve,
That two, or one, are almost what they seem, —
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream."

The closing stanzas of the poem are extremely beautiful; — but we are immovable in the resolution, that no statement of ours shall ever give additional publicity to the subjects of which they treat.

We now come to the "Prisoner of Chillon." It is very sweet and touching — though we can afford but a short account of it. Chillon is a ruined castle on the Lake of Geneva, in the dungeon of which three gallant brothers were confined, each chained to a separate pillar, till, after long years of anguish, the two younger died, and were buried under the cold floor of the prison. The eldest was at length liberated, when worn out with age and misery — and is supposed, in his joyless liberty, to tell the sad story of his imprisonment. The picture of their first feelings, when bound apart in this living tomb, and of the gradual sinking of their cheery fortitude, is full of pity and agony.

"We could not move a single pace;
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together — yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, and pin'd in heart;
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each,
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold!
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
A grating sound — not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy — but to me
They never sounded like our own."

The return to the condition of the younger brother, the blooming Benjamin of the family, is extremely natural and affecting.

"I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest,
I ought to do — and did my best:
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father lov'd,
Because our mother's brow was giv'n
To him — with eyes as blue as heav'n,
For him my soul was sorely mov'd;
And truly might it be distrest
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day —
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free) —
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills:
And then they flow'd like mountain rills."

The gentle decay and gradual extinction of this youngest life, is the most tender and beautiful passage in the poem.

"But he, the favorite and the flow'r,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that this might be
Less wretched now, and one day free!
He, too, who yet had held untir'd
A spirit natural or inspir'd —
He, too, was struck! and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
He faded; and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And griev'd for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray —
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur! — not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence — lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less!
I listen'd, but I could not hear! —
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound —
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him! — I found *him* not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only liv'd — *I* only drew
Th' accursed breath of dungeon-dew."

After this last calamity he is allowed to be at large in the dungeon.

"And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,

And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod.

He climbs up at last to the high chink that admitted the light to his prison; and looks out once more on the long-remembered face of nature, and the lofty forms of the eternal mountains.

"I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not chang'd like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush!
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view!
A small green isle; it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous, each and all;
The eagle rode the riding blast;
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly."

The rest of the poems in this little volume are less amiable — and most of them, we fear, have a personal and not very charitable application. One, entitled "Darkness," is free at least from this imputation. It is a grand and gloomy sketch of the supposed consequences of the final extinction of the Sun and the Heavenly bodies — executed, undoubtedly, with great and fearful force — but with something of German exaggeration, and a fantastical selection of incidents. The very conception is terrible, above all conception of known calamity — and is too oppressive to the imagination, to be contemplated with pleasure, even in the faint reflection of poetry.

"The icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air."

Cities and forests are burnt, for light and warmth.

"The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them! Some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smil'd!
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world! and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd!"

Then they eat each other: and are extinguished!

"——— The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay!
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal: As they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The moon their mistress had expir'd before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them — She was the universe."

There is a poem entitled "The Dream," full of living pictures, and written with great beauty and genius — but extremely painful — and abounding with mysteries into which we have no desire to penetrate. "The Incantation" and "Titan" have the same distressing character — though without the sweetness of the other. Some stanzas to a nameless friend, are in a tone of more open misanthropy. This is a favourable specimen of their tone and temper.

"Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though lov'd, thou foreborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie."

Beautiful as this poetry is, it is a relief at last to close the volume. We cannot maintain our accustomed tone of levity, or even speak like calm literary judges, in the midst of these agonizing traces of a wounded and distempered spirit. Even our admiration is at last swallowed up in a most painful feeling of pity and of wonder. It is impossible to mistake these

for fictitious sorrows, conjured up for the purpose of poetical effect. There is a dreadful tone of sincerity, and an energy that cannot be counterfeited, in the expression of wretchedness and alienation from human kind, which occurs in every page of this publication; and as the author has at last spoken out in his own person, and unbosomed his griefs a great deal too freely to his readers, the offence now would be to entertain a doubt of their reality. We certainly have no hope of preaching him into philanthropy and cheerfulness; but it is impossible not to mourn over such a catastrophe of such a mind; or to see the prodigal gifts of Nature, Fortune, and Fame, thus turned to bitterness, without an oppressive feeling of impatience, mortification, and surprise. Where there are such elements, however, it is equally impossible to despair that they may yet enter into happier combinations, — or not to hope that "this puissant spirit"

"yet shall re-ascend
Self-raised, and repossess its native seat."

THOMAS MOORE.

(NOVEMBER, 1817.)

Lalla Rookh; an Oriental Romance. By THOMAS MOORE. 4to. pp. 405.: London, 1817.

THERE is a great deal of our recent poetry derived from the East: but this is the finest Orientalism we have had yet The land of the Sun has never shone out so brightly on the children of the North — nor the sweets of Asia been poured forth, nor her gorgeousness displayed so profusely to the delighted senses of Europe. The beauteous forms, the dazzling splendours, the breathing odours of the East, seem at last to have found a kindred poet in that Green Isle of the West; whose Genius has long been suspected to be derived from a warmer clime, and now wantons and luxuriates in those voluptuous regions, as if it felt that it had at length regained its native element. It is amazing, indeed, how much at home Mr. Moore seems to be in India, Persia, and Arabia; and how purely and strictly Asiatic all the colouring and imagery of his book appears. He is thoroughly embued with the character of the scenes to which he transports us; and yet the extent of his knowledge is less wonderful than the dexterity and apparent facility with which he has turned it to account, in the elucidation and embellishment of his poetry. There is not, in the volume now before us, a simile or description, a name, a trait of history, or allusion of romance which belongs to European experience; or does not indicate an entire familiarity with the life, the dead nature, and the learning of the East. Nor are these barbaric ornaments thinly scattered to make up a show. They are showered lavishly over all the work; and form, perhaps, too much, the staple of the poetry — and the riches of that which is chiefly distinguished for its richness.

We would confine this remark, however, to the descriptions of external objects, and the allusions to literature and history — or to what may be termed the *matériel* of the poetry now before us. The Characters and Sentiments are of a different order. They cannot, indeed, be said to be copies of European nature; but they are still less like that of any other region. They are, in truth, poetical imaginations; — but it is to the poetry of rational, honourable, considerate, and humane Europe, that they belong — and not to the childishness, cruelty, and profligacy of Asia. It may seem a harsh and presumptuous sentence, to some of our Cosmopolite readers: but from all we have been able to gather from history or recent observation, we should be inclined to say that there was no sound sense, firmness of purpose, or principled goodness, except among the natives of Europe, and their genuine descendants.

There is something very extraordinary, we think, in the work before us — and something which indicates in the author, not only a great exuberance of talent, but a very singular constitution of genius. While it is more splendid in imagery — (and for the most part in very good taste) — more rich in sparkling thoughts and original conceptions, and more full indeed of exquisite pictures, both of all sorts of beauties and virtues, and all sorts of sufferings and crimes, than any other poem that has yet come before us; we rather think we speak the sense of most readers when we add, that the effect of the whole is to mingle a certain feeling of disappointment with that of admiration! to ex-

cite admiration rather than any warmer sentiment of delight — to dazzle, more than to enchant — and, in the end, more frequently to startle the fancy, and fatigue the attention, by the constant succession of glittering images and high-strained emotions, than to maintain a rising interest, or win a growing sympathy, by a less profuse or more systematic display of attractions.

The style is, on the whole, rather diffuse, and too unvaried in its character. But its greatest fault, in our eyes, is the uniformity of its brilliancy—the want of plainness, simplicity, and repose. We have heard it observed, by some very zealous admirers of Mr. Moore's genius, that you cannot open this book without finding a cluster of beauties in every page. Now, this is only another way of expressing what we think its greatest defect. No work, consisting of many pages, should have detached and distinguishable beauties in every one of them. No great work, indeed, should have *many* beauties: if it were perfect, it would have but *one;* and that but faintly perceptible, except on a view of *the whole.* Look, for example, at what is perhaps the most finished and exquisite production of human art — the design and elevation of a Grecian temple, in its old severe simplicity. What penury of ornament — what rejection of beauties of detail! — what masses of plain surface — what rigid economical limitation to the useful and the necessary! The cottage of a peasant is scarcely more simple in its structure, and has not fewer parts that are superfluous. Yet what grandeur — what elegance — what grace and completeness in the effect! The whole is beautiful — because the beauty is in the whole: but there is little merit in any of the parts, except that of fitness and careful finishing. Contrast this, now, with a Dutch pleasure-house, or a Chinese — where every part is meant to be separately beautiful — and the result is deformity; — where there is not an inch of the surface that is not brilliant with varied colour, and rough with curves and angles, — and where the effect of the whole is monstrous and offensive. We are as far as possible from meaning to insinuate that Mr. Moore's poetry is of *this* description. On the contrary, we think his ornaments are, for the most part, truly and exquisitely beautiful; and the general design of his pieces very elegant and ingenious: all that we mean to say is, that there is too much ornament—too many insulated and independent beauties — and that the notice, and the very admiration they excite, hurt the interest of the general design, and not only withdraw our attention too importunately from it, but at last weary it out with their perpetual recurrence.

It seems to be a law of our intellectual constitution, that the powers of taste cannot be permanently gratified, except by some *sustained* or continuous emotion; and that a series, even of the most agreeable excitements, soon ceases, if broken and disconnected, to give any pleasure. No conversation fatigues so soon as that which is made up of points and epigrams; and the accomplished rhetorician, who

"—— could not ope
His mouth, but out there flew a trope."

must have been a most intolerable companion. There are some things, too, that seem so plainly intended for ornaments and seasonings only, that they are only agreeable, when sprinkled in moderation over a plainer medium. No one would like to make an entire meal on *sauce piquante;* or to appear in a dress crusted over with diamonds; or to pass a day in a steam of rich distilled perfumes. It is the same with the glittering ornaments of poetry — with splendid metaphors and ingenious allusions, and all the figures of speech and of thought that constitute its outward pomp and glory. Now, Mr Moore, it appears to us, is decidedly too lavish of his gems and sweets; — he labours under a plethora of wit and imagination — impairs his credit by the palpable exuberance of his possessions, and would be richer with half his wealth. His works are not only of costly material and graceful design, but they are everywhere glistening with small beauties and transitory inspirations—sudden flashes of fancy, that blaze out and perish; like earth-born meteors, that crackle in the lower sky, and unseasonably divert our eyes from the great and lofty bodies which pursue their harmonious courses in a serener region.

We have spoken of these as faults of style: but they could scarcely have existed in the style, without going deeper; and though they first strike us as qualities of the composition only, we find, upon a little reflection, that the same general character belongs to the fable,

the characters, and the sentiments,—that they all sin alike in the excess of their means of attraction,—and fail to interest, chiefly by being too interesting.

In order to avoid the debasement of ordinary or familiar life, the author has soared to a region beyond the comprehension of most of his readers. All his personages are so very beautiful, and brave, and agonizing — so totally wrapt up in the exaltation of their vehement emotions, and withal so lofty in rank, and so sumptuous and magnificent in all that relates to their external condition, that the herd of ordinary mortals can scarcely venture to conceive of their proceedings, or to sympathize freely with their fortunes. The disasters to which they are exposed, and the designs in which they are engaged, are of the same ambitious and exaggerated character; and all are involved in so much pomp, and splendour, and luxury, and the description of their extreme grandeur and elegance forms so considerable a part of the whole work, that the less sublime portion of the species can with difficulty presume to judge of them, or to enter into the concernments of such very exquisite persons. The incidents, in like manner, are so prodigiously moving, so excessively improbable, and so terribly critical, that we have the same difficulty of raising our sentiments to the proper pitch for them; — and finding it impossible to sympathize as we ought to do with such portentous occurrences, are sometimes tempted to withhold our sympathy altogether, and to seek for its objects among more familiar adventures. Scenes of voluptuous splendour and ecstasy alternate suddenly with agonizing separations, atrocious crimes, and tremendous sufferings;—battles, incredibly fierce and sanguinary, follow close on entertainments incredibly sumptuous and elegant; — terrific tempests are succeeded by delicious calms at sea: and the land scenes are divided between horrible chasms and precipices, and vales and gardens rich in eternal blooms, and glittering with palaces and temples — while the interest of the story is maintained by instruments and agents of no less potency than insanity, blasphemy, poisonings, religious hatred, national antipathy, demoniacal misanthropy, and devoted love.

We are aware that, in objecting to a work like this, that it is made up of such materials, we may seem to be objecting that it is made of the elements of poetry, — since it is no doubt true, that it is by the use of such materials that poetry is substantially distinguished from prose, and that it is to them it is indebted for all that is peculiar in the delight and the interest it inspires: and it may seem a little unreasonable to complain of a poet, that he treats us with the essence of poetry. We have already hinted, however, that it is not advisable to live entirely on essences; and our objection goes not only to the excessive strength of the emotions that are sought to be raised, but to the violence of their transitions, and the want of continuity in the train of feeling that is produced. It may not be amiss, however, to add a word or two more of explanation.

In the *first* place, then, if we consider how *the fact* stands, we shall find that all the great poets, and, in an especial manner, all the poets who chain down the attention of their readers, and maintain a growing interest through a long series of narrations, have been remarkable for the occasional familiarity, and even homeliness, of many of their incidents, characters, and sentiments. This is the distinguishing feature in Homer, Chaucer, Ariosto, Shakspeare, Dryden, Scott — and will be found to occur, we believe, in all poetry that has been long and extensively popular; or that is capable of pleasing very strongly, or stirring very deeply, the common sensibilities of our nature. We need scarcely make an exception for the lofty Lyric, which is so far from being generally attractive, that it is not even intelligible, except to a studious few — or for those solemn and devotional strains which derive their interest from a still higher principle: but in all narrative poetry — in all long pieces made up of descriptions and adventures, it seems hitherto to have been an indispensable condition of their success, that most of the persons and events should bear a considerable resemblance to those which we meet with in ordinary life; and, though more animated and important than to be of daily occurrence, should not be immeasurably exalted above the common standard of human fortune and character.

It should be almost enough to settle the question, that such is the fact — and that no narrative poetry has ever excited a great interest, where the persons were too much pu-

rified from the vulgar infirmities of our nature, or the incidents too thoroughly purged of all that is ordinary or familiar. But the slightest reflection upon the feelings with which we read such poetry, must satisfy us as *to the reason* of our disappointment. It may be told in two words. Writings of this kind revolt by their improbability; and fatigue, by offering no points upon which our sympathies can readily attach. — Two things are necessary to give a fictitious narrative a deep and commanding interest; *first*, that we should believe that such things might have happened; and *secondly*, that they might have happened to ourselves, or to such persons as ourselves. But, in reading the ambitious and overwrought poetry of which we have been speaking, we feel perpetually, that there could have been no such people, and no such occurrences as we are there called upon to feel for; and that it is impossible for us, at all events, to have much concern about beings whose principles of action are so remote from our own, and who are placed in situations to which we have never known any parallel. It is no doubt true, that all stories that interest us must represent passions of a higher pitch, and events of a more extraordinary nature than occur in common life; and that it is in consequence of rising thus sensibly above its level that they become objects of interest and attention. But, in order that this very elevation may be felt, and produce its effect, the story must itself, in other places, give us the known and ordinary level, — and, by a thousand adaptations and traits of *universal* nature, make us feel that the characters which become every now and then the objects of our intense sympathy and admiration, in great emergencies, and under the influence of rare but conceivable excitements, are, after all, our fellow creatures — made of the same flesh and blood with ourselves, and acting, and acted upon, by the common principles of our nature. Without this, indeed, the effect of their sufferings and exploits would be entirely lost upon us; as we should be without any scale by which to estimate the magnitude of the temptations they had to resist, or the energies they had exerted. To make us aware of the altitude of a mountain, it is absolutely necessary to show us the plain from which it ascends. If we are allowed to see nothing but *the table land* at the top, the effect will be no greater than if we had remained on the humble level of the shore—except that it will be more lonely, bleak, and inhospitable. And thus it is, that by exaggerating the heroic qualities of heroes, they become as uninteresting as if they had no such qualities — that by striking out those weaknesses and vulgar infirmities which identify them with ordinary mortals, they not only cease to interest ordinary mortals, but even to excite their admiration or surprise; and appear merely as strange inconceivable beings, in whom superhuman energy and refinement are no more to be wondered at, than the power of flying in an eagle, or of fasting in a snake.

The wise ancient who observed, that being a man himself, he could not but take an interest in every thing that related to man—might have confirmed his character for wisdom, by adding, that for the same reason he could take no interest in any thing else. There is nothing, after all, that we ever truly care for, but the feelings of creatures like ourselves: — and we are obliged to lend them to the flowers and the brooks of the valley, and the stars and airs of heaven, before we can take any delight in them. With sentient beings the case is more obviously the same. By whatever names we may call them, or with whatever fantastic attributes we may please to invest them, still we comprehend, and concern ourselves about them, only in so far as they resemble ourselves. All the deities of the classic mythology — and all the devils and angels of later poets, are nothing but human creatures—or at least only interest us so long as they are so. Let any one try to imagine what kind of story he could make of the adventures of a set of beings who differed from our own species in any of its general attributes — who were incapable, for instance, of the debasing feelings of fear, pain, or anxiety — and he will find, that instead of becoming more imposing and attractive by getting rid of those infirmities, they become utterly insignificant, and indeed in a great degree inconceivable. Or, to come a little closer to the matter before us, and not to go beyond the bounds of common experience — Suppose a tale, founded on refined notions of delicate love and punctilious inte-

grity, to be told to a race of obscene, brutal and plundering savages — or, even within the limits of the same country, if a poem, turning upon the jealousies of court intrigue, the pride of rank, and the cabals of sovereigns and statesmen, were put into the hands of village maidens or clownish labourers, is it not obvious that the remoteness of the manners, characters, and feelings from their own, would first surprise, and then revolt them — and that the moral, intellectual, and adventitious Superiority of the personages concerned, would, instead of enhancing the interest, entirely destroy it, and very speedily extinguish all sympathy with their passions, and all curiosity about their fate? — Now, what gentlemen and ladies are to a ferocious savage, or politicians and princesses to an ordinary rustic, the exaggerated persons of such poetry as we are now considering, are to the ordinary readers of poetry. They do not believe in the possibility of their existence, or of their adventures. They do not comprehend the principles of their conduct; and have no thorough sympathy with the feelings that are ascribed to them.

We have carried this speculation, we believe, a little too far — and, with reference to the volume before us, it would be more correct perhaps to say, that it had suggested these observations, than that they are strictly applicable to it. For though its faults are certainly of the kind we have been endeavouring to describe, it would be quite unjust to characterize it by its faults — which are beyond all doubt less conspicuous than its beauties. There is not only a richness and brilliancy of diction and imagery spread over the whole work, that indicate the greatest activity and elegance of fancy in the author; but it is everywhere pervaded, still more strikingly, by a strain of tender and noble feeling, poured out with such warmth and abundance, as to steal insensibly on the heart of the reader, and gradually to overflow it with a tide of sympathetic emotion. There are passages indeed, and these neither few nor brief, over which the very Genius of Poetry seems to have breathed his richest enchantment — where the melody of the verse and the beauty of the images conspire so harmoniously with the force and tenderness of the emotion, that the whole is blended into one deep and bright stream of sweetness and feeling, along which the spirit of the reader is borne passively away, through long reaches of delight. Mr. Moore's poetry, indeed, where his happiest vein is opened, realizes more exactly than that of any other writer, the splendid account which is given by Comus of the song of

> "His Mother Circe, and the Sirens three,
> Amid the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
> Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
> And lap it in Elysium!"

And though it is certainly to be regretted that he should so often have broken the measure with more frivolous strains, or filled up its intervals with a sort of brilliant *falsetto*; it should never be forgotten, that his excellences are at least as peculiar to himself as his faults, and, on the whole, perhaps more characteristic of his genius.

The volume before us contains four separate and distinct poems — connected, however, and held together, "like orient pearls at random strung," by the slender thread of a slight prose story, on which they are all suspended, and to the simple catastrophe of which they in some measure contribute. This airy and elegant legend is to the following effect. Lalla Rookh, the daughter of the great Aurengzebe, is betrothed to the young king of Bucharia; and sets forth, with a splendid train of Indian and Bucharian attendants, to meet her enamoured bridegroom in the delightful valley of Cashmere. The progress of this gorgeous cavalcade, and the beauty of the country which it traverses, are exhibited with great richness of colouring and picturesque effect; though in this, as well as in the other parts of the prose narrative, a certain tone of levity, and even derision, is frequently assumed—not very much in keeping, we think, with the tender and tragic strain of the poetry of which it is the accompaniment — certain breakings out, in short, of that mocking European wit, which has made itself merry with Asiatic solemnity, ever since the time of the facetious Count Hamilton — but seems a little out of place in a miscellany, the prevailing character of which is of so opposite a temper. To amuse the languor, or divert the impatience of the royal bride, in the noontide and night-halts of her luxurious progress, a young Cashmerian poet has been sent by the gallantry of the bride-

groom; and recites, on those occasions, the several poems that form the bulk of the volume now before us. Such is the witchery of his voice and look, and such the sympathetic effect of the tender tales which he recounts, that the poor princess, as was naturally to be expected, falls desperately in love with him before the end of the journey; and by the time she enters the lovely Vale of Cashmere, and sees the glittering palaces and towers prepared for her reception, she feels that she would joyfully forego all this pomp and splendour, and fly to the desert with her adored Feramorz. The youthful bard, however, has now disappeared from her side; and she is supported, with fainting heart and downcast eyes, into the hated presence of her tyrant! when the voice of Feramorz himself bids her be of good cheer — and, looking up, — she sees her beloved poet in the prince himself! who had assumed this gallant disguise, and won her young affections, without deriving any aid from his rank or her engagements.

The whole story is very sweetly and gaily told; and is adorned with many tender as well as lively passages — without reckoning among the latter the occasional criticisms of the omniscient Fadladeen, the magnificent and most infallible grand chamberlain of the Haram — whose sayings and remarks, we cannot help observing, do not agree very well with the character which is assigned him — being for the most part very smart, sententious, and acute, and by no means solemn, stupid, and pompous, as was to have been expected. Mr. Moore's genius, however, we suppose, is too inveterately lively, to make it possible for him even to counterfeit dulness. We come at last, however, to the poetry.

The first piece, which is entitled "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan," is the longest, we think, and certainly not the best, of the series. It has all the faults which we have, somewhat too sweepingly, imputed to the volume at large; and it was chiefly, indeed, with a reference to it, that we made those introductory remarks, which the author will probably think too much in the spirit of the sage Chamberlain. The story, which is not in all its parts extremely intelligible, is founded on a notice, in D'Herbelot, of a daring impostor of the early ages of Islamism, who pretended to have received a later and more authoritative mission than that of the prophet, and to be destined to overturn all tyrannies and superstitions on the earth, and to rescue all souls that believed in him. To shade the celestial radiance of his brow, he always wore a veil of silver gauze, and was at last attacked by the Caliph, and exterminated, with all his adherents. On this story Mr. Moore has engrafted a romantic and not very probable tale of two young lovers, Azim and Zelica; the former of whom having been supposed to perish in battle, the grief of the latter unsettles her understanding; and her distempered imagination is easily inflamed by the mystic promises of the Veiled Prophet, which at length prevail on her to join the troop of lovely priestesses who earn a blissful immortality in another world, by sharing his embraces upon earth. By what artful illusions the poor distracted maid was thus betrayed to her ruin, is not very satisfactorily explained; only we are informed that she and the Veiled Apostle descended into a charnel-house, and took a mutual oath, and drank blood together, in pledge of their eternal union. At length Azim, who had not been slain, but made captive in battle, and had wandered in Greece till he had imbibed the love of liberty that inspired her famous heroes of old — hears of the proud promises of emancipation which Mokanna (for that was the prophet's name) had held out to all nations, and comes to be enrolled among the champions of freedom and virtue. On the day of his presentment, he is introduced into a scene of voluptuous splendour, where all the seductive influences of art and nature are in vain exerted to divert his thoughts from the love of Zelica and of liberty. He breaks proudly away from these soft enchantments, and finds a mournful female figure before him, in whom he almost immediately recognizes his long-lost and ever-loved Zelica. The first moment of their meeting is ecstasy on both sides; but the unhappy girl soon calls to mind the unutterable condition to which she is reduced — and, in agony, reveals to him the sad story of her derangement, and of the base advantages that had been taken of it. Azim at first throws her from him in abhorrence, but soon turns, in relenting pity, and offers at last to rescue her from this seat of pollution. She

listens with eager joy to his proposal, and is about to fly with him in the instant, when the dread voice of Mokanna thunders in her ear her oath of eternal fidelity. That terrible sound brings back her frenzy. She throws her lover wildly from her, and vanishes at once, amidst the dazzling lights of that unholy palace. Azim then joins the approaching army of the Caliph, and leads on his forces against the impious usurper. Mokanna performs prodigies of valour — but is always borne back by the superior force and enthusiasm of Azim: and after a long course of horrors and illusions, he poisons the remnant of his adherents, and himself plunges into a bath, of such corrosive quality, as instantly to extinguish life, and dissolve all the elements of the mortal frame. Zelica then covers herself with his fatal veil, and totters out to the ramparts, where, being mistaken for Mokanna, she rushes upon the spear of her Azim, and receives his forgiveness in death! while he survives, to pass the rest of his life in continual prayer and supplication for her erring spirit; and dies at last upon her grave, in the full assurance of rejoining her in purity and bliss.

It is needless to enlarge on the particular faults of this story, after the general observations we hazarded at the outset. The character of Mokanna, as well as his power and influence, is a mere distortion and extravagance: but the great blemish is the corruption of Zelica; and the insanity so gratuitously alleged by the poet in excuse of it. Nothing less, indeed, could in any way account for such a catastrophe; and, after all, it is painful and offensive to the imagination. The bridal oath, pledged with blood among the festering bodies of the dead, is one of the overstrained theatrical horrors of the German School; and a great deal of the theorizing and argumentation which is intended to palliate or conceal those defects, is obscure and incomprehensible. Rich as it is, in short, in fancy and expression, and powerful in some of the scenes of passion, we should have had great doubts of the success of this volume, if it had all been of the same texture with the poem of which we are now speaking. Yet, even there, there is a charm, almost irresistible, in the volume of sweet sounds and beautiful images, which are heaped together with luxurious profusion in the general texture of the style, and invest even the absurdities of the story with the graceful amplitude of their rich and figured veil. What, for instance, can be sweeter than this account of Azim's entry into this earthly paradise of temptations?

"Meanwhile, through vast illuminated halls,
Silent and bright, where nothing but the falls
Of fragrant waters, gushing with cool sound
From many a jasper fount, is heard around,
Young Azim roams bewilder'd; nor can guess
What means this maze of light and loneliness!
Here, the way leads, o'er tesselated floors
Or mats of Cairo, through long corridors,
Where, rang'd in cassolets and silver urns,
Sweet wood of aloe or of sandal burns;
And here, at once, the glittering saloon
Bursts on his sight, boundless and bright as noon!
Where, in the midst, reflecting back the rays
In broken rainbows, a fresh fountain plays
High as th' enamell'd cupola; which towers
All rich with Arabesques of gold and flowers!
And the mosaic floor beneath shines through
The sprinkling of that fountain's silvery dew,
Like the wet, glist'ning shells, of ev'ry dye;
That on the margin of the Red Sea lie.

"Here too he traces the kind visitings
Of woman's love, in those fair, living things
Of land and wave, whose fate — in bondage thrown
For their weak loveliness — is like her own!
On one side gleaming with a sudden grace
Through water, brilliant as the crystal vase
In which it undulates, small fishes shine,
Like golden ingots from a fairy mine! —
While, on the other, lattic'd lightly in
With odorif'rous woods of Comorin,
Each brilliant bird that wings the air is seen; —
Gay, sparkling loories, such as gleam between
The crimson blossoms of the coral tree
In the warm isles of India's sunny sea:
Mecca's blue sacred pigeon; and the thrush
Of Hindostan, whose holy warblings gush,
At evening, from the tall pagoda's top; —
Those golden birds that, in the spice-time, drop
About the gardens, drunk with that sweet food
Whose scent hath lur'd them o'er the summer
flood; —
And those that under Araby's soft sun
Build their high nests of budding cinnamon."

Pp. 53—56.

The warrior youth looks round at first with disdain upon those seductions, with which he supposes the sage prophet wishes to try the firmness of his votaries.

"While thus he thinks, still nearer on the breeze
Come those delicious, dream-like harmonies,

Each note of which but adds new, downy links
To the soft chain in which his spirit sinks.
He turns him tow'rd the sound; and far away
Through a long vista, sparkling with the play
Of countless lamps — like the rich track which Day
Leaves on the waters, when he sinks from us;
He sees a group of female forms advance,
Some chain'd together in the mazy dance
By fetters, forg'd in the green sunny bowers,
As they were captives to the King of Flowers," &c.

"Awhile they dance before him; then divide,
Breaking, like rosy clouds at even-tide
Around the rich pavilion of the sun —
Till silently dispersing, one by one,
Through many a path that from the chamber leads
To gardens, terraces, and moonlight meads,
Their distant laughter comes upon the wind,
And but one trembling nymph remains behind,
Beck'ning them back in vain, — for they are gone,
And she is left in all that light, alone!
No veil to curtain o'er her beauteous brow,
In its young bashfulness more beauteous now;
But a light, golden chain-work round her hair
Such as the maids of Yezd and Shiraz wear,
While her left hand, as shrinkingly she stood,
Held a small lute of gold and sandal wood,
Which, once or twice, she touch'd with hurried strain,
Then took her trembling fingers off again.
But when at length a timid glance she stole
At Azim, the sweet gravity of soul
She saw through all his features, calm'd her fear;
And, like a half-tam'd antelope, more near,
Though shrinking still, she came; — then sat her down
Upon a musnud's edge, and bolder grown,
In the pathetic mode of Ispahan
Touch'd a preluding strain, and thus began: —"

The following picture of the grand armament of the Caliph shows the same luxuriance of diction and imagination, directed to different objects: —

"Whose are the gilded tents that crowd the way,
Where all was waste and silent yesterday?
This City of War, which, in a few short hours,
Hath sprung up here as if the magic powers
Of him who, in the twinkling of a star,
Built the high pillar'd halls of Chilminar,
Had conjur'd up, far as the eye can see,
This world of tents and domes and sun-bright armory!
Princely pavilions, screen'd by many a fold
Of crimson cloth, and topp'd with balls of gold;
Steeds, with their housings of rich silver spun,
Their chains and poitrels glitt'ring in the sun;
And camels, tufted o'er with Yemen's shells,
Shaking in every breeze their light-ton'd bells!

"Ne'er did the march of Mahadi display
Such pomp before; not ev'n when on his way
To Mecca's Temple, when both land and sea
Were spoil'd to feed the Pilgrim's luxury;
When round him, mid the burning sands, he saw
Fruits of the North in icy freshness thaw,
And cool'd his thirsty lip, beneath the glow
Of Mecca's sun, with urns of Persian snow: —
Nor e'er did armament more grand than that
Pour from the kingdoms of the Caliphat.
First, in the van, the People of the Rock,
On their light mountain steeds, of royal stock;
Then, Chieftains of Damascus, proud to see
The flashing of their swords' rich marquetry," &c.
Pp. 86—89.

We can afford room now only for the conclusion — the last words of the dying Zelica; which remind us of those of Campbell's Gertrude — and the catastrophe of Azim, which is imaged in that of Southey's Roderick.

"'But live, my Azim; — oh! to call thee mine
Thus once again! — *my* Azim — dream divine!
Live, if thou ever lov'dst me, if to meet
Thy Zelica hereafter would be sweet,
Oh live to pray for her! — to bend the knee
Morning and night before that Deity,
To whom pure lips and hearts without a stain,
As thine are, Azim, never breath'd in vain —
And pray that he may pardon her — may take
Compassion on her soul for thy dear sake,
And, nought rememb'ring but her love to thee,
Make her all thine, all His, eternally!
Go to those happy fields where first we twin'd
Our youthful hearts together — every wind
That meets thee there, fresh from the well-known flowers,
Will bring the sweetness of those innocent hours
Back to thy soul, and thou may'st feel again
For thy poor Zelica as thou didst then,
So shall thy orisons, like dew that flies
To heav'n upon the morning's sunshine, rise
With all love's earliest ardour to the skies!'

Time fleeted! Years on years had passed away,
And few of those who, on that mournful day,
Had stood, with pity in their eyes, to see
The maiden's death, and the youth's agony,
Were living still — when, by a rustic grave
Beside the swift Amoo's transparent wave,
An aged man, who had grown aged there
By one lone grave, morning and night in prayer,
For the last time knelt down! And, though the shade
Of death hung dark'ning over him, there play'd
A gleam of rapture on his eye and cheek,
That brighten'd even death — like the last streak
Of intense glory on th' horizon's brim,
When night o'er all the rest hangs chill and dim! —
His soul had seen a Vision, while he slept;
She, for whose spirit he had pray'd and wept
So many years, had come to him, all drest
In angel smiles, and told him she was blest!

For this the old man breath'd his thanks,—and
died!—
And there, upon the banks of that lov'd tide,
He and his Zelica sleep side by side."—Pp. 121—123.

The next piece, which is entitled "Paradise and the Peri," has none of the faults of the preceding. It is full of spirit, elegance, and beauty; and, though slight enough in its structure, breathes throughout a most pure and engaging morality. It is, in truth, little more than a moral apologue, expanded and adorned by the exuberant fancy of the poet who recites it. The Peris are a sort of half-fallen female angels, who dwell in the air, and live on perfumes; and though banished for a time from Paradise, go about in this lower world doing good. One of these—But it is as short, and much more agreeable, to give the author's own introduction.

"One morn a Peri at the gate
Of Eden stood, disconsolate;
And as she listen'd to the Springs
Of Life within, like music flowing;
And caught the light upon her wings
Through the half-open portal glowing!
She wept to think her recreant race
Should e'er have lost that glorious place!"
P. 133.

The Angel of the Gate sees her weeping, and—

"'Nymph of a fair, but erring line!'
Gently he said—'One hope is thine.
'Tis written in the Book of Fate,
The Peri yet may be forgiven
Who brings to this Eternal Gate
The gift that is most dear to Heaven!
Go, seek it, and redeem thy sin;—
'Tis sweet to let the Pardon'd in!"—P. 135.

Full of hope and gratitude, she goes eagerly in search of this precious gift. Her first quest is on the plains of India—the luxuriant beauty of which is put in fine contrast with the havoc and carnage which the march of a bloody conqueror had then spread over them. The Peri comes to witness the heroic death of a youthful patriot, who disdains to survive the overthrow of his country's independence. She catches the last drop which flows from his breaking heart, and bears *that* to heaven's gate, as the acceptable propitiation that was required. For

"'Oh! if there be, on this earthly sphere,
A boon, an offering Heaven holds dear,
'Tis the last libation Liberty draws
From the heart that bleeds and breaks in her
cause!'"—P. 140.

The angel accepts the tribute with respect: but the crystal bar of the portal does not move! and she is told that something holier even than this will be required as the price of her admission. She now flies to the source of the Nile, and makes a delighted but pensive survey of the splendid regions which it waters; till she finds the inhabitants of the lovely gardens of Rosetta dying by thousands of the plague—the selfish deserting their friends and benefactors, and the generous, when struck with the fatal malady, seeking some solitude where they may die without bringing death upon others. Among the latter is a noble youth, who consoles himself, in the hour of his agony, with the thought, that his beloved and betrothed bride is safe from this mortal visitation. In the stillness of his midnight retreat, however, he hears a light step approaching.

"'Tis she!—far off, through moonlight dim,
He knew his own betrothed bride,
She, who would rather die with him,
Than live to gain the world beside!—
Her arms are round her lover now!
His livid cheek to her she presses,
And dips, to bind his burning brow,
In the cool lake her loosen'd tresses.
Ah! once how little did he think
An hour would come, when he should shrink
With horror from that dear embrace," &c.
"'Oh! let me only breathe the air,
The bless'd air, that's breath'd by thee!
And, whether on its wings it bear
Healing or death, 'tis sweet to me!
There—drink my tears, while yet they fall—
Would that my bosom's blood were balm,
And, well thou know'st, I'd shed it all,
To give thy brow one minute's calm.
Nay, turn not from me that dear face—
Am I not thine—thy own lov'd bride—
The one, the chosen one, whose place,
In life or death, is by thy side!
When the stem dies, the leaf that grew,
Out of its heart must perish too!
Then turn to me, my own love! turn
Before like thee I fade and burn;
Cling to these yet cool lips, and share
The last pure life that lingers there!'
She fails—she sinks!—as dies the lamp
In charnel airs or cavern-damp,
So quickly do his baleful sighs
Quench all the sweet light of her eyes!

One struggle — and his pain is past —
Her lover is no longer living!
One kiss the maiden gives, — one last,
Long kiss — which she expires in giving."
Pp. 146—148.

The gentle Peri bids them sleep in peace; and bears again to the gates of heaven the farewell sigh of pure, self-sacrificing love. The worth of the gift is again admitted by the pitying angel; but the crystal bar still remains immovable; and she is sent once more to seek a still holier offering. In passing over the romantic vales of Syria, she sees a lovely child at play among dews and flowers, and opposite to him a stern wayfaring man, resting from some unhallowed toil, with the stamp of all evil passions and evil deeds on his face.

"But hark! the vesper-call to prayer,
As slow the orb of daylight sets,
Is rising sweetly on the air,
From Syria's thousand minarets!
The boy has started from the bed
Of flowers, where he had laid his head,
And down upon the fragrant sod
Kneels, with his forehead to the south
Lisping th' eternal name of God
From purity's own cherub mouth,
And looking, while his hands and eyes
Are lifted to the glowing skies,
Like a stray babe of Paradise,
Just lighted on that flowery plain,
And seeking for its home again!

"And how felt *he*, the wretched Man
Reclining there — while mem'ry ran
O'er many a year of guilt and strife?
Flew o'er the dark flood of his life,
Nor found one sunny resting-place,
Nor brought him back one branch of grace!
'There *was* a time,' he said, in mild,
Heart-humbled tones — 'thou blessed child!
When young and haply pure as thou,
I look'd and pray'd like thee! — but now!' —
He hung his head — each nobler aim
And hope and feeling, which had slept
From boyhood's hour, that instant came
Fresh o'er him, and he wept — he wept!"
Pp. 156, 157.

This tear of repentance is the acceptable gift for the Peri's redemption. The gates of heaven fly open, and she rushes into the joy of immortality.

"The Fire Worshippers" is the next in the series, and appears to us to be indisputably the finest and most powerful. With all the richness and beauty of diction that belong to the best parts of Mokanna, it has a far more interesting story; and is not liable to any of the objections we have been obliged to bring against the contrivance and structure of that leading poem. The outline of the story is short and simple. — Al Hassan, the bigoted and sanguinary Emir of Persia, had long waged a furious and exterminating war against the votaries of the ancient religion of the land — the worshippers of Mithra, or his emblem, Fire — then and since designated by the name of Ghebers. The superior numbers of the invader had overcome the heroic resistance of the patriots, and driven them to take refuge in a precipitous peninsula, cut off from the land by what was understood to be an impassable ravine, and exposing nothing but bare rocks to the sea. In this fastness the scanty remnant of the Ghebers maintained themselves, under the command of their dauntless leader, Hafed, who is still enabled, by sudden and daring excursions, to harass and annoy their enemy. In one of these desperate enterprises, this adventurous leader climbs to the summit of a lofty cliff, near the Emir's palace, where a small pleasure-house had been built, in which he hoped to surprise this bigoted foe of his country; but found only his fair daughter Hinda, the loveliest and gentlest of all Arabian maids — as he himself expresses it.

"He climb'd the gory Vulture's nest,
And found a trembling dove within!"

This romantic meeting gives rise to a mutual passion — and the love of the fair Hinda is inevitably engaged, before she knows the name or quality of her nightly visitant. In the noble heart of Hafed, however, love was but a secondary feeling to devotion to the freedom and the faith of his country. His little band had lately suffered further reverses, and saw nothing now before them but a glorious self-sacrifice. He resolves, therefore, to tear all gentler feelings from his breast, and, in one last interview, to take an eternal farewell of the maid who had captivated his soul. In his melancholy aspect she reads at once, with the instinctive sagacity of love, the tidings of their approaching separation; and breaks out into the following sweet and girlish repinings: —

"I knew, I knew it *could* not last —
'Twas bright, 'twas heavenly — but 'tis past!

Oh! ever thus, from childhood's hour,
I've seen my fondest hopes decay;
I never lov'd a tree or flower,
But 'twas the first to fade away.
I never nurs'd a dear gazelle,
To glad me with its soft black eye,
But when it came to know me well,
And love me, it was sure to die!
Now too — the joy most like divine
Of all I ever dreamt or knew,
To see thee, hear thee, call thee mine, —
Oh mis'ry! must I lose *that* too?
Yet go! — on peril's brink we meet; —
Those frightful rocks — that treach'rous sea —
No, never come again — though sweet,
Though heav'n, it may be death to thee.'"
Pp. 187, 188.

When he smiles sternly at the idea of danger, she urges him to join her father's forces, and earn her hand by helping him to root out those impious Ghebers whom he so much abhors. The spirit of the patriot bursts forth at this; and, without revealing his name or quality, he proudly avows and justifies the conduct of that luckless sect; and then, relenting, falls into a gentler and more pathetic strain.

"Oh! had we never, never met!
Or could this heart e'en now forget!
How link'd, how blest we might have been,
Had fate not frown'd so dark between!
Hadst thou been born a Persian maid;
In neighb'ring valleys had we dwelt,
Through the same fields in childhood play'd,
At the same kindling altar knelt —
Then, then, while all those nameless ties,
In which the charm of country lies,
Had round our hearts been hourly spun,
Till Iran's cause and thine were one; —
While in thy lute's awak'ning sigh
I heard the voice of days gone by,
And saw in ev'ry smile of thine,
Returning hours of glory shine! —
While the wrong'd Spirit of our Land
Liv'd, look'd, and spoke her wrongs through thee! —
God! who could then this sword withstand?
Its very flash were victory!
But now! Estrang'd, divorc'd for ever!
Far as the grasp of Fate can sever;
Our only ties what love has wove —
Faith, friends, and country sunder'd wide; —
And then, then only, true to love,
When false to all that's dear beside!
Thy father Iran's deadliest foe —
Thyself, perhaps, ev'n now — but no —
Hate never look'd so lovely yet!
No! — sacred to thy soul will be
The land of him who could forget
All but that bleeding land for thee!
When other eyes shall see, unmov'd,
Her widows mourn, her warriors fall,
Thou'lt think how well one Gheber lov'd,
And for *his* sake thou'lt weep for all!'"
Pp. 193, 194.

He then starts desperately away; regains his skiff at the foot of the precipice, and leaves her in agony and consternation. The poet now proceeds to detail, a little more particularly, the history of his hero, and recounts some of the absurd legends and miraculous attributes with which the fears of his enemies had invested his name.

"Such were the tales that won belief,
And such the colouring fancy gave
To a young, warm, and dauntless Chief, —
One who, no more than mortal brave,
Fought for the land his soul ador'd,
For happy homes and altars free;
His only talisman, the sword, —
His only spell-word, Liberty!
'Twas not for him to crouch the knee
Tamely to Moslem tyranny; —
'Twas not for him, whose soul was cast
In the bright mould of ages past,
Whose melancholy spirit, fed
With all the glories of the dead; —
'Twas not for him, to swell the crowd
Of slavish heads, that shrinking bow'd
Before the Moslem, as he pass'd
Like shrubs beneath the poison-blast —
No — far he fled — indignant fled
The pageant of his country's shame;
While every tear her children shed
Fell on his soul, like drops of flame;
And, as a lover hails the dawn
Of a first smile, so welcom'd he
The sparkle of the first sword drawn
For vengeance and for liberty!"—Pp. 206, 207.

The song then returns to Hinda —

"Whose life, as free from thought as sin,
Slept like a lake, till Love threw in
His talisman, and woke the tide,
And spread its trembling circles wide.
Once, Emir! thy unheeding child,
Mid all this havoc, bloom'd and smil'd, —
Tranquil as on some battle-plain
The Persian lily shines and towers,
Before the combat's reddening stain
Has fall'n upon her golden flowers.
Far other feelings Love has brought —
Her soul all flame, her brow all sadness," &c.

"Ah! not the Love, that should have bless'd
So young, so innocent a breast!

Not the pure, open, prosp'rous Love
That, pledg'd on earth, and seal'd above,
Grows in the world's approving eyes,
In friendship's smile, and home's caress,
Collecting all the heart's sweet ties
Into one knot of happiness!" — Pp. 215—217.

The Emir now learns, from a recreant prisoner, the secret of the pass to the Gheber's retreat; and when he sees his daughter faint with horror at his eager anticipation of their final extirpation, sends her, in a solitary galley, away from the scene of vengeance, to the quiet of her own Arabian home.

"And does the long-left home she seeks
Light up no gladness on her cheeks?
The flowers she nurs'd — the well-known groves,
Where oft in dreams her spirit roves —
Once more to see her dear gazelles
Come bounding with their silver bells;
Her birds' new plumage to behold,
And the gay, gleaming fishes count,
She left, all filleted with gold,
Shooting around their jasper fount —
Her little garden mosque to see,
And once again, at ev'ning hour,
To tell her ruby rosary,
In her own sweet acacia bower. —
Can these delights, that wait her now,
Call up no sunshine on her brow?
No — silent, from her train apart —
As if ev'n now she felt at heart
The chill of her approaching doom —
She sits all lovely in her gloom
As a pale Angel of the Grave." — Pp. 227, 228.

Her vessel is first assailed by a violent tempest, and, in the height of its fury, by a hostile bark; and her senses are extinguished with terror in the midst of the double conflict. At last, both are appeased — and her recollection is slowly restored. The following passage appears to us extremely beautiful and characteristic: —

"How calm, how beautiful comes on
The stilly hour, when storms are gone;
When warring winds have died away,
And clouds beneath the glancing ray,
Melt off, and leave the land and sea
Sleeping in bright tranquillity —
Fresh as if Day again were born,
Again upon the lap of Morn!
When, 'stead of one unchanging breeze,
There blow a thousand gentle airs,
And each a different perfume bears —
As if the loveliest plants and trees
Had vassal breezes of their own
To watch and wait on them alone,
And waft no other breath than theirs!
When the blue waters rise and fall,
In sleepy sunshine mantling all;
And ev'n that swell the tempest leaves
Is like the full and silent heaves
Of lovers' hearts, when newly blest;
Too newly to be quite at rest! —
"Such was the golden hour, that broke
Upon the world, when Hinda woke
From her long trance; and heard around
No motion but the water's sound
Rippling against the vessel's side,
As slow it mounted o'er the tide. —
But where is she? — Her eyes are dark,
Are wilder'd still — is this the bark,
The same, that from Harmozia's bay
Bore her at morn — whose bloody way
The sea-dog tracks? — No! — Strange and new
Is all that meets her wond'ring view.
Upon a galliot's deck she lies,
Beneath no rich pavilion's shade,
No plumes to fan her sleeping eyes,
Nor jasmin on her pillow laid.
But the rude litter, roughly spread
With war-cloaks, is her homely bed,
And shawl and sash, on javelins hung,
For awning o'er her head are flung."
Pp. 233—236.

She soon discovers, in short, that she is a captive in the hands of the Ghebers! and shrinks with horror, when she finds that she is to be carried to their rocky citadel, and to the presence of the terrible Hafed. The galley is rowed by torchlight through frightful rocks and foaming tides, into a black abyss of the promontory, where her eyes are bandaged — and she is borne up a long and rugged ascent, till at last she is desired to look up, and receive her doom from the formidable chieftain. Before she has raised her eyes, the well-known voice of her lover pronounces her name; and she finds herself alone in the arms of her adoring Hafed. The first emotion is ecstasy. —But the recollection of her father's vow and means of vengeance comes like a thundercloud on her joy; — she tells her lover of the treachery by which he has been sacrificed; and urges him, with passionate eagerness, to fly with her to some place of safety.

"'Hafed, my own beloved Lord,'
She kneeling cries — 'First, last ador'd!
If in that soul thou'st ever felt
Half what thy lips impassion'd swore,
Here, on my knees, that never knelt
To any but their God before!
I pray thee, as thou lov'st me, fly —
Now, now — ere yet their blades are nigh,

Oh haste! — the bark that bore me hither
Can waft us o'er yon dark'ning sea
East—west — alas! I care not whither,
So thou art safe,—and I with thee!
Go where we will, this hand in thine,
Those eyes before me beaming thus,
Through good and ill, through storm and shine,
The world's a world of love for us!
On some calm, blessed shore we'll dwell,
Where 'tis no crime to love too well! —
Where thus to worship tenderly
An erring child of light like thee
Will not be sin — or, if it be,
Where we may weep our faults away,
Together kneeling, night and day, —
Thou, for *my* sake, at Alla's shrine,
And I — at *any* god's, for thine!'
Wildly these passionate words she spoke —
Then hung her head, and wept for shame;
Sobbing, as if a heart-string broke
With every deep-heav'd sob that came."
Pp. 261, 262.

Hafed is more shocked with the treachery to which he is sacrificed than with the fate to which it consigns him:—one moment he gives up to softness and pity — assures Hinda, with compassionate equivocation, that they shall soon meet on some more peaceful shore — places her sadly in a litter, and sees her borne down the steep to the galley she had lately quitted, and to which she still expects that he is to follow her. He then assembles his brave and devoted companions, warns them of the fate that is approaching — and exhorts them to meet the host of the invaders in the ravine, and sell their lives dearly to their steel. After a fierce and somewhat too sanguinary combat, the Ghebers are at last borne down by numbers, and Hafed finds himself left alone, with one brave associate, mortally wounded like himself. They make a desperate effort to reach and die beside the consecrated fire which burns for ever on the summit of the cliff.

"The crags are red they've clamber'd o'er,
The rock-weed's dripping with their gore —
Thy blade, too, Hafed, false at length,
Now breaks beneath thy tott'ring strength —
Haste, haste — the voices of the Foe
Come near and nearer from below! —
One effort more — thank Heav'n! 'tis past,
They've gain'd the topmost steep at last.
And now they touch the temple's walls,
Now Hafed sees the Fire divine —
When, lo! — his weak, worn comrade falls
Dead, on the threshold of the Shrine.
'Alas! brave soul, too quickly fled;
'And must I leave thee with'ring here,
'The sport of every ruffian's tread,
'The mark for every coward's spear?
'No, by yon altar's sacred beams!'
He cries, and, with a strength that seems
Not of this world, uplifts the frame
Of the fall'n chief, and tow'rds the flame
Bears him along! With death-damp hand
The corpse upon the pyre he lays;
Then lights the consecrated brand,
And fires the pile, whose sudden blaze
Like lightning bursts o'er Oman's Sea. —
'Now, Freedom's God! I come to Thee!'
The youth exclaims, and with a smile
Of triumph, vaulting on the pile,
In that last effort, ere the fires
Have harm'd one glorious limb, expires!"
Pp. 278, 279.

The unfortunate Hinda, whose galley had been detained close under the cliff by the noise of the first onset, had heard with agony the sounds which marked the progress and catastrophe of the fight, and is at last a spectatress of the lofty fate of her lover.

"But see — what moves upon the height?
Some signal! — 'tis a torch's light.
What bodes its solitary glare?
In gasping silence tow'rd the shrine
All eyes are turn'd — thine, Hinda, thine
Fix their last failing life-beams there!
'Twas but a moment — fierce and high
The death-pile blaz'd into the sky,
And far away o'er rock and flood
Its melancholy radiance sent;
While Hafed, like a vision stood
Reveal'd before the burning pyre!
Tall, shadowy, like a Spirit of Fire
Shrin'd in its own grand element!
''Tis he!'—the shudd'ring maid exclaims, —
But, while she speaks, he's seen no more!
High burst in air the fun'ral flames,
And Iran's hopes and hers are o'er!
One wild, heart-broken shriek she gave —
Then sprung, as if to reach that blaze,
Where still she fix'd her dying gaze,
And, gazing, sunk into the wave! —
Deep, deep! — where never care or pain
Shall reach her innocent heart again!"
Pp. 283, 284.

This sad story is closed by a sort of choral dirge, of great elegance and beauty, of which we can only afford to give the first stanza.

"Farewell — farewell to thee, Araby's daughter!
(Thus warbled a Peri beneath the dark sea)
No pearl ever lay, under Oman's green water,
More pure in its shell than thy spirit in thee."
P. 284.

But the general tone of this poem is certainly too much strained. It is overwrought throughout, and is too entirely made up of agonies and raptures; — yet, in spite of all this, it is a work of great genius and beauty; and not only delights the fancy by its general brilliancy and spirit, but moves all the tender and noble feelings with a deep and powerful agitation.

The last piece, entitled "The Light of the Haram," is the gayest of the whole; and is of a very slender fabric as to fable or invention. In truth, it has scarcely any story at all; but is made up almost entirely of beautiful songs and descriptions. During the summer months when the court is resident in the Vale of Cashmere, there is, it seems, a sort of oriental carnival, called the Feast of Roses, during which every body is bound to be happy and in good humour. At this critical period, the Emperor Selim had unfortunately a little love-quarrel with his favourite Sultana Nourmahal, — which signifies, it seems, the Light of the Haram. The lady is rather unhappy while the sullen fit is on her; and applies to a sort of enchantress, who invokes a musical spirit to teach her an irresistible song, which she sings in a mask to the offended monarch; and when his heart is subdued by its sweetness, throws off her mask, and springs with fonder welcome than ever into his repentant arms. The whole piece is written in a kind of rapture, — as if the author had breathed nothing but intoxicating gas during its composition. It is accordingly quite filled with lively images and splendid expressions, and all sorts of beauties, — except those of reserve or simplicity. We must give a few specimens, to revive the spirits of our readers after the tragic catastrophe of Hafed; and we may begin with this portion of the description of the Happy Valley.

"Oh! to see it by moonlight,—when mellowly shines
The light o'er its palaces, gardens and shrines;
When the waterfalls gleam like a quick fall of stars,
And the nightingale's hymn from the Isle of Chenars
Is broken by laughs and light echoes of feet,
From the cool shining walks where the young people meet—
Or at morn, when the magic of daylight awakes
A new wonder each minute, as slowly it breaks,
Hills, cupolas, fountains, call'd forth every one
Out of darkness, as they were just born of the Sun.
When the Spirit of Fragrance is up with the day
From his Haram of night-flowers stealing away;
And the wind, full of wantonness, woos like a lover
The young aspen-trees till they tremble all over.
When the east is as warm as the light of first hopes,
And Day, with his banner of radiance unfurl'd,
Shines in through the mountainous portal that opes,
Sublime, from that Valley of bliss to the world!"
P. 296.

The character of Nourmahal's beauty is much in the same taste: though the diction is rather more loose and careless.

"There's a beauty, for ever unchangingly bright,
Like the long sunny lapse of a summer day's light,
Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender,
Till Love falls asleep in its sameness of splendour.
This *was not* the beauty—oh! nothing like this,
That to young Nourmahal gave such magic of bliss;
But that loveliness, ever in motion, which plays
Like the light upon autumn's soft shadowy days,
Now here and now there, giving warmth as it flies
From the lips to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes,
Now melting in mist and now breaking in gleams,
Like the glimpses a saint has of Heav'n in his dreams!
When pensive, it seem'd as if that very grace,
That charm of all others, was born with her face.
Then her mirth—oh! 'twas sportive as ever took wing
From the heart with a burst, like the wild-bird in spring,—
Illum'd by a wit that would fascinate sages,
Yet playful as Peris just loos'd from their cages.
While her laugh, full of life, without any controul
But the sweet one of gracefulness, rung from her soul;
And where it most sparkl'd no glance could discover,
In lip, cheek, or eyes, for she bright'ned all over,—
Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon,
When it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun."—Pp. 302, 303.

We can give but a little morsel of the enchanting Song of the Spirit of Music.

"'For mine is the lay that lightly floats,
And mine are the murm'ring, dying notes,
That fall as soft as snow on the sea,
And melt in the heart as instantly!
And the passionate strain that, deeply going,
Refines the bosom it trembles through,
As the musk-wind over the water blowing,
Ruffles the wave, but sweetens it too!
'The warrior's heart, when touch'd by me,
Can as downy soft and as yielding be
As his own soft plume, that high amid death
Through the field has shone—yet moves with a breath.

And, oh how the eyes of Beauty glisten,
When Music has reach'd her inward soul,
Like the silent stars that wink and listen,
While Heav'n's eternal melodies roll!'"

Pp. 318, 319.

Nourmahal herself, however, in her Arabian disguise, sings a still more prevailing ditty — of which we can only insert a few stanzas.

"'Fly to the desert, fly with me!
Our Arab tents are rude for thee;
But oh! the choice what heart can doubt
Of tents with love, or thrones without?

'Our rocks are rough; but smiling there
Th' acacia waves her yellow hair,
Lonely and sweet — nor lov'd the less
For flow'ring in a wilderness!

'Our sands are bare; but down their slope
The silv'ry-footed antelope
As gracefully and gaily springs
As o'er the marble courts of kings.

'Then come! thy Arab maid will be
The lov'd and lone acacia tree,
The antelope, whose feet shall bless
With their light sound thy loneliness!

'Come! if the love thou hast for me
Is pure and fresh as mine for thee, —
Fresh as the fountain under ground,
When first 'tis by the lapwing found.

'But if for me thou dost forsake
Some other maid, — and rudely break
Her worshipp'd image from its base,
To give to me the ruin'd place: —

'Then, fare thee well! — I'd rather make
My bow'r upon some icy lake
When thawing suns begin to shine,
Than trust to love so false as thine!'"

This strain, and the sentiment which it embodies, remind the offended monarch of his charming Nourmahal; and he names her name in accents of tenderness and regret.

"The mask is off — the charm is wrought! —
And Selim to his heart has caught,
In blushes, more than ever bright,
His Nourmahal, his Haram's Light!" — P. 334.

We have now said enough, and shown enough, of this book, to let our readers understand both what it is, and what we think of it. Its great fault certainly is its excessive finery, and its great charm the inexhaustible copiousness of its imagery — the sweetness and ease of its diction — and the beauty of the objects and sentiments with which it is concerned. Its finery, it should also be observed, is not the vulgar ostentation which so often disguises poverty or meanness — but the extravagance of excessive wealth. We have said this, however, we believe before — and suspect we have little more to say.

All poets, who really love poetry, and live in a poetical age, are great imitators; and the character of their writings may often be as correctly ascertained by observing whom they imitate and whom they abstain from imitating, as from any thing else. Mr. Moore, in the volume before us, reminds us oftener of Mr. Southey and Lord Byron, than of any other of his contemporaries. The resemblance is sometimes to the Roderick of the first-mentioned author, but most frequently to his Kehama. This may be partly owing to the nature of the subject; but, in many passages, the coincidence seems to be more radical — and to indicate a considerable conformity, in taste and habits of conception. Mr. Southey's tone, indeed, is more assuming, his manner more solemn, and his diction weaker. Mr. Moore is more lively — his figures and images come more thickly; and his language is at once more familiar, and more strengthened with points and antitheses. In other respects, the descriptive passages in Kehama bear a remarkable affinity to many in the work before us — in the brightness of the colouring, and the amplitude and beauty of the details. It is in his descriptions of love, and of female loveliness, that there is the strongest resemblance to Lord Byron — at least to the larger poems of that noble author. In the powerful and condensed expression of strong emotion, Mr. Moore seems to us rather to have imitated the tone of some of his Lordship's smaller pieces — but imitated them as only an original genius could imitate — as Lord Byron himself may be said, in his later pieces, to have imitated those of an earlier date. There is less to remind us of Scott than we can very well account for, when we consider the great range and variety of that most fascinating and powerful writer; and we must say, that if Mr. Moore could bring the resemblance a little closer, and exchange a portion of his superfluous images and ecstacies for an equivalent share of Mr. Scott's gift of interesting and delighting us with pictures of familiar nature, and of that spirit and energy which never rises to extravagance, we

think he would be a gainer by the exchange. To Mr. Crabbe there is no resemblance at all; and we only mention his name to observe that he and Mr. Moore seem to be the antipodes of our present poetical sphere; and to occupy the extreme points of refinement and homeliness that can be said to fall within the legitimate dominion of poetry. They could not meet in the middle, we are aware, without changing their nature, and losing their specific character; but each might approach a few degrees, we think, with great mutual advantage. The outposts of all empires are posts of peril:— though we do not dispute that there is great honour in maintaining them with success.

There is one other topic upon which we are not quite sure whether we should say any thing. On a former occasion, we reproved Mr. Moore, perhaps with unnecessary severity, for what appeared to us the licentiousness of some of his youthful productions. We think it a duty to say, that he has long ago redeemed that error; and that in all his latter works that have come under our observation, he appears as the eloquent champion of purity, fidelity, and delicacy, not less than of justice, liberty, and honour. Like most other poets, indeed, he speaks much of beauty and love; and we doubt not that many mature virgins and careful matrons may think his lucubrations on those themes too rapturous and glowing to be safely admitted among the private studies of youth. We really think, however, that there is not much need for such apprehensions: and, at all events, if we look to the moral design and scope of the works themselves, we can see no reason to censure the author. All his favourites, without exception, are dutiful, faithful, and self-denying; and no other example is ever set up for imitation. There is nothing approaching to indelicacy even in his description of the seductions by which they are tried; and they who object to his enchanting pictures of the beauty and pure attachment of the more prominent characters would find fault, we suppose, with the loveliness and the embraces of angels.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

(NOVEMBER, 1814.)

The Excursion; being a Portion of the Recluse, a Poem. By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. 4to. Pp. 447. London, 1814.*

THIS will never do! It bears no doubt the stamp of the author's heart and fancy: but

---

* I have spoken in many places rather too bitterly and confidently of the faults of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry: and forgetting that, even on my own view of them, they were but faults of taste, or venial self-partiality, have sometimes visited them, I fear, with an asperity which should be reserved for objects of moral reprobation. If I were now to deal with the whole question of his poetical merits, though my judgment might not be substantially different, I hope I should repress the greater part of these *vivacités* of expression: and indeed so strong has been my feeling in this way, that, considering how much I have always loved many of the attributes of his Genius, and how entirely I respect his character, it did at first occur to me whether it was quite fitting that, in my old age and his, I should include in this publication any of those critiques which may have formerly given pain or offence, to him or his admirers. But when I reflected that the mischief, if there really ever was any, was long ago done, and that I still retain, in substance, the opinions which I should now like to have seen more gently expressed, I felt that to omit all notice of them on the present occasion, might be held to import a retractation which I am as far as possible from intending; or even be represented as a very shabby way of backing out of sentiments which should either be manfully persisted in, or openly renounced, and abandoned as untenable.

I finally resolved, therefore, to reprint my review of "The Excursion;" which contains a pretty full view of my griefs and charges against Mr. Wordsworth; set forth too, I believe, in a more temperate strain than most of my other inculpations,— and of which I think I may now venture to say farther, that if the faults are unsparingly noted, the beauties are not penuriously or grudgingly allowed; but commended to the admiration of the reader with at least as much heartiness and good-will.

But I have also reprinted a short paper on the same author's "White Doe of Rylstone,"— in which there certainly is no praise, or notice of beauties, to set against the very unqualified censures of which it is wholly made up. I have done this, however, not merely because I adhere to these censures, but chiefly because it seemed necessary to bring me fairly to issue with those who may not concur in them. I can easily understand that many whose admiration of the Excursion, or the Lyrical Ballads, rests substantially

unfortunately not half so visibly as that of his peculiar system. His former poems were intended to recommend that system, and to bespeak favour for it by their individual merit; — but this, we suspect, must be recommended by the system — and can only expect to succeed where it has been previously established. It is longer, weaker, and tamer, than any of Mr. Wordsworth's other productions; with less boldness of originality, and less even of that extreme simplicity and lowliness of tone which wavered so prettily, in the Lyrical Ballads, between silliness and pathos. We have imitations of Cowper, and even of Milton here; engrafted on the natural drawl of the Lakers — and all diluted into harmony by that profuse and irrepressible wordiness which deluges all the blank verse of this school of poetry, and lubricates and weakens the whole structure of their style.

Though it fairly fills four hundred and twenty good quarto pages, without note, vignette, or any sort of extraneous assistance, it is stated in the title — with something of an imprudent candour — to be but "a portion" of a larger work; and in the preface, where an attempt is rather unsuccessfully made to explain the whole design, it is still more rashly disclosed, that it is but "*a part of the second part*, of a *long* and laborious work" — which is to consist of three parts!

What Mr. Wordsworth's ideas of length are, we have no means of accurately judging: but we cannot help suspecting that they are liberal to a degree that will alarm the weakness of most modern readers. As far as we can gather from the preface, the entire poem — or one of them (for we really are not sure whether there is to be one or two), is of a biographical nature; and is to contain the history of the author's mind, and of the origin and progress of his poetical powers, up to the period when they were sufficiently matured to qualify him for the great work on which he has been so long employed. Now, the quarto before us contains an account of one of his youthful rambles in the vales of Cumberland, and occupies precisely the period of three days! So that, by the use of a very powerful *calculus*, some estimate may be formed of the probable extent of the entire biography.

This small specimen, however, and the statements with which it is prefaced, have been sufficient to set our minds at rest in one particular. The case of Mr. Wordsworth, we perceive, is now manifestly hopeless, and we give him up as altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism. We cannot, indeed, altogether omit taking precautions now and then against the spreading of the malady; — but for himself, though we shall watch the progress of his symptoms as a matter of professional curiosity and instruction, we really think it right not to harass him any longer with nauseous remedies, — but rather to throw in cordials and lenitives, and wait in patience for the natural termination of the disorder. In order to justify this desertion of our patient, however, it is proper to state why we despair of the success of a more active practice.

A man who has been for twenty years at work on such matter as is now before us, and who comes complacently forward with a whole quarto of it, after all the admonitions he has received, cannot reasonably be expected to "change his hand, or check his pride," upon the suggestion of far weightier monitors than we can pretend to be. Inveterate habit must now have given a kind of sanctity to the errors of early taste; and the very powers of which we lament the perversion, have probably be-

on the passages which I too should join in admiring, may view with greater indulgence than I can do, the tedious and flat passages with which they are interspersed, and may consequently think my censure of these works a great deal too harsh and uncharitable. Between such persons and me, therefore, there may be no radical difference of opinion, or contrariety as to principles of judgment. But if there be any who actually admire this White Doe of Rylstone, or Peter Bell the Waggoner, or the Lamentations of Martha Rae, or the Sonnets on the Punishment of Death, there can be no such ambiguity, or means of reconcilement. Now I have been assured not only that there are such persons, but that almost all those who seek to exalt Mr. Wordsworth as the founder of a new school of poetry, consider these as by far his best and most characteristic productions; and would at once reject from their communion any one who did not acknowledge in them the traces of a high inspiration. Now I wish it to be understood, that when I speak with general intolerance or impatience of the school of Mr. Wordsworth, it is to the school holding these tenets, and applying these tests, that I refer: and I really do not see how I could better explain the grounds of my dissent from their doctrines, than by republishing my remarks on this "White Doe."

come incapable of any other application. The very quantity, too, that he has written, and is at this moment working up for publication upon the old pattern, makes it almost hopeless to look for any change of it. All this is so much capital already sunk in the concern; which must be sacrificed if that be abandoned: and no man likes to give up for lost the time and talent and labour which he has embodied in any permanent production. We were not previously aware of these obstacles to Mr. Wordsworth's conversion; and, considering the peculiarities of his former writings merely as the result of certain wanton and capricious experiments on public taste and indulgence, conceived it to be our duty to discourage their repetition by all the means in our power. We now see clearly, however, how the case stands; — and, making up our minds, though with the most sincere pain and reluctance, to consider him as finally lost to the good cause of poetry, shall endeavour to be thankful for the occasional gleams of tenderness and beauty which the natural force of his imagination and affections must still shed over all his productions, — and to which we shall ever turn with delight, in spite of the affectation and mysticism and prolixity, with which they are so abundantly contrasted.

Long habits of seclusion, and an excessive ambition of originality, can alone account for the disproportion which seems to exist between this author's taste and his genius; or for the devotion with which he has sacrificed so many precious gifts at the shrine of those paltry idols which he has set up for himself among his lakes and his mountains. Solitary musings, amidst such scenes, might no doubt be expected to nurse up the mind to the majesty of poetical conceptions — (though it is remarkable, that all the greater poets lived, or had lived, in the full current of society): — but the collision of equal minds, — the admonition of prevailing impressions — seems necessary to reduce its redundancies, and repress that tendency to extravagance or puerility, into which the self-indulgence and self-admiration of genius is so apt to be betrayed, when it is allowed to wanton, without awe or restraint, in the triumph and delight of its own intoxication. That its flights should be graceful and glorious in the eyes of men, it seems almost to be necessary that they should be made in the consciousness that men's eyes are to behold them, — and that the inward transport and vigour by which they are inspired, should be tempered by an occasional reference to what will be thought of them by those ultimate dispensers of glory. An habitual and general knowledge of the few settled and permanent maxims, which form the canon of general taste in all large and polished societies — a certain tact, which informs us at once that many things, which we still love and are moved by in secret, must necessarily be despised as childish, or derided as absurd, in all such societies — though it will not stand in the place of genius, seems necessary to the success of its exertions; and though it will never enable any one to produce the higher beauties of art, can alone secure the talent which does produce them from errors that must render it useless. Those who have most of the talent, however, commonly acquire this knowledge with the greatest facility; — and if Mr. Wordsworth, instead of confining himself almost entirely to the society of the dalesmen and cottagers, and little children, who form the subjects of his book, had condescended to mingle a little more with the people that were to read and judge of it, we cannot help thinking that its texture might have been considerably improved; at least it appears to us to be absolutely impossible, that any one who had lived or mixed familiarly with men of literature and ordinary judgment in poetry (of course we exclude the coadjutors and disciples of his own school), could ever have fallen into such gross faults, or so long mistaken them for beauties. His first essays we looked upon in a good degree as poetical paradoxes, — maintained experimentally, in order to display talent, and court notoriety; — and so maintained, with no more serious belief in their truth, than is usually generated by an ingenious and animated defence of other paradoxes. But when we find that he has been for twenty years exclusively employed upon articles of this very fabric, and that he has still enough of raw material on hand to keep him so employed for twenty years to come, we cannot refuse him the justice of believing that he is a sincere convert to his own system, and must ascribe the peculiarities of his composition, not to any transient affectation, or accidental caprice of

imagination, but to a settled perversity of taste or understanding, which has been fostered, if not altogether created, by the circumstances to which we have alluded.

The volume before us, if we were to describe it very shortly, we should characterize as a tissue of moral and devotional ravings, in which innumerable changes are rung upon a few very simple and familiar ideas: — but with such an accompaniment of long words, long sentences, and unwieldy phrases — and such a hubbub of strained raptures and fantastical sublimities, that it is often difficult for the most skilful and attentive student to obtain a glimpse of the author's meaning — and altogether impossible for an ordinary reader to conjecture what he is about. Moral and religious enthusiasm, though undoubtedly poetical emotions, are at the same time but dangerous inspirers of poetry; nothing being so apt to run into interminable dulness or mellifluous extravagance, without giving the unfortunate author the slightest intimation of his danger. His laudable zeal for the efficacy of his preachments, he very naturally mistakes for the ardour of poetical inspiration; — and, while dealing out the high words and glowing phrases which are so readily supplied by themes of this description, can scarcely avoid believing that he is eminently original and impressive: — all sorts of commonplace notions and expressions are sanctified in his eyes, by the sublime ends for which they are employed; and the mystical verbiage of the Methodist pulpit is repeated, till the speaker entertains no doubt that he is the chosen organ of divine truth and persuasion. But if such be the common hazards of seeking inspiration from those potent fountains, it may easily be conceived what chance Mr. Wordsworth had of escaping their enchantment, — with his natural propensities to wordiness, and his unlucky habit of debasing pathos with vulgarity. The fact accordingly is, that in this production he is more obscure than a Pindaric poet of the seventeenth century; and more verbose "than even himself of yore;" while the wilfulness with which he persists in choosing his examples of intellectual dignity and tenderness exclusively from the lowest ranks of society, will be sufficiently apparent, from the circumstance of his having thought fit to make his chief prolocutor in this poetical dialogue, and chief advocate of Providence and virtue, *an old Scotch Pedlar* — retired indeed from business — but still rambling about in his former haunts, and gossiping among his old customers, without his pack on his shoulders. The other persons of the drama are, a retired military chaplain, who has grown half an atheist and half a misanthrope — the wife of an unprosperous weaver — a servant girl with her natural child — a parish pauper, and one or two other personages of equal rank and dignity.

The character of the work is decidedly didactic; and more than nine tenths of it are occupied with a species of dialogue, or rather a series of long sermons or harangues, which pass between the pedlar, the author, the old chaplain, and a worthy vicar, who entertains the whole party at dinner on the last day of their excursion. The incidents which occur in the course of it are as few and trifling as can well be imagined; — and those which the different speakers narrate in the course of their discourses, are introduced rather to illustrate their arguments or opinions, than for any interest they are supposed to possess of their own. — The doctrine which the work is intended to enforce, we are by no means certain that we have discovered. In so far as we can collect, however, it seems to be neither more nor less than the old familiar one, that a firm belief in the providence of a wise and beneficent Being must be our great stay and support under all afflictions and perplexities upon earth — and that there are indications of His power and goodness in all the aspects of the visible universe, whether living or inanimate — every part of which should therefore be regarded with love and reverence, as exponents of those great attributes. We can testify, at least, that these salutary and important truths are inculcated at far greater length, and with more repetitions, than in any ten volumes of sermons that we ever perused. It is also maintained, with equal conciseness and originality, that there is frequently much good sense, as well as much enjoyment, in the humbler conditions of life; and that, in spite of great vices and abuses, there is a reasonable allowance both of happiness and goodness in society at large. If there be any deeper or more recondite doctrines in Mr. Wordsworth's book, we must

confess that they have escaped us; — and, convinced as we are of the truth and soundness of those to which we have alluded, we cannot help thinking that they might have been better enforced with less parade and prolixity. His effusions on what may be called the physiognomy of external nature, or its moral and theological expression, are eminently fantastic, obscure, and affected. — It is quite time, however, that we should give the reader a more particular account of this singular performance.

It opens with a picture of the author toiling across a bare common in a hot summer day, and reaching at last a ruined hut surrounded with tall trees, where he meets by appointment with a hale old man, with an iron-pointed staff lying beside him. Then follows, a retrospective account of their first acquaintance — formed, it seems, when the author was at a village school; and his aged friend occupied "one room, — the fifth part of a house" in the neighbourhood. After this, we have the history of this reverend person at no small length. He was born, we are happy to find, in Scotland — among the hills of Athol; and his mother, after his father's death, married the parish schoolmaster — so that he was taught his letters betimes: but then, as it is here set forth with much solemnity,

"From his sixth year, the boy of whom I speak,
In summer, tended cattle on the hills;"

And again, a few pages after, that there may be no risk of mistake as to a point of such essential importance —

"From early childhood, even, as hath been said,
From his *sixth year*, he had been sent abroad,
In summer — to tend herds! Such was his task!"

In the course of this occupation it is next recorded, that he acquired such a taste for rural scenery and open air, that when he was sent to teach a school in a neighbouring village, he found it "a misery to him;" and determined to embrace the more romantic occupation of a Pedlar — or, as Mr. Wordsworth more musically expresses it,

"A vagrant merchant, bent beneath his load;"

— and in the course of his peregrinations had acquired a very large acquaintance, which, after he had given up dealing, he frequently took a summer ramble to visit.

The author, on coming up to this interesting personage, finds him sitting with his eyes half shut; — and, not being quite sure whether he is asleep or awake, stands "some minutes' space" in silence beside him. "At length," says he, with his own delightful simplicity —

"At length I hail'd him — *seeing that his hat
Was moist* with water-drops, as if the brim
Had newly scoop'd a running stream! —
—————— 'Tis,' said I, 'a burning day!
My lips are parch'd with thirst; — but you, I guess,
Have somewhere found relief.'"

Upon this, the benevolent old man points him out, not a running stream, but a well in a corner, to which the author repairs; and, after minutely describing its situation, beyond a broken wall, and between two alders that "grew in a cold damp nook," he thus faithfully chronicles the process of his return: —

"My thirst I slak'd; and from the cheerless spot
Withdrawing, straightway to the shade return'd,
Where sate the old man on the cottage bench."

The Pedlar then gives an account of the last inhabitants of the deserted cottage beside them. These were, a good industrious weaver and his wife and children. They were very happy for a while, till sickness and want of work came upon them; and then the father enlisted as a soldier, and the wife pined in that lonely cottage — growing every year more careless and desponding, as her anxiety and fears for her absent husband, of whom no tidings ever reached her, accumulated. Her children died, and left her cheerless and alone; and at last she died also; and the cottage fell to decay. We must say, that there is very considerable pathos in the telling of this simple story; and that they who can get over the repugnance excited by the triteness of its incidents, and the lowness of its objects, will not fail to be struck with the author's knowledge of the human heart, and the power he possesses of stirring up its deepest and gentlest sympathies. His prolixity, indeed, it is not so easy to get over. This little story fills about twenty-five quarto pages; and abounds, of course, with mawkish sentiment, and details of preposterous minuteness. When the tale is told, the travellers take their staffs, and end

their first day's journey, without further adventure, at a little inn.

The Second Book sets them forward betimes in the morning; they pass by a Village Wake; and as they approach a more solitary part of the mountains, the old man tells the author that he is taking him to see an old friend of his, who had formerly been chaplain to a Highland regiment — had lost a beloved wife — been roused from his dejection by the first enthusiasm of the French Revolution — had emigrated, on its miscarriage, to America — and returned disgusted to hide himself in the retreat to which they were now ascending. That retreat is then most tediously described — a smooth green valley in the heart of the mountain, without trees, and with only one dwelling. Just as they get sight of it from the ridge above, they see a funeral train proceeding from the solitary abode, and hurry on with some apprehension for the fate of the amiable misanthrope — whom they find, however, in very tolerable condition at the door, and learn that the funeral was that of an aged pauper who had been boarded out by the parish in that cheap farm house, and had died in consequence of long exposure to heavy rain. The old chaplain, or, as Mr. Wordsworth is pleased to call him, the Solitary, tells this dull story at prodigious length; and after giving an inflated description of an effect of mountain mists in the evening sun, treats his visitors with a rustic dinner—and they walk out to the fields at the close of the second book.

The Third makes no progress in the excursion. It is entirely filled with moral and religious conversation and debate, and with a more ample detail of the Solitary's past life than had been given in the sketch of his friend. The conversation is, in our judgment, exceedingly dull and mystical; and the Solitary's confessions insufferably diffuse. Yet there is occasionally very considerable force of writing and tenderness of sentiment in this part of the work.

The Fourth Book is also filled with dialogues, ethical and theological; and, with the exception of some brilliant and forcible expressions here and there, consists of an exposition of truisms, more cloudy, wordy, and inconceivably prolix, than any thing we ever met with.

In the beginning of the Fifth Book, they leave the solitary valley, taking its pensive inhabitant along with them, and stray on to where the landscape sinks down into milder features, till they arrive at a church, which stands on a moderate elevation in the centre of a wide and fertile vale. Here they meditate for a while among the monuments, till the Vicar comes out and joins them; —and, recognizing the Pedlar for an old acquaintance, mixes graciously in the conversation, which proceeds in a very edifying manner till the close of the book.

The Sixth contains a choice obituary, or characteristic account, of several of the persons who lie buried before this group of moralizers; — an unsuccessful lover, who had found consolation in natural history — a miner, who worked on for twenty years, in despite of universal ridicule, and at last found the vein he had expected — two political enemies reconciled in old age to each other — an old female miser — a seduced damsel — and two widowers, one who had devoted himself to the education of his daughters, and one who had preferred marrying a prudent middle-aged woman to take care of them.

In the beginning of the Eighth Book, the worthy Vicar expresses, in the words of Mr. Wordsworth's own epitome, "his apprehensions that he had detained his auditors too long — invites them to his house — Solitary, disinclined to comply, rallies the Wanderer, and somewhat playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of a knight-errant — which leads to the Wanderer giving an account of changes in the country, from the Manufacturing spirit — Its favourable effects — The other side of the picture," &c. &c. After these very poetical themes are exhausted, they all go into the house, where they are introduced to the Vicar's wife and daughter; and while they sit chatting in the parlour over a family dinner, his son and one of his companions come in with a fine dish of trouts piled on a blue slate; and after being caressed by the company, are sent to dinner in the nursery. — This ends the eighth book.

The Ninth and last Book is chiefly occupied with a mystical discourse of the Pedlar; who maintains, that the whole universe is animated by an active principle, the noblest seat

of which is in the human soul; and moreover, that the final end of old age is to train and enable us

> "To hear the mighty stream of *Tendency*
> Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
> A clear sonorous voice, inaudible
> To the vast multitude whose doom it is
> To run the giddy round of vain delight—"

with other matters as luminous and emphatic. The hostess at length breaks off the harangue, by proposing that they should all make a little excursion on the lake,—and they embark accordingly; and, after navigating for some time along its shores, and drinking tea on a little island, land at last on a remote promontory, from which they see the sun go down,—and listen to a solemn and pious, but rather long prayer from the Vicar. They then walk back to the parsonage door, where the Author and his friend propose to spend the evening;—but the Solitary prefers walking back in the moonshine to his own valley, after promising to take another ramble with them—

> "If time, with free consent, be yours to give,
> And season favours."

—And here the publication somewhat abruptly closes.

Our abstract of the story has been so extremely concise, that it is more than usually necessary for us to lay some specimens of the work itself before our readers. Its grand staple, as we have already said, consists of a kind of mystical morality: and the chief characteristics of the style are, that it is prolix, and very frequently unintelligible: and though we are sensible that no great gratification is to be expected from the exhibition of those qualities, yet it is necessary to give our readers a taste of them, both to justify the sentence we have passed, and to satisfy them that it was really beyond our power to present them with any abstract or intelligible account of those long conversations which we have had so much occasion to notice in our brief sketch of its contents. We need give ourselves no trouble, however, to select passages for this purpose. Here is the first that presents itself to us on opening the volume; and if our readers can form the slightest guess at its meaning, we must give them credit for a sagacity to which we have no pretension.

> "But, by the storms of *Circumstance* unshaken,
> And subject neither to eclipse or wane,
> Duty exists;—immutably survive,
> For our support, the measures and the forms,
> Which an abstract Intelligence supplies;
> Whose kingdom is, where Time and Space are not:
> Of other converse, which mind, soul, and heart,
> Do, with united urgency, require,
> What more, that may not perish?"
>
> "'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
> Earth to despise; but to converse with heav'n,
> This is not easy:—to relinquish all
> We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,—
> And stand in freedom loosen'd from this world;
> I deem not arduous!—but must needs confess
> That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
> Conceptions equal to the Soul's desires."
>
> Pp. 144, 147.

This is a fair sample of that rapturous mysticism which eludes all comprehension, and fills the despairing reader with painful giddiness and terror. The following, which we meet with on the very next page, is in the same general strain:—though the first part of it affords a good specimen of the author's talent for enveloping a plain and trite observation in all the mock majesty of solemn verbosity. A reader of plain understanding, we suspect, could hardly recognize the familiar remark, that excessive grief for our departed friends is not very consistent with a firm belief in their immortal felicity, in the first twenty lines of the following passage:—In the succeeding lines we do not ourselves pretend to recognize any thing.

> "From this infirmity of mortal kind
> Sorrow proceeds, which else were not;—at least,
> If Grief be something hallow'd and ordain'd,
> If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
> Through this, 'tis able to maintain its hold,
> In that excess which conscience disapproves,
> For who could sink and settle to that point
> Of selfishness; so senseless who could be
> In framing estimates of loss or gain,
> As long and perseveringly to mourn
> For any Object of his love, remov'd
> From this unstable world, if he could fix
> A satisfying view upon that state
> Of pure imperishable blessedness,
> Which Reason promises, and Holy Writ
> Ensures to all believers?—Yet mistrust
> Is of such incapacity, methinks,
> No natural branch; despondency far less.
> —And, if there be whose tender frames have droop'd
> Even to the dust; apparently, through weight

Of anguish unreliev'd, and lack of power
An agonising sorrow to *transmute*;
Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
When wanted most; a confidence impair'd
So pitiably, that, having ceas'd to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret!
Oh! no, full oft the innocent Suff'rer sees
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
To realize the Vision with intense
And overconstant yearning — There — there lies
The excess, by which the balance is destroy'd.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To ecstasy! and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires.
I, speaking now from such disorder free,
Nor sleep, nor craving, but in settled peace,
I cannot doubt that They whom you deplore
Are glorified." — Pp. 148, 149.

If any farther specimen be wanted of the learned author's propensity to deal out the most familiar truths as the oracles of his own inspired understanding, the following wordy paraphrase of the ordinary remark, that the best consolation in distress is to be found in the exercises of piety, and the testimony of a good conscience, may be found on turning the leaf.

" What then remains? — To seek
Those helps, for his occasions ever near,
Who lacks not will to use them; vows, renew'd
On the first motion of a holy thought;
Vigils of contemplation; praise; and pray'r,
A Stream, which from the fountain of the heart,
Issuing however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For Him, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of Conscience; Conscience rev'renc'd and obey'd
As God's most intimate Presence in the soul,
And his most perfect image in the world."—P. 151.

We have kept the book too long open, however, at one place, and shall now take a dip in it nearer the beginning. The following account of the Pedlar's early training, and lonely meditations among the mountains, is a good example of the forced and affected ecstasies in which this author abounds.

—— " Nor did he fail,
While yet a Child, with a Child's eagerness
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
On all things which the moving seasons brought
To feed such appetite: nor this alone
Appeas'd his yearning: — in the after day
Of Boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,
And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags,
He sate, and even in their fix'd lineaments,
Or from the pow'r of a peculiar eye,
Or by creative feeling overborne,
Or by predominance of thought oppress'd,
Ev'n in their fixed and steady lineaments
He trac'd an ebbing and a flowing mind."— P. 11.

We should like extremely to know what is meant by tracing an ebbing and flowing mind in the fixed lineaments of naked crags? — but this is but the beginning of the raving fit.

In these majestic solitudes, he used also to read his Bible; — and we are told that —

"There did he see *the writing!* — All things there
Breath'd immortality, *revolving life*
And greatness still revolving; infinite!
There littleness was not; the least of things
Seem'd infinite; and there his spirit shap'd
Her prospects; nor did he believe,— he *saw!*
What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive! Low desires,
Low thoughts had there no place; yet was his heart
Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude."— Pp. 14, 15

What follows about nature, triangles, stars, and the laws of light, is still more incomprehensible.

—— " Yet still uppermost
Nature was at his heart, as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, *a wasting pow'r*
In all things which from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues,
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He cloth'd the nakedness of austere truth.
While yet he linger'd in the rudiments
Of science, and among her simplest laws,
His *triangles*— they were the *stars* of heav'n,
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure th' altitude of some tall crag
Which is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows
Inscrib'd as with the silence of the thought,
Upon its bleak and visionary sides; —
—— and I have heard him say
That often, failing at this time to gain
The peace requir'd, *he scann'd the laws of light*
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
A cloud of mist, which in the sunshine frames
A lasting tablet — for the observer's eye
Varying its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,
And vainly by all other means, he strove
To mitigate the fever of his heart."— Pp. 16—18.

The whole book, indeed, is full of such stuff. The following is the author's own sublime aspiration after the delight of becoming *a Motion*, or *a Presence*, or *an Energy* among multitudinous streams.

"Oh! what a joy it were, in vig'rous health,
To have a Body (this our vital Frame
With shrinking sensibility endu'd,
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
And to the elements surrender it
As if it were a spirit! — How divine
The liberty, for frail, for mortal man
To roam at large among unpeopled glens
And mountainous retirements, only trod
By devious footsteps; regions consecrate
To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
Be as *a Presence* or *a Motion!* — one
Among the many there; and, while the Mists
Flying, and rainy Vapours, call out Shapes
And Phantoms from the crags and solid earth
As fast as a Musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument; and, while the Streams —
(As at a first creation and in haste
To exercise their untried faculties)
Descending from the regions of the clouds,
And starting from the hollows of the earth
More multitudinous every moment — rend
Their way before them, what a joy to roam
An equal among mightiest Energies!
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
Amid the deaf'ning tumult scarcely heard
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud
Be this continu'd so from day to day,
Nor let it have an end from month to month!"
Pp. 164, 165.

We suppose the reader is now satisfied with Mr. Wordsworth's sublimities — which occupy rather more than half the volume: — Of his tamer and more creeping prolixity, we have not the heart to load him with many specimens. The following amplification of the vulgar comparison of human life to a stream, has the merit of adding much obscurity to wordiness; at least, *we* have not ingenuity enough to refer the conglobated bubbles and murmurs, and floating islands, to their Vital prototypes.

—— "The tenor
Which my life holds, he readily may conceive
Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain Brook
In some still passage of its course, and seen,
Within the depths of its capacious breast,
Inverted trees, and rocks, and azure sky;
And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,
And conglobated bubbles undissolv'd,
Numerous as stars; that, by their onward lapse,
Betray to sight the motion of the stream,
Else imperceptible; meanwhile, is heard
Perchance a roar or murmur; and the sound
Though soothing, and the little floating isles
Though beautiful, are both by Nature charg'd
With the same pensive office; and make known
Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt
Precipitations, and untoward straits,
The earth-born wanderer hath pass'd; and quickly,
That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
Must be again encounter'd. — Such a stream
Is Human Life."—Pp. 139, 140.

The following, however, is a better example of the useless and most tedious minuteness with which the author so frequently details circumstances of no interest in themselves, — of no importance to the story, — and possessing no graphical merit whatsoever as pieces of description. On their approach to the old Chaplain's cottage, the Author gets before his companion,

—— "when behold
An object that entic'd my steps aside!
It was an Entry, narrow as a door;
A passage whose brief windings open'd out
Into a platform; that lay, *Sheep-fold wise,*
Enclos'd between a single mass of rock
And one old moss-grown wall; — a cool Recess,
And fanciful! For, where the rock and wall
Met in an angle, hung a tiny roof,
Or penthouse, *which most quaintly had been fram'd*
By thrusting two rude sticks into the wall,
And overlaying them with mountain sods
To weather-fend a little turf-built seat
Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor dread
The burning sunshine, or a transient shower;
But the whole plainly wrought by Children's hands!
Whose simple skill had throng'd the grassy floor
With work of frame less solid; *a proud show*
Of baby-houses, curiously arrang'd!
Nor wanting ornament of walks between,
With mimic trees inserted in the turf,
And gardens interpos'd. *Pleas'd with the sight,*
I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,
Who, having enter'd, carelessly look'd round,
And now would have pass'd on; when I exclaim'd,
'Lo! what is here?' and, stooping down, drew forth
A Book," &c.—Pp. 71, 72.

And this book, which he

—— "found to be a work
In the French Tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,"

leads to no incident or remark of any value or importance, to apologize for this long story of its finding. There is no beauty, we think, it must be admitted, in these passages; and so

little either of interest or curiosity in the incidents they disclose, that we can scarcely conceive that any man to whom they had actually occurred, should take the trouble to recount them to his wife and children by his idle fireside; — but, that man or child should think them worth writing down in blank verse, and printing in magnificent quarto, we should certainly have supposed altogether impossible, had it not been for the ample proofs which Mr. Wordsworth has afforded to the contrary.

Sometimes their silliness is enhanced by a paltry attempt at effect and emphasis: — as in the following account of that very touching and extraordinary occurrence of a lamb bleating among the mountains. The poet would actually persuade us that he thought the mountains themselves were bleating; — and that nothing could be so grand or impressive. "List!" cries the old Pedlar, suddenly breaking off in the middle of one of his daintiest ravings —

—— "'List! — I heard,
From yon huge breast of rock, *a solemn bleat!*
Sent forth as if it were the Mountain's voice!
As if the visible Mountain made the cry!
Again!' — The effect upon the soul was such
As he express'd; for, from the Mountain's heart
The solemn bleat appear'd to come! There was
No other — and the region all around
Stood silent, empty of all shape of life.
— *It was a Lamb* — left somewhere to itself!"
P. 159.

What we have now quoted will give the reader a notion of the taste and spirit in which this volume is composed: and yet, if it had not contained something a good deal better, we do not know how we should have been justified in troubling him with any account of it. But the truth is, that Mr. Wordsworth, with all his perversities, is a person of great powers; and has frequently a force in his moral declamations, and a tenderness in his pathetic narratives, which neither his prolixity nor his affectation can altogether deprive of their effect. We shall venture to give some extracts from the simple tale of the Weaver's solitary cottage. Its heroine is the deserted wife; and its chief interest consists in the picture of her despairing despondence and anxiety, after his disappearance. The Pedlar, recurring to the well to which he had directed his companions, observes,

—— "As I stoop'd to drink,
Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied
The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
Green with the moss of years; a pensive sight
That mov'd my heart! — recalling former days,
When I could never pass that road but She
Who liv'd within these walls, at my approach
A Daughter's welcome gave me; — and I lov'd her
As my own child! O Sir! the good die first!
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket."
—— "By some especial care
Her temper had been fram'd, as if to make
A Being — who by adding love to peace
Might live on earth a life of happiness." — Pp. 27, 28.

The bliss and tranquillity of these prosperous years is well and copiously described; — but at last came sickness and want of employment; — and the effect on the kind-hearted and industrious mechanic is strikingly delineated.

—— "At his door he stood,
And whistl'd many a snatch of merry tunes
That had no mirth in them! or with his knife
Carv'd uncouth figures on the heads of sticks —
Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook
In house or garden, any casual work
Of use or ornament."—
"One while he would speak lightly of his Babes,
And with a cruel tongue: at other times
He toss'd them with a false unnat'ral joy:
And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
Of the poor innocent children." — P. 31.

At last, he steals from his cottage, and enlists as a soldier; and when the benevolent Pedlar comes, in his rounds, in hope of a cheerful welcome, he meets with a scene of despair.

—— "Having reach'd the door
I knock'd — and, when I enter'd with the hope
Of usual greeting, Margaret look'd at me
A little while; then turn'd her head away
Speechless, — and sitting down upon a chair
Wept bitterly! I wist not what to do,
Or how to speak to her. Poor Wretch! at last
She rose from off her seat, and then, — O Sir!
I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name. —
With fervent love, and with a face of grief
Unutterably helpless!" — Pp. 34, 35.

Hope, however, and native cheerfulness, were not yet subdued; and her spirit still bore up against the pressure of this desertion.

—— 'Long we had not talk'd
Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
And with a brighter eye she look'd around
As if she had been shedding tears of joy."

"We parted.—'Twas the time of early spring;
I left her busy with her garden tools;
And well remember o'er that fence she look'd,
And, while I paced along the footway path,
Call'd out, and sent a blessing after me,
With tender cheerfulness; and with a voice
That seem'd the very sound of happy thoughts!"
Pp. 36, 37.

The gradual sinking of the spirit under the load of continued anxiety, and the destruction of all the finer springs of the soul by a course of unvarying sadness, are very feelingly represented in the sequel of this simple narrative.

—— "I journey'd back this way
Towards the wane of Summer; when the wheat
Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass
Springing afresh had o'er the hay-field spread
Its tender verdure. At the door arriv'd,
I found that she was absent. In the shade,
Where now we sit, I waited her return.
Her Cottage, then a cheerful Object, wore
Its customary look,—only, I thought,
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
Hung down in heavier tufts: and that bright weed,
The yellow stone-crop, suffer'd to take root
Along the window's edge, profusely grew,
Blinding the lower panes. I turn'd aside,
And stroll'd into her garden. It appear'd
To lag behind the season, and had lost
Its pride of neatness."—

"The sun was sinking in the west; and now
I sate with sad impatience. From within
Her solitary infant cried aloud;
Then, like a blast that dies away self-still'd,
The voice was silent."—Pp. 37—39.

The desolate woman had now an air of still and listless, though patient sorrow.

—— "Evermore
Her eyelids droop'd, her eyes were downward cast;
And, when she at her table gave me food,
She did not look at me! Her voice was low,
Her body was subdu'd. In ev'ry act
Pertaining to her house affairs, appear'd
The careless stillness of a thinking mind
Self-occupied; to which all outward things
Are like an idle matter. Still she sigh'd,
But yet no motion of the breast was seen,
No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
I knew not how and hardly whence they came.
—— I return'd,
And took my rounds along this road again,
Ere on its sunny bank the primrose flow'r
Peep'd forth to give an earnest of the Spring.
I found her sad and drooping; she had learn'd
No tidings of her Husband; if he liv'd
She knew not that he liv'd; if he were dead
She knew not he was dead. She seem'd the same
In person and appearance; but her House
Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence.
—— Her Infant Babe
Had from its Mother caught the trick of grief,
And sigh'd among its playthings!"—Pp. 41—43.

Returning seasons only deepened this gloom, and confirmed this neglect. Her child died; and she spent her weary days in roaming over the country, and repeating her fond and vain enquiries to every passer by.

"Meantime her House, by frost, and thaw, and rain,
Was sapp'd; and while she slept the nightly damps
Did chill her breast; and in the stormy day
Her tatter'd clothes were ruffl'd by the wind,
Ev'n at the side of her own fire. Yet still
She lov'd this wretched spot: and here, my Friend,
In sickness she remain'd; and here she died!
Last Human Tenant of these ruin'd Walls."—P. 46.

The story of the old Chaplain, though a little less lowly, is of the same mournful cast, and almost equally destitute of incidents; for Mr. Wordsworth delineates only feelings—and all his adventures are of the heart. The narrative which is given by the sufferer himself is, in our opinion, the most spirited and interesting part of the poem. He begins thus, and addressing himself, after a long pause, to his ancient countryman and friend the Pedlar—

"You never saw, your eyes did never look
On the bright Form of Her whom once I lov'd!—
Her silver voice was heard upon the earth
A sound unknown to you; else, honour'd Friend,
Your heart had borne a pitiable share
Of what I suffer'd, when I wept that loss!
And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought
That I remember—and can weep no more!"
P. 117.

The following account of his marriage and early felicity is written with great sweetness—a sweetness like that of Massinger, in his softer and more mellifluous passages.

—— "This fair Bride—
In the devotedness of youthful love,
Preferring me to Parents, and the choir
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
And all known places and familiar sights,
(Resign'd with sadness gently weighing down
Her trembling expectations, but no more
Than did to her due honour, and to me
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
In what I had to build upon)—this Bride,
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led

To a low Cottage in a sunny Bay,
Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,
And the sea breeze as innocently breaths,
On Devon's leafy shores; — a shelter'd Hold,
In a soft clime, encouraging the soil
To a luxuriant bounty! — As our steps
Approach the embower'd Abode, our chosen Seat,
See, rooted in the earth, its kindly bed,
The unendanger'd Myrtle, deck'd with flowers," &c.
"— Wild were our walks upon those lonely Downs,
Whence, unmolested Wanderers, we beheld
The shining Giver of the Day diffuse
His brightness, o'er a tract of sea and land
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires,
As our enjoyments boundless. — From these Heights
We dropp'd, at pleasure, into sylvan Combs;
Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
And mossy seats detain'd us, side by side,
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts
'That all the grove and all the day was ours.'"
Pp. 118—120.

There, seven years of unmolested happiness were blessed with two lovely children.

"And on these pillars rested, as on air,
Our solitude."

Suddenly a contagious malady swept off both the infants.

"Calm as a frozen Lake when ruthless Winds
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
The Mother now remain'd."
—— "Yet, stealing slow,
Dimness o'er this clear Luminary crept
Insensibly! — The immortal and divine
Yielded to mortal reflux, her pure Glory,
As from the pinnacle of worldly state
Wretched Ambition drops astounded, fell
Into a gulph obscure of silent grief,
And keen heart-anguish — of itself asham'd,
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:
And, so consum'd, She melted from my arms!
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate."
Pp. 125, 126.

The agony of mind into which the survivor was thrown, is described with a powerful eloquence; as well as the doubts and distracting fears which the sceptical speculations of his careless days had raised in his spirit. There is something peculiarly grand and terrible to our feelings in the imagery of these three lines —

"By pain of heart, now check'd, and now impell'd,
The Intellectual Power, through words and things,
Went sounding on, — a dim and perilous way!"

At last he is roused from this dejected mood, by the glorious promises which seemed held out to human nature by the first dawn of the French Revolution; — and it indicates a fine perception of the secret springs of character and emotion, to choose a being so circumstanced as the most ardent votary of that far-spread enthusiasm.

"Thus was I reconverted to the world!
Society became my glitt'ring Bride,
And airy hopes my Children! — If busy Men
In sober conclave met, to weave a web
Of amity, whose living threads should stretch
Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise
And acclamation, crowds in open air
Express'd the tumult of their minds, my voice
There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song
I left not uninvok'd; and, in still groves,
Where mild Enthusiasts tun'd a pensive lay
Of thanks and expectation, in accord
With their belief, I sang Saturnian Rule
Return'd, — a progeny of golden years
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind!"
Pp. 128, 129.

On the disappearance of that bright vision, he was inclined to take part with the desperate party who still aimed at establishing universal regeneration, though by more questionable instruments than they had originally assumed. But the military despotism which ensued soon closed the scene against all such exertions; and, disgusted with men and Europe, he sought for shelter in the wilds of America. In the calm of the voyage, Memory and Conscience awoke him to a sense of his misery.

—— "Feebly must They have felt
Who, in old time, attir'd with snakes and whips
The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turn'd on me — the face of her I lov'd!
The Wife and Mother, pitifully fixing
Tender reproaches, insupportable!" — Pp. 133, 134.

His disappointment, and ultimate seclusion in England, have been already sufficiently detailed.

We must trespass upon our readers with the fragments of yet another story. It is that of a simple, seduced, and deserted girl, told with great sweetness, pathos, and indulgence, by the Vicar of the parish, by the side of her untimely grave. Looking down on the turf, he says —

"As, on a sunny bank, a tender Lamb,
Lurks in safe shelter, from the winds of March
Screen'd by its Parent, so that little mound
Lies guarded by its neighbour. The small heap

Speaks for itself; — an Infant there doth rest;
The shelt'ring Hillock is the Mother's grave! —
There, by her innocent Baby's precious grave,
Yea, doubtless, on the turf that roofs her own,
The Mother oft was seen to stand or kneel,
In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
Now she is not! The swelling turf reports
Of the fresh show'r, but of poor Ellen's tears
Is silent; nor is any vestige left
Upon the pathway of her mournful tread;
Nor of that peace with which she once had mov'd
In virgin fearlessness — a step that seem'd
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
Upon the mountains wet with morning dew,
In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs."
Pp. 285—287.

Her virgin graces and gentleness are then very beautifully described, and her seduction and lonely anguish passed over very tenderly.

"'Ah why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge;
And nature that is kind in Woman's breast,
And reason that in Man is kind and good,
And fear of Him who is a righteous Judge,
Why do not these prevail for human life,
To keep two hearts together, that began
Their spring-time with one love, and that have need
Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
To grant, or be receiv'd!" — P. 289.

"A kindlier passion open'd on her soul
When that poor Child was born. Upon its face
She look'd as on a pure and spotless gift
Of unexpected promise, where a grief
Or dread was all that had been thought of.
—— 'Till this hour,'
Thus in her Mother's hearing Ellen spake,
'There was a stony region in my heart!
But He at whose command the parched rock
Was smitten, and pour'd forth a quenching stream,
Hath soften'd that obduracy, and made
Unlook'd-for gladness in the desert place,
To save the perishing; and, henceforth, I look
Upon the light with cheerfulness, for thee
My Infant! and for that good Mother dear,
Who bore me, — and hath pray'd for me in vain! —
Yet not in vain, it shall not be in vain.'
— Through four months' space the infant drew its food
From the maternal breast. Then scruples rose;
Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and cross'd
The sweet affection. She no more could bear
By her offence to lay a twofold weight
On a kind parent, willing to forget
Their slender means! So, to that parent's care
Trusting her child, she left their common home.
And with contented spirit undertook
A Foster-Mother's office." — Pp. 291—293.

Here the parents of her new nursling soon forbade her all intercourse with her own most precious child; — and a sudden malady carried it off, in this period of forced desertion.

—— "Once, only once,
She saw it in that mortal malady,
And, on the burial day, could scarcely gain
Permission to attend its obsequies!
She reach'd the house — last of the funeral train;
And some One, as she enter'd, having chanc'd
To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,
'Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit
Of anger never seen in her before,
'Nay, ye must wait *my* time!' and down she sate,
And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat;
Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping
Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child!
Until at length her soul was satisfied.
You see the Infant's Grave! — and to this Spot,
The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
And whatsoe'er the errand, urg'd her steps.
Hither she came; and here she stood or knelt,
In the broad day — a rueful Magdalene!" — P. 294.

Overwhelmed with this calamity, she was at last obliged to leave her service.

"But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapp'd,
And the flow'r droop'd; as every eye might see."
"Her fond maternal Heart had built a Nest
In blindness all too near the river's edge;
That Work a summer flood with hasty swell
Had swept away! and now her spirit long'd
For its last flight to Heaven's security."
"— Meek Saint! through patience glorified on earth!
In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,
The ghastly face of cold decay put on
A sun-like beauty, and appear'd divine;
So, through the cloud of death her spirit pass'd
Into that pure and unknown world of love,
Where injury cannot come: — and here is laid
The mortal Body by her Infant's side!"
Pp. 296, 297.

These passages, we think, are among the most touching with which the volume presents us; though there are many in a more lofty and impassioned style. The following commemoration of a beautiful and glorious youth, the love and pride of the humble valley, is full of warmth and poetry.

—— "The mountain Ash
Deck'd with autumnal berries that outshine
Spring's richest blossoms, yields a splendid show
Amid the leafy woods; and ye have seen,
By a brook side or solitary tarn,
How she her station doth adorn, — the pool
Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
Are brighten'd round her! In his native Vale
Such and so glorious did this Youth appear;

A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts,
By his ingenious beauty, by the gleam
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
By all the graces with which nature's hand
Had bounteously array'd him. As old Bards
Tell in their idle songs of wand'ring Gods,
Pan or Apollo, veil'd in human form;
Yet, like the sweet-breath'd violet of the shade,
Discover'd in their own despite, to sense
Of Mortals, (if such fables without blame
May find chance-mention on this sacred ground,)
So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise,
In him reveal'd a Scholar's genius shone!
And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,
In him the spirit of a hero walk'd
Our unpretending valley." — Pp. 342, 343.

This is lofty and energetic; — but Mr. Wordsworth descends, we cannot think very gracefully, when he proceeds to describe how the quoit *whizzed* when his arm launched it — and how the football mounted as high as a lark, at the touch of his toe; — neither is it a suitable catastrophe, for one so nobly endowed, to catch cold by standing too long in the river washing sheep, and die of spasms in consequence.

The general reflections on the indiscriminating rapacity of death, though by no means original in themselves, and expressed with too bold a rivalry of the seven ages of Shakspeare, have yet a character of vigour and truth about them that entitles them to notice.

"This file of infants; some that never breath'd
And the besprinkl'd Nursling, unrequir'd
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him; and the tott'ring Little-one
Taken from air and sunshine, when the rose
Of Infancy first blooms upon his cheek;
The thinking, thoughtless Schoolboy; the bold Youth
Of soul impetuous; and the bashful Maid
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are op'ning round her; those of middle age,
Cast down while confident in strength they stand,
Like pillars fix'd more firmly, as might seem,
And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them; the decay'd
And burthensome; and, lastly, that poor few
Whose light of reason is with age extinct;
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,
The earliest summon'd and the longest spar'd,
Are here deposited; with tribute paid
Various, but unto each *some* tribute paid;
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,
Society were touch'd with kind concern,
And gentle 'Nature griev'd that One should die!'"
Pp. 244, 245.

There is a lively and impressive appeal on the injury done to the health, happiness, and morality of the lower orders, by the unceasing and premature labours of our crowded manufactories. The description of night-working is picturesque. In lonely and romantic regions, he says, when silence and darkness incline all to repose —

—— "An unnatural light,
Prepar'd for never-resting Labour's eyes,
Breaks from a many-window'd Fabric huge;
And at the appointed hour a Bell is heard —
Of harsher import than the Curfew-knoll
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest.
A local summons to unceasing toil!
Disgorg'd are now the Ministers of day;
And, as they issue from the illumin'd Pile,
A fresh Band meets them, at the crowded door, —
And in the Courts; — and where the rumbling Stream,
That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
Glares, like a troubl'd Spirit, in its bed
Among the rocks below. Men, Maidens, Youths,
Mother and little Children, Boys and Girls,
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
Within this Temple — where is offer'd up
To Gain — the Master Idol of the Realm,
Perpetual sacrifice." — P. 367.

The effects on the ordinary life of the poor are delineated in graver colours.

—— "Domestic bliss,
(Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)
How art thou blighted for the poor Man's heart!
Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve,
The habitations empty! or perchance
The Mother left alone, — no helping hand
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,
Or in the despatch of each day's little growth
Of household occupation; no nice arts
Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,
Where once the dinner was prepar'd with Pride;
Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind;
Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command!
— The Father, if perchance he still retain
His old employments, goes to field or wood,
No longer led or follow'd by his Sons;
Idlers perchance they were, — but in *his* sight;
Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth;
Till their short holiday of childhood ceas'd,
Ne'er to return! That birth-right now is lost."
Pp. 371, 372.

The dissertation is closed with an ardent hope, that the farther improvement and the universal diffusion of these arts may take away the temptation for us to embark so largely in

their cultivation; and that we may once more hold out inducements for the return of old manners and domestic charities.

"Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,
All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
Upon the Moral law. Egyptian Thebes;
Tyre by the margin of the sounding waves;
Palmyra, central in the Desert, fell!
And the Arts died by which they had been raised.
— Call Archimedes from his buried Tomb
Upon the plain of vanish'd Syracuse,
And feelingly the Sage shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is that Philosophy, whose sway is fram'd
For mere material instruments: — How weak
Those hearts, and high Inventions, if unpropp'd
By virtue." — P. 369.

There is also a very animated exhortation to the more general diffusion of education among the lower orders; and a glowing and eloquent assertion of their capacity for all virtues and all enjoyments.

—— "Believe it not!
The primal Duties shine aloft — like stars;
The Charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scatter'd at the feet of Man — like flow'rs.
The gen'rous inclination, the just rule,
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts —
No mystery is here; no special boon
For high and not for low, for proudly grac'd,
And not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
To heav'n as lightly from the Cottage hearth
As from the haughty palace." — P. 398.

The blessings and necessities that now render this a peculiar duty in the rulers of this empire, are urged in a still loftier tone.

"Look! and behold, from Calpe's sunburnt cliffs
To the flat margin of the Baltic Sea,
Long-reverenc'd Titles cast away as weeds;
Laws overturn'd, — and Territory split;
Like fields of ice rent by the polar winds,
And forc'd to join in less obnoxious shapes,
Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust
Of the same breath are shatter'd and destroy'd.
Meantime, the Sov'reignty of these fair Isles
Remains entire and indivisible;
And, if that ignorance were remov'd, which acts
Within the compass of their sev'ral shores
To breed commotion and disquietude,
Each might preserve the beautiful repose
Of heav'nly bodies shining in their spheres.
— The discipline of slavery is unknown
Amongst us, — hence the more do we require
The discipline of virtue; order else
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace."
Pp. 403, 404.

There is a good deal of fine description in the course of this work; but we have left ourselves no room for any specimen. The following few lines, however, are a fine epitome of a lake voyage: —

—— "Right across the Lake
Our pinnace moves: then, coasting creek and bay,
Glades we behold — and into thickets peep —
Where crouch the spotted deer; or raise our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls." — P. 412.

We add, also, the following more elaborate and fantastic picture—which, however, is not without its beauty: —

"Then having reach'd a bridge, that overarch'd
The hasty rivulet where it lay becalm'd
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
A twofold image. On a grassy bank
A snow-white Ram, and in the crystal flood
Another and the same! Most beautiful,
On the green turf, with his imperial front
Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,
The breathing creature stood! as beautiful,
Beneath him, show'd his shadowy Counterpart.
Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
And each seem'd centre of his own fair world:
Antipodes, unconscious of each other,
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
Blended in perfect stillness to our sight!" — P. 407.

Besides those more extended passages of interest or beauty, which we have quoted, and omitted to quote, there are scattered up and down the book, and in the midst of its most repulsive portions, a very great number of single lines and images, that sparkle like gems in the desert, and startle us by an intimation of the great poetic powers that lie buried in the rubbish that has been heaped around them. It is difficult to pick up these, after we have once passed them by; but we shall endeavour to light upon one or two. The beneficial effect of intervals of relaxation and pastime on youthful minds, is finely expressed, we think, in a single line, when it is said to be —

"Like vernal ground to Sabbath sunshine left."

The following image of the bursting forth of a mountain-spring, seems to us also to be conceived with great elegance and beauty.

"And a few steps may bring us to the spot,
Where haply crown'd with flow'rets and green herbs,
The mountain Infant to the Sun comes forth,
Like human life from darkness!"

The ameliorating effects of song and music on the minds which most delight in them, are likewise very poetically expressed.

—— "And when the stream
Which overflow'd the soul was pass'd away,
A consciousness remain'd that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
That shall not die, and cannot be destroy'd."

Nor is any thing more elegant than the representation of the graceful tranquillity occasionally put on by one of the author's favourites; who, though gay and airy, in general —

"Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth and still
As the mute swan that floats adown the stream,
Or on the waters of th' unruffled lake
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf
That flutters on the bough more light than he,
And not a flow'r that droops in the green shade
More winningly reserv'd."

Nor are there wanting morsels of a sterner and more majestic beauty; as when, assuming the weightier diction of Cowper, he says, in language which the hearts of all readers of modern history must have responded —

—— "Earth is sick,
And Heav'n is weary of the hollow words
Which States and Kingdoms utter when they speak
Of Truth and Justice."

These examples, we perceive, are not very well chosen — but we have not leisure to improve the selection; and, such as they are, they may serve to give the reader a notion of the sort of merit which we meant to illustrate by their citation. When we look back to them, indeed, and to the other passages which we have now extracted, we feel half inclined to rescind the severe sentence which we passed on the work at the beginning: — but when we look into the work itself, we perceive that it cannot be rescinded. Nobody can be more disposed to do justice to the great powers of Mr. Wordsworth than we are; and, from the first time that he came before us, down to the present moment, we have uniformly testified in their favour, and assigned indeed our high sense of their value as the chief ground of the bitterness with which we resented their perversion. That perversion, however, is now far more visible than their original dignity; and while we collect the fragments, it is impossible not to mourn over the ruins from which we are condemned to pick them. If any one should doubt of the existence of such a perversion, or be disposed to dispute about the instances we have hastily brought forward, we would just beg leave to refer him to the general plan and character of the poem now before us. Why should Mr. Wordsworth have made his hero a superannuated Pedlar? What but the most wretched affectation, or provoking perversity of taste, could induce any one to place his chosen advocate of wisdom and virtue in so absurd and fantastic a condition? Did Mr. Wordsworth really imagine, that his favourite doctrines were likely to gain any thing in point of effect or authority, by being put into the mouth of a person accustomed to higgle about tape, or brass sleeve-buttons? Or is it not plain, that, independent of the ridicule and disgust which such a personification must excite in many of his readers, its adoption exposes his work throughout to the charge of revolting incongruity, and utter disregard of probability or nature? For, after he has thus wilfully debased his moral teacher by a low occupation, is there one word that he puts into his mouth, or one sentiment of which he makes him the organ, that has the most remote reference to that occupation? Is there any thing in his learned, abstract, and logical harangues, that savours of the calling that is ascribed to him? Are any of their materials such as a pedlar could possibly have dealt in? Are the manners, the diction, the sentiments, in any, the very smallest degree, accommodated to a person in that condition? or are they not eminently and conspicuously such as could not by possibility belong to it? A man who went about selling flannel and pocket-handkerchiefs in this lofty diction, would soon frighten away all his customers; and would infallibly pass either for a madman, or for some learned and affected gentleman, who, in a frolic, had taken up a character which he was peculiarly ill qualified for supporting.

The absurdity in this case, we think, is palpable and glaring: but it is exactly of the same nature with that which infects the whole substance of the work — a puerile ambition of singularity engrafted on an unlucky predilection for truisms; and an affected passion for simplicity and humble life, most awkwardly

combined with a taste for mystical refinements, and all the gorgeousness of obscure phraseology. His taste for simplicity is evinced by sprinkling up and down his interminable declamations a few descriptions of baby-houses, and of old hats with wet brims; and his amiable partiality for humble life, by assuring us that a wordy rhetorician, who talks about Thebes, and allegorizes all the heathen mythology, was once a pedlar - and making him break in upon his magnificent orations with two or three awkward notices of something that he had seen when selling winter raiment about the country — or of the changes in the state of society, which had almost annihilated his former calling.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

(OCTOBER, 1815.)

The White Doe of Rylstone; or the Fate of the Nortons: a Poem. By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. 4to. Pp. 162. London: 1815.

THIS, we think, has the merit of being the very worst poem we ever saw imprinted in a quarto volume; and though it was scarcely to be expected, we confess, that Mr. Wordsworth, with all his ambition, should so soon have attained to that distinction, the wonder may perhaps be diminished when we state, that it seems to us to consist of a happy union of all the faults, without any of the beauties, which belong to his school of poetry. It is just such a work, in short, as some wicked enemy of that school might be supposed to have devised, on purpose to make it ridiculous; and when we first took it up, we could not help suspecting that some ill-natured critic had actually taken this harsh method of instructing Mr. Wordsworth, by example, in the nature of those errors, against which our precepts had been so often directed in vain. We had not gone far, however, till we felt intuitively that nothing in the nature of a joke could be so insupportably dull;—and that this must be the work of one who earnestly believed it to be a pattern of pathetic simplicity, and gave it out as such to the admiration of all intelligent readers. In this point of view, the work may be regarded as curious at least, if not in some degree interesting; and, at all events, it must be instructive to be made aware of the excesses into which superior understandings may be betrayed, by long self-indulgence, and the strange extravagances into which they may run, when under the influence of that intoxication which is produced by unrestrained admiration of themselves. This poetical intoxication, indeed, to pursue the figure a little farther, seems capable of assuming as many forms as the vulgar one which arises from wine; and it appears to require as delicate a management to make a man a good poet by the help of the one, as to make him a good companion by means of the other. In both cases, a little mistake as to the dose or the quality of the inspiring fluid may make him absolutely outrageous, or lull him over into the most profound stupidity, instead of brightening up the hidden stores of his genius: and truly we are concerned to say, that Mr. Wordsworth seems hitherto to have been unlucky in the choice of his liquor — or of his bottle holder. In some of his odes and ethic exhortations, he was exposed to the public in a state of incoherent rapture and glorious delirium, to which we think we have seen a parallel among the humbler lovers of jollity. In the Lyrical Ballads, he was exhibited, on the whole, in a vein of very pretty deliration; but in the poem before us, he appears in a state of low and maudlin imbecility, which would not have misbecome Master Silence himself, in the close of a social day. Whether this unhappy result is to be ascribed to any adulteration of his Castalian cups, or to the unlucky choice of his company over them, we cannot presume to say. It may be that he has dashed his Hippocrene with too large an infusion of lake water, or assisted its operation too exclusively by the study of the ancient historical ballads of "the north countrie." That there are palpable imitations of the style and manner of those venerable compositions in the work before us, is indeed undeniable; but it unfortunately happens, that while the hobbling versification, the mean diction, and flat stupidity of these models are very exactly copied, and even improved upon, in this imitation, their rude energy, manly simplicity, and occasional felicity of expression, have totally disappeared; and, instead of them, a large allowance of the author's own metaphysical sensibility, and mys-

tical wordiness, is forced into an unnatural combination with the borrowed beauties which have just been mentioned.

The story of the poem, though not capable of furnishing out matter for a quarto volume, might yet have made an interesting ballad; and, in the hands of Mr. Scott or Lord Byron, would probably have supplied many images to be loved, and descriptions to be remembered. The incidents arise out of the short-lived Catholic insurrection of the Northern counties, in the reign of Elizabeth, which was supposed to be connected with the project of marrying the Queen of Scots to the Duke of Norfolk; and terminated in the ruin of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, by whom it was chiefly abetted. Among the victims of this rash enterprise was Richard Norton of Rylstone, who comes to the array with a splendid banner, at the head of eight tall sons, but against the will and advice of a ninth, who, though he refused to join the host, yet follows unarmed, in its rear, out of anxiety for the fate of his family; and when the father and his gallant progeny are made prisoners, and led to execution at York, recovers the fatal banner, and is slain by a party of the Queen's horse near Bolton Priory, in which place he had been ordered to deposit it by the dying voice of his father. The stately halls and pleasant bowers of Rylstone are then wasted, and fall into desolation; while the heroic daughter, and only survivor of the house, is sheltered among its faithful retainers, and wanders about for many years in its neighbourhood, accompanied by a beautiful white doe, which had formerly been a pet in the family; and continues, long after the death of this sad survivor, to repair every Sunday to the churchyard of Bolton Priory, and there to feed and wander among the graves, to the wonder and delight of the rustic congregation that came there to worship.

This, we think, is a pretty subject for a ballad; and, in the author's better day, might have made a lyrical one of considerable interest. Let us see, however, how he deals with it, since he has bethought him of publishing in quarto.

The First Canto merely contains the description of the Doe coming into the churchyard on Sunday, and of the congregation wondering at her. She is described as being as white as a lily — or the moon — or a ship in the sunshine; and this is the style in which Mr. Wordsworth marvels and moralises about her through ten quarto pages.

> "What harmonious, pensive changes,
> Wait upon her as she ranges
> Round and through this Pile of State,
> Overthrown and desolate!"

> "The presence of this wand'ring Doe
> Fills many a damp obscure recess
> With lustre of a saintly show;
> And, re-appearing, she no less
> To the open day gives blessedness."

The mothers point out this pretty creature to their children; and tell them in sweet nursery phrases —

> "Now you who have seen the famous Doe!
> From Rylstone she hath found her way
> Over the hills this Sabbath-day;
> Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
> And she will depart when we are gone."

The poet knows why she comes there, and thinks the people may know it too: but some of them think she is a new incarnation of some of the illustrious dead that lie buried around them; and one, who it seems is an Oxford scholar, conjectures that she may be the fairy who instructed Lord Clifford in Astrology! an ingenious fancy, which the poet thus gently reproveth —

> "Ah, pensive scholar! think not so!
> But look again at the radiant doe!"

And then closes the Canto with this natural and luminous apostrophe to his harp.

> "But, harp! thy murmurs may not cease; —
> Thou hast breeze-like visitings;
> For a Spirit with angel-wings
> Hath touch'd thee, and a Spirit's hand:
> A voice is with us — a command
> To chant, in *strains of heavenly glory,*
> A tale of tears, a mortal story!"

The Second Canto is more full of business; and affords us more insight into the author's manner of conducting a story. The opening, however, which goes back to the bright and original conception of the harp, is not quite so intelligible as might have been desired.

> "The harp in lowliness obey'd:
> And first we sang of the green-wood shade;
> And a solitary Maid!
> Beginning, *where the song must end,*
> With her, and with her sylvan Friend;

The friend who stood before her sight,
Her only unextinguish'd light, —
Her last companion in a dearth
Of love, upon a hopeless earth."

This solitary maid, we are then told, had wrought, at the request of her father, "an unblessed work" —

"A Banner — one that did fulfil
Too perfectly his headstrong will:
For on this Banner had her hand
Embroider'd (such was the command)
The Sacred Cross; and figur'd there
The five dear wounds our Lord did bear."

The song then proceeds to describe the rising of Northumberland and Westmoreland, in the following lofty and spirited strains:—

"Two earls fast leagu'd in discontent,
Who gave their wishes open vent;
And boldly urg'd a general plea,
The rites of ancient piety
To be by force of arms renew'd;
Glad prospect for the multitude!
And that same Banner, on whose breast
The blameless Lady had exprest,
Memorials chosen to give life,
And sunshine to a dangerous strife;
This Banner," &c.

The poet, however, puts out all his strength in the dehortation which he makes Francis Norton address to his father, when the preparations are completed, and the household is ready to take the field.

—— "Francis Norton said,
'O Father! rise not in this fray —
The hairs are white upon your head;
Dear Father, hear me when I say
It is for you too late a day!
Bethink you of your own good name
A just and gracious queen have we,
A pure religion, and the claim
Of peace on our humanity.
'Tis meet that I endure your scorn, —
I am your son, your eldest born:
The Banner touch not, stay your hand, —
This multitude of men disband,
And live at home in blissful ease.'"

The warlike father makes no answer to this exquisite address, but turns in silent scorn to the banner,

"And his wet eyes are glorified;"

and forthwith he marches out, at the head of his sons and retainers.

Francis is very sad when thus left alone in the mansion—and still worse when he sees his sister sitting under a tree near the door. However, though "he cannot choose but shrink and sigh," he goes up to her and says,

"'Gone are they, — they have their desire;
And I with thee one hour will stay,
To give thee comfort if I may.'
He paused, her silence to partake,
And long it was before he spake:
Then, all at once, *his thoughts turn'd round,*
And fervent words a passage found.
'Gone are they, bravely, though misled,
With a dear Father at their head!
The Sons obey a natural lord;
The Father had given a solemn word
To noble Percy, — and a force
Still stronger bends him to his course.
This said, our tears to-day may fall
As at an innocent funeral.
In deep and awful channel runs
This sympathy of Sire and Sons;
Untried our Brothers were belov'd,
And now their faithfulness is prov'd;
For faithful we must call them, bearing
That soul of conscientious daring.'"

After a great deal more, as touching and sensible, he applies himself more directly to the unhappy case of his hearer — whom he thus judiciously comforts and flatters:

"Hope nothing, if I thus may speak
To thee a woman, and thence weak;
Hope nothing, I repeat; for we
Are doom'd to perish utterly;
'Tis meet that thou with me divide
The thought while I am by thy side,
Acknowledging a grace in this,
A comfort in the dark abyss:
But look not for me when I am gone,
And be no farther wrought upon.
Farewell all wishes, all debate,
All prayers for this cause, or for that!
Weep, if that aid thee; but depend
Upon no help of outward friend;
Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave
To fortitude without reprieve."

It is impossible, however, to go regularly on with this goodly matter — The Third Canto brings the Nortons and their banner to the head quarters of the insurgent Earls; and describes the first exploits of those conscientious warriors, who took possession of the Cathedral of Durham,

"Sang Mass, — and tore the book of Prayer, —
And trod the Bible beneath their feet."

Elated by this triumph they turn to the south.

"To London were the Chieftains bent:
But what avails the bold intent?
A Royal army is gone forth
To quell the Rising of the North;
They march with Dudley at their head,
And in seven days' space, will to York be led!—
And Neville was opprest with fear;
For, though he bore a valiant name,
His heart was of a timid frame."

So they agree to march back again; at which old Norton is sorely afflicted — and Francis takes the opportunity to renew his dehortations—but is again repulsed with scorn, and falls back to his station in the rear.

The Fourth Canto shows Emily walking by the fish ponds and harbours of Rylstone, in a fine moonshiny night, with her favourite white Doe not far off.

"Yet the meek Creature was not free,*
Erewhile, *from some perplexity*:
For thrice hath she approach'd, this day,
The thought-bewilder'd Emily."

However, they are tolerably reconciled that evening; and by and by, just a few minutes after nine, an old retainer of the house comes to comfort her, and is sent to follow the host and bring back tidings of their success. — The worthy yeoman sets out with great alacrity; but not having much hope, it would appear, of the cause, says to himself as he goes,

"'Grant that the moon which shines this night,
May guide them in a prudent flight!'" — P. 75.

Things however had already come to a still worse issue — as the poet very briefly and ingeniously intimates in the following fine lines: —

"Their flight the fair moon may not see;
For, from mid-heaven, already she
Hath witness'd their captivity!" — P. 75.

They had made a rash assault, it seems, on Barnard Castle, and had been all made prisoners, and forwarded to York for trial.

The Fifth Canto shows us Emily watching on a commanding height for the return of her faithful messenger; who accordingly arrives forthwith, and tells, "as gently as could be," the unhappy catastrophe which he had come soon enough to witness. The only comfort he can offer is, that Francis is still alive.

"To take his life they have not dar'd.
On him and on his high endeavour
The light of praise shall shine for ever!
Nor did he (such Heav'n's will in vain)
His solitary course maintain;
Nor vainly struggled in the might
Of duty seeing with clear sight." — P. 85.

He then tells how the father and his eight sons were led out to execution; and how Francis, at his father's request, took their banner, and promised to bring it back to Bolton Priory.

The Sixth Canto opens with the homeward pilgrimage of this unhappy youth; and there is something so truly forlorn and tragical in his situation, that we should really have thought it difficult to have given an account of it without exciting some degree of interest or emotion. Mr. Wordsworth, however, reserves all his pathos for describing the whiteness of the pet doe, and disserting about her perplexities and her high communion, and participation of Heaven's grace; — and deals in this sort with the orphan son, turning from the bloody scaffold of all his line, with their luckless banner in his hand.

"He look'd about like one betray'd;
What hath he done? what promise made?
Oh weak, weak moment! to what end
Can such a vain oblation tend,
And he the Bearer? — Can he go
Carrying this Instrument of woe,
And find, find any where, a right
To excuse him in his Country's sight?
No, will not all Men deem the change
A downward course? perverse and strange?
Here is it, — but how, when? must she,
The unoffending Emily,
Again this piteous object see?
Such conflict long did he maintain
Within himself, and found no rest;
Calm liberty he could not gain;
And yet the service was unblest.
His own life into danger brought
By this sad burden — even that thought
Rais'd self-suspicion, which was strong,
Swaying the brave Man to his wrong:
And how, unless it were the sense
Of all-disposing Providence,
Its will intelligibly shown,
Finds he the Banner in his hand,
Without a thought to such intent?" — Pp. 99, 100.

His death is not much less pathetic. A troop of the Queen's horse surround him, and reproach him, we must confess with some plau-

sibility, with having kept his hands unarmed, only from dread of death and forfeiture, while he was all the while a traitor in his heart. The sage Francis answers the insolent troopers as follows: —

"'I am no traitor,' Francis said,
'Though this unhappy freight I bear;
It weakens me; my heart hath bled
Till it is weak — but you beware,
Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,
Whose self-reproaches are too strong!'" — P. 103.

This virtuous and reasonable person, however, has ill luck in all his dissuasories; for one of the horsemen puts a pike into him without more ado — and

"There did he lie of breath forsaken!"

And after some time the neighbouring peasants take him up, and bury him in the churchyard of Bolton Priory.

The Seventh and last Canto contains the history of the desolated Emily and her faithful doe; but so very discreetly and cautiously written, that we will engage that the most tender-hearted reader shall peruse it without the least risk of any excessive emotion. The poor lady runs about indeed for some years in a very disconsolate way, in a worsted gown and flannel nightcap; but at last the old white doe finds her out, and takes again to following her — whereupon Mr. Wordsworth breaks out into this fine and natural rapture.

"Oh, moment ever blest! O Pair!
Belov'd of Heaven, Heaven's choicest care!
This was for you a precious greeting,—
For both a bounteous, fruitful meeting.
Join'd are they; and the sylvan Doe
Can she depart? can she forego
The Lady, once her playful Peer?

"That day, the first of a re-union
Which was to teem with high communion,
That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together." — Pp. 117, 118.

What follows is not quite so intelligible.

"When Emily by morning light
Went forth, the Doe was there in sight.
She shrunk: — with one frail shock of pain,
Received and followed by a prayer,
Did she behold — saw once again;
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear; —
But wheresoever she look'd round
All now was trouble-haunted ground." — P. 119.

It certainly is not easy to guess what could be in the mind of the author when he penned these four last inconceivable lines; but we are willing to infer that the lady's loneliness was cheered by this mute associate; and that the doe, in return, found a certain comfort in the lady's company —

"Communication, like the ray
Of a new morning, to the nature
And prospects of the inferior Creature!" — P. 126.

In due time the poor lady dies, and is buried beside her mother; and the doe continues to haunt the places which they had frequented together, and especially to come and pasture every Sunday upon the fine grass in Bolton churchyard, the gate of which is never opened but on occasion of the weekly service. — In consequence of all which we are assured by Mr. Wordsworth, that she "is approved by Earth and Sky, in their benignity; and moreover, that the old Priory itself takes her for a daughter of the Eternal Prime," — which we have no doubt is a very great compliment, though we have not the good luck to understand what it means.

"And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say,
'Thou art not a Child of Time,
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime!'"

FELICIA HEMANS.

(October, 1829.)

1. *Records of Women: with other Poems.* By Felicia Hemans. 2d Edition. 12mo. pp. 323. Edinburgh: 1828.

2. *The Forest Sanctuary: with other Poems.* By Felicia Hemans. 2d Edition, with Additions. 12mo. pp. 325. Edinburgh: 1829.

Women, we fear, cannot do every thing; nor even every thing they attempt. But what they can do, they do, for the most part, excellently — and much more frequently with an absolute and perfect success, than the aspirants of our rougher and more ambitious sex. They cannot, we think, represent naturally the fierce and sullen passions of men — nor their coarser vices — nor even scenes of actual business or contention — nor the mixed motives, and

strong and faulty characters, by which affairs of moment are usually conducted on the great theatre of the world. For much of this they are disqualified by the delicacy of their training and habits, and the still more disabling delicacy which pervades their conceptions and feelings; and from much they are excluded by their necessary inexperience of the realities they might wish to describe — by their substantial and incurable ignorance of business — of the way in which serious affairs are actually managed — and the true nature of the agents and impulses that give movement and direction to the stronger currents of ordinary life. Perhaps they are also incapable of long moral or political investigations, where many complex and indeterminate elements are to be taken into account, and a variety of opposite probabilities to be weighed before coming to a conclusion. They are generally too impatient to get at the ultimate results, to go well through with such discussions; and either stop short at some imperfect view of the truth, or turn aside to repose in the shade of some plausible error. This, however, we are persuaded arises entirely from their being seldom set on such tedious tasks. Their proper and natural business is the practical regulation of private life, in all its bearings, affections, and concerns; and the questions with which they have to deal in that most important department, though often of the utmost difficulty and nicety, involve, for the most part, but few elements; and may generally be better described as delicate than intricate; — requiring for their solution rather a quick tact and fine perception, than a patient or laborious examination. For the same reason, they rarely succeed in long works, even on subjects the best suited to their genius; their natural training rendering them equally averse to long doubt and long labour.

For all other intellectual efforts, however, either of the understanding or the fancy, and requiring a thorough knowledge either of man's strength or his weakness, we apprehend them to be, in all respects, as well qualified as their brethren of the stronger sex: while, in their perceptions of grace, propriety, ridicule—their power of detecting artifice, hypocrisy, and affectation — the force and promptitude of their sympathy, and their capacity of noble and devoted attachment, and of the efforts and sacrifices it may require, they are, beyond all doubt, our Superiors.

Their business being, as we have said, with actual or social life, and the colours it receives from the conduct and dispositions of individuals, they unconsciously acquire, at a very early age, the finest perception of character and manners, and are almost as soon instinctively schooled in the deep and more dangerous learning of feeling and emotion; while the very minuteness with which they make and meditate on these interesting observations, and the finer shades and variations of sentiment which are thus treasured and recorded, trains their whole faculties to a nicety and precision of operation, which often discloses itself to advantage in their application to studies of a different character. When women, accordingly, have turned their minds—as they have done but too seldom — to the exposition or arrangement of any branch of knowledge, they have commonly exhibited, we think, a more beautiful accuracy and a more uniform and complete justness of thinking, than their less discriminating brethren. There is a finish and completeness, in short, about every thing they put out of their hands, which indicates not only an inherent taste for elegance and neatness, but a habit of nice observation, and singular exactness of judgment.

It has been so little the fashion, at any time, to encourage women to write for publication, that it is more difficult than it should be, to prove these truths by examples. Yet there are enough, within the reach of a very careless and superficial glance over the open field of literature, to enable us to explain, at least, and illustrate, if not entirely to verify, our assertions. No *Man*, we will venture to say, could have written the Letters of Madame de Sevigné, or the Novels of Miss Austin, or the Hymns and Early Lessons of Mrs. Barbauld, or the Conversations of Mrs. Marcet. Those performances, too, are not only essentially and intensely feminine; but they are, in our judgment, decidedly more perfect than any masculine productions with which they can be brought into comparison. They accomplish more completely all the ends at which they aim; and are worked out with a gracefulness and felicity of execution which excludes all

idea of failure, and entirely satisfies the expectations they may have raised. We might easily have added to these instances. There are many parts of Miss Edgeworth's earlier stories, and of Miss Mitford's sketches and descriptions, and not a little of Mrs. Opie's, that exhibit the same fine and penetrating spirit of observation, the same softness and delicacy of hand, and unerring truth of delineation, to which we have alluded as characterising the purer specimens of female art. The same distinguishing traits of woman's spirit are visible through the grief and piety of Lady Russel, and the gaiety, the spite, and the venturesomeness of Lady Mary Wortley. We have not as yet much female poetry; but there is a truly feminine tenderness, purity, and elegance, in the Psyche of Mrs. Tighe, and in some of the smaller pieces of Lady Craven. On some of the works of Madame de Staël — her Corinne especially — there is a still deeper stamp of the genius of her sex. Her pictures of its boundless devotedness — its depth and capacity of suffering — its high aspirations — its painful irritability, and inextinguishable thirst for emotion, are powerful specimens of that morbid anatomy of the heart, which no hand but that of a woman's was fine enough to have laid open, or skilful enough to have recommended to our sympathy and love. There is the same exquisite and inimitable delicacy, if not the same power, in many of the happier passages of Madame de Souza and Madame Cottin — to say nothing of the more lively and yet melancholy records of Madame de Staël, during her long presence in the court of the Duchesse de Maine.

But we are preluding too largely; and must come at once to the point, to which the very heading of this article has already admonished the most careless of our readers that we are tending. We think the poetry of Mrs. Hemans a fine exemplification of Female Poetry — and we think it has much of the perfection which we have ventured to ascribe to the happier productions of female genius.

It may not be the best imaginable poetry, and may not indicate the very highest or most commanding genius; but it embraces a great deal of that which gives the very best poetry its chief power of pleasing; and would strike us, perhaps, as more impassioned and exalted, if it were not regulated and harmonised by the most beautiful taste. It is singularly sweet, elegant, and tender — touching, perhaps, and contemplative, rather than vehement and overpowering; and not only finished throughout with an exquisite delicacy, and even severity of execution, but informed with a purity and loftiness of feeling, and a certain sober and humble tone of indulgence and piety, which must satisfy all judgments, and allay the apprehensions of those who are most afraid of the passionate exaggerations of poetry. The diction is always beautiful, harmonious, and free — and the themes, though of great variety, uniformly treated with a grace, originality, and judgment, which mark the same master hand. These themes she has occasionally borrowed, with the peculiar imagery that belongs to them, from the legends of different nations, and the most opposite states of society; and has contrived to retain much of what is interesting and peculiar in each of them, without adopting, along with it, any of the revolting or extravagant excesses which may characterise the taste or manners of the people or the age from which it has been derived. She has transfused into her German or Scandinavian legends the imaginative and daring tone of the originals, without the mystical exaggerations of the one, or the painful fierceness and coarseness of the other — she has preserved the clearness and elegance of the French, without their coldness or affectation — and the tenderness and simplicity of the early Italians, without their diffuseness or languor. Though occasionally expatiating, somewhat fondly and at large, amongst the sweets of her own planting, there is, on the whole, a great condensation and brevity in most of her pieces, and, almost without exception, a most judicious and vigorous conclusion. The great merit, however, of her poetry, is undoubtedly in its tenderness and its beautiful imagery. The first requires no explanation; but we must be allowed to add a word as to the peculiar charm and character of the latter.

It has always been our opinion, that the very essence of poetry — apart from the pathos, the wit, or the brilliant description which may be embodied in it, but may exist equally in prose — consists in the fine perception and vivid expression of that subtle and mysterious

Analogy which exists between the physical and the moral world — which makes outward things and qualities the natural types and emblems of inward gifts and emotions, or leads us to ascribe life and sentiment to every thing that interests us in the aspects of external nature. The feeling of this analogy, obscure and inexplicable as the theory of it may be, is so deep and universal in our nature, that it has stamped itself on the ordinary language of men of every kindred and speech; and that to such an extent, that one half of the epithets by which we familiarly designate moral and physical qualities, are in reality so many metaphors, borrowed reciprocally, upon this analogy, from those opposite forms of existence. The very familiarity, however, of the expression, in these instances, takes away its poetical effect — and indeed, in substance, its metaphorical character. The original sense of the word is entirely forgotten in the derivative one to which it has succeeded; and it requires some etymological recollection to convince us that it was originally nothing else than a typical or analogical illustration. Thus we talk of a sparkling wit, and a furious blast — a weighty argument, and a gentle stream — without being at all aware that we are speaking in the language of poetry, and transferring qualities from one extremity of the sphere of being to another. In these cases, accordingly, the metaphor, by ceasing to be felt, in reality ceases to exist, and the analogy being no longer intimated, of course can produce no effect. But whenever it is intimated, it does produce an effect; and that effect we think is poetry.

It has substantially two functions, and operates in two directions. In the *first* place, when material qualities are ascribed to mind, it strikes vividly out, and brings at once before us the conception of an inward feeling or emotion, which it might otherwise have been difficult to convey, by the presentment of some bodily form or quality which is instantly felt to be its true representative, and enables us to fix and comprehend it with a force and clearness not otherwise attainable; and, in the *second* place, it vivifies dead and inanimate matter with the attributes of living and sentient mind, and fills the whole visible universe around us with objects of interest and sympathy, by tinting them with the hues of life, and associating them with our own passions and affections. This magical operation the poet too performs, for the most part, in one of two ways — either by the direct agency of similes and metaphors, more or less condensed or developed, or by the mere graceful presentment of such visible objects on the scene of his passionate dialogues or adventures, as partake of the character of the emotion he wishes to excite, and thus form an appropriate accompaniment or preparation for its direct indulgence or display. The former of those methods has perhaps been most frequently employed, and certainly has most attracted attention. But the latter, though less obtrusive, and perhaps less frequently resorted to of set purpose, is, we are inclined to think, the most natural and efficacious of the two; and is often adopted, we believe unconsciously, by poets of the highest order; — the predominant emotion of their minds overflowing spontaneously on all the objects which present themselves to their fancy, and calling out from them, and colouring with their own hues, those that are naturally emblematic of its character, and in accordance with its general expression. It would be easy to show how habitually this is done, by Shakspeare and Milton especially, and how much many of their finest passages are indebted, both for force and richness of effect, to this general and diffusive harmony of the external character of their scenes with the passions of their living agents — this harmonising and appropriate glow with which they kindle the whole surrounding atmosphere, and bring all that strikes the sense into unison with all that touches the heart.

But it is more to our present purpose to say, that we think the fair writer before us is eminently a mistress of this poetical secret; and, in truth, it was solely for the purpose of illustrating this great charm and excellence in her imagery, that we have ventured upon this little dissertation. Almost all her poems are rich with fine descriptions, and studded over with images of visible beauty. But these are never idle ornaments: all her pomps have a meaning; and her flowers and her gems are arranged, as they are said to be among Eastern lovers, so as to speak the language of truth and of passion. This is peculiarly remarkable in some little pieces, which seem at first sight to

be purely descriptive — but are soon found to tell upon the heart, with a deep moral and pathetic impression. But it is in truth nearly as conspicuous in the greater part of her productions; where we scarcely meet with any striking sentiment that is not ushered in by some such symphony of external nature — and scarcely a lovely picture that does not serve as an appropriate foreground to some deep or lofty emotion. We may illustrate this proposition, we think, by opening either of these little volumes at random, and taking what they first present to us. — The following exquisite lines, for example, on a Palm-tree in an English garden;

"It wav'd not thro' an Eastern sky,
Beside a fount of Araby;
It was not fann'd by southern breeze
In some green isle of Indian seas,
Nor did its graceful shadow sleep
O'er stream of Afric lone and deep.

"But far the exil'd Palm-tree grew
'Midst foliage of no kindred hue:
Thro' the laburnum's dropping gold
Rose the light shaft of orient mould,
And Europe's violets, faintly sweet,
Purpled the moss-beds at his feet.

"There came an eve of festal hours —
Rich music fill'd that garden's bowers:
Lamps, that from flowering branches hung,
On sparks of dew soft colours flung,
And bright forms glanc'd — a fairy show —
Under the blossoms to and fro.

"But one, a lone one, 'midst the throng,
Seem'd reckless all of dance or song:
He was a youth of dusky mien,
Whereon the Indian sun had been —
Of crested brow, and long black hair —
A stranger, like the Palm-tree, there!

"And slowly, sadly mov'd his plumes,
Glittering athwart the leafy glooms;
He pass'd the pale green olives by,
Nor won the chestnut flowers his eye;
But, when to that sole Palm he came,
Then shot a rapture through his frame!

"To him, to him its rustling spoke!
The silence of his soul it broke!
It whisper'd of his own bright isle,
That lit the ocean with a smile;
Aye, to his ear that native tone
Had something of the sea-wave's moan!

"His mother's cabin home, that lay
Where feathery cocoas fring'd the bay;
The dashing of his brethren's oar;
The conch-note heard along the shore; —
All thro' his wakening bosom swept;
He clasp'd his country's Tree — and wept!

"Oh! scorn him not! — The strength, whereby
The patriot girds himself to die,
Th' unconquerable power, which fills
The freeman battling on his hills —
These have one fountain, deep and clear —
The same whence gush'd that child-like tear!"

The following, which the author has named "Graves of a Household," has rather less of external scenery, but serves, like the others, to show how well the graphic and pathetic may be made to set off each other:

"They grew in beauty, side by side,
They fill'd one home with glee; —
Their graves are sever'd, far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea!

"The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight, —
Where are those dreamers now?

"One, 'midst the forests of the West,
By a dark stream is laid, —
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.

"The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one!
He lies where pearls lie deep:
He was the lov'd of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

"One sleeps where southern vines are drest
Above the noble slain:
He wrapt his colours round his breast,
On a blood-red field of Spain.

"And one — o'er her the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fann'd;
She faded 'midst Italian flowers, —
The last of that bright band!

"And parted thus they rest, who play'd
Beneath the same green tree!
Whose voices mingled as they pray'd
Around one parent knee!

"They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheer'd with song the hearth, —
Alas! for Love, if *thou* wert all,
And nought beyond, oh earth!"

We have taken these pieces chiefly on account of their shortness: but it would not be fair to Mrs. Hemans not to present our readers with one longer specimen — and to give a portion of her graceful narrative along with her pathetic descriptions. This story of "The Lady of the Castle," is told, we think, with great force and sweetness: —

"Thou seest her pictur'd with her shining hair,
(Fam'd were those tresses in Provençal song)
Half braided, half o'er cheek and bosom fair
Let loose, and pouring sunny waves along
Her gorgeous vest. A child's right hand is roving
'Midst the rich curls, and oh! how meekly loving
Its earnest looks are lifted to the face,
Which bends to meet its lip in laughing grace!
Yet that bright lady's eye methinks hath less
Of deep, and still, and pensive tenderness,
Than might beseem a mother's· On her brow
Something too much there sits of native scorn,
And her smile kindles with a conscious glow.
— These may be dreams! But how shall Woman tell
Of woman's shame, and not with tears? — She fell!
That mother left that child!—went hurrying by
Its cradle — haply not without a sigh;
Haply one moment o'er its rest serene
She hung — But no! it could not thus have been,
For *she went on!* — forsook her home, her hearth,
All pure affection, all sweet household mirth,
To live a gaudy and dishonour'd thing,
Sharing in guilt the splendours of a king."

"Her lord, in very weariness of life,
Girt on his sword for scenes of distant strife;
He reck'd no more of Glory: — Grief and shame
Crush'd out his fiery nature, and his name
Died silently. A shadow o'er his halls
Crept year by year; the minstrel pass'd their walls;
The warder's horn hung mute:—Meantime the child,
On whose first flow'ring thoughts no parent smil'd,
A gentle girl, and yet deep-hearted, grew
Into sad youth; for well, too well, she knew
Her mother's tale! Its memory made the sky
Seem all too joyous for her shrinking eye;
Check'd on her lip the flow of song, which fain
Would there have linger'd; flush'd her cheek to pain,
If met by sudden glance; and gave a tone
Of sorrow, as for something lovely gone,
Even to the spring's glad voice. Her own was low
And plaintive! — Oh! there lie such depths of woe
In a *young* blighted spirit! Manhood rears
A haughty brow; and Age has done with tears;
But Youth bows down to mis'ry, in amaze
At the dark cloud o'ermantling its fresh days,—
And thus it was with her. A mournful sight
In one so fair — for she indeed was fair —
Not with her mother's dazzling eyes of light.
Hers were more shadowy, full of thought and pray'r;
And with long lashes o'er a white-rose cheek,
Drooping in gloom, yet tender still and meek.

"One sunny morn,
With alms before her castle gate she stood,
'Midst peasant-groups; when, breathless and o'er-worn,
And shrouded in long robes of widowhood,
A stranger through them broke: — The orphan maid
With her sweet voice, and proffered hand of aid,
Turn'd to give welcome: but a wild sad look
Met hers; a gaze that all her spirit shook;
And that pale woman, suddenly subdued
By some strong passion in its gushing mood,
Knelt at her feet, and bath'd them with such tears
As rain the hoarded agonies of years
From the heart's urn; and with her white lips press'd
The ground they trode; then, burying in her vest
Her brow's deep flush, sobb'd out — 'Oh! undefil'd!
I am thy Mother — spurn me not, my child!'

"Isaure had pray'd for that lost mother; wept
O'er her stain'd memory, while the happy slept
In the hush'd midnight; stood with mournful gaze
Before yon picture's smile of other days,
But never breath'd in human ear the name
Which weigh'd her being to the earth with shame.
What marvel if the anguish, the surprise,
The dark remembrances, the alter'd guise,
Awhile o'erpowered her? — from the weeper's touch
She shrank! — 'Twas but a moment — yet too much
For that all humbled one; its mortal stroke
Came down like lightning, and her full heart broke
At once in silence. Heavily and prone
She sank, while, o'er her castle's threshold-stone,
Those long fair tresses — *they* still brightly wore
Their early pride, though bound with pearls no more —
Bursting their fillet, in sad beauty roll'd,
And swept the dust with coils of wavy gold.

"Her child bent o'er her — call'd her —'Twas too late —
Dead lay the wanderer at her own proud gate!
The joy of courts, the star of knight and bard,—
How did'st thou fall, O bright-hair'd Ermengarde!"

The following sketch of "Joan of Arc in Rheims," is in a loftier and more ambitious vein; but sustained with equal grace, and as touching in its solemn tenderness. We can afford to extract but a part of it: —

——"Within, the light,
Through the rich gloom of pictur'd windows flowing,
Tinged with soft awfulness a stately sight,
The chivalry of France, their proud heads bowing
In martial vassalage! — while 'midst the ring,
And shadow'd by ancestral tombs, a king
Received his birthright's crown. For this, the hymn
Swell'd out like rushing waters, and the day
With the sweet censer's misty breath grew dim,
As through long aisles it floated, o'er th' array
Of arms and sweeping stoles. But who, alone
And unapproach'd, beside the altar-stone,
With the white banner, forth like sunshine streaming,
And the gold helm, through crowds of fragrance gleaming

Silent and radiant stood? — The helm was rais'd,
And the fair face revealed, that upward gazed,
Intensely worshipping; — a still, clear face,
Youthful, but brightly solemn! — Woman's cheek
And brow were there, in deep devotion meek,
Yet glorified with inspiration's trace!

. . . . "A triumphant strain,
A proud rich stream of warlike melodies,
Gush'd through the portals of the antique fane,
And forth she came." . . . .
"The shouts that fill'd
The hollow heaven tempestuously, were still'd,
One moment; and in that brief pause, the tone,
As of a breeze that o'er her home had blown,
Sank on the bright maid's heart! — 'Joanne!' — Who spoke?
Like those whose childhood with *her* childhood grew
Under one roof? — 'Joanne!' — *that* murmur broke
With sounds of weeping forth! — She turn'd — she knew
Beside her, mark'd from all the thousands there,
In the calm beauty of his silver hair,
The stately shepherd! And the youth, whose joy
From his dark eye flash'd proudly; and the boy,
The youngest-born that ever lov'd her best!
'Father! and ye my brothers!' — On the breast
Of that grey sire she sank — and swiftly back,
Even in an instant, to their native track
Her free thoughts flow'd. — She saw the pomp no more!
The plumes, the banners! — To her cabin door,
And to the Fairy's Fountain in the glade,
Where her young sisters by her side had play'd,
And to her hamlet's chapel, where it rose
Hallowing the forest into deep repose,
Her spirit turn'd. — The very wood-note, sung
In early spring-time by the bird, which dwelt
Where o'er her father's roof the beech-leaves hung,
Was in her heart; a music heard and felt,
Winning her back to nature! — she unbound
The helm of many battles from her head,
And, with her bright locks bow'd to sweep the ground,
Lifting her voice up, wept for joy, and said, —
'Bless me, my father, bless me! and with thee,
To the still cabin and the beechen-tree,
Let me return!'"

There are several strains of a more passionate character; especially in the two poetical epistles from Lady Arabella Stuart and Properzia Rossi. We shall venture to give a few lines from the former. The Lady Arabella was of royal descent; and having excited the fears of our pusillanimous James by a secret union with the Lord Seymour, was detained in a cruel captivity, by that heartless monarch, till the close of her life — during which she is supposed to have indited this letter to her lover from her prison house: —

"My friend, my friend! where art thou? Day by day,
Gliding, like some dark mournful stream, away,
My silent youth flows from me! Spring, the while,
Comes, and rains beauty on the kindling boughs
Round hall and hamlet; Summer, with her smile,
Fills the green forests; — young hearts breathe their vows;
Brothers, long parted, meet; fair children rise
Round the glad board: Hope laughs from loving eyes.

"Ye are from dingle and fresh glade, ye flowers!
By some kind hand to cheer my dungeon sent;
O'er you the oak shed down the summer showers,
And the lark's nest was where your bright cups bent,
Quivering to breeze and rain-drop, like the sheen
Of twilight stars. On you Heaven's eye hath been,
Through the leaves pouring its dark sultry blue
Into your glowing hearts; the bee to you
Hath murmur'd, and the rill. — My soul grows faint
With passionate yearning, as its quick dreams paint
Your haunts by dell and stream, — the green, the free,
The full of all sweet sound, — they shut from me!

"There went a swift bird singing past my cell —
O Love and freedom! ye are lovely things;
With you the peasant on the hills may dwell,
And by the streams; but I — the blood of kings,
A proud unmingling river, through my veins
Flows in lone brightness, — and its gifts are chains!
— Kings! — I had silent visions of deep bliss,
Leaving *their* thrones far distant! and for this
I am cast under their triumphal car,
An insect to be crush'd!

"Thou hast forsaken me! — I feel, I know!
There would be rescue if it were not so.
Thou'rt at the chase, thou'rt at the festive board,
Thou'rt where the red wine free and high is pour'd,
Thou'rt where the dancers meet! — a magic glass
Is set within my soul, and proud shapes,
Flushing it o'er with pomp from bower and hall!
I see one shadow, stateliest there of all, —
Thine! — What dost *Thou* amidst the bright and fair,
Whisp'ring light words, and mocking my despair?"

The following, though it has no very distinct object or moral, breathes, we think, the very spirit of Poetry, in its bright and vague picturings, and is well entitled to the name it bears — "An Hour of Romance:" —

"There were thick leaves above me and around,
And low sweet sighs, like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
As of soft showers on water! Dark and deep

Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still
They seem'd but pictured glooms: as hidden rill
Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
Under the fern-tufts: and a tender gleam
Of soft green light as by the glow-worm shed,
Came pouring thro' the woven beech-boughs down,
And steep'd the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown;
A tale of Palestine.—Meanwhile the bee
Swept past me with a tone of summer hours,
A drowsy bugle wafting thoughts of flowers,
Blue skies and amber sunshine: brightly free
On filmy wing the purple dragon-fly
Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by;
And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
Where sat the lone wood pigeon:
But ere long
All sense of these things faded, as the spell
Breathing from that high gorgeous tale grew strong
On my chain'd soul!—T'was not the leaves I heard—
A Syrian wind the Lion-banner stirr'd,
Thro' its proud, floating folds!—'twas not the brook,
Singing in secret thro' its glassy glen;—
And wild shrill trumpet of the Saracen
Peal'd from the desert's lonely heart, and shook
The burning air!—Like clouds when winds are high,
O'er glitt'ring sands flew steeds of Araby;
And tents rose up, and sudden lance and spear
Flash'd where a fountain's diamond wave lay clear,
Shadow'd by graceful palm-trees! Then the shout
Of merry England's joy swell'd freely out,
Sent thro' an eastern heaven, whose glorious hue
Made shields dark mirrors to its depths of blue!
And harps were there;—I heard their sounding strings,
As the waste echo'd to the mirth of kings.—
The bright masque faded!—Unto life's worn track,
What call'd me from its flood of glory back?
A voice of happy childhood!—and they pass'd,
Banner, and harp, and Paynim trumpet's blast;
Yet might I scarce bewail the splendours gone,
My heart so leap'd to that sweet laughter's tone."

There is great sweetness in the following portion of a little poem on a "Girl School:"—

"Oh! joyous creatures! that will sink to rest,
Lightly, when those pure orisons are done,
As birds with slumbers honey-dew opprest,
'Midst the dim folded leaves, at set of sun—
Yet in those flute-like voices, mingling low,
Is woman's tenderness—how soon her woe!

"Her look is on you—silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear, through suff'ring's hour;
And sumless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds—a wasted show'r!
And to make idols,—and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship!—therefore pray!

"Her lot is on you! to be found untir'd,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain,
With a pale cheek, and yet a brow inspir'd,
And a true heart of hope, though hope be vain;
Meekly to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,
And Oh! to Love through all things!—therefore pray!"

There is a fine and stately solemnity, too, in these lines on "The Lost Pleiad:"—

"Hath the night lost a gem, the regal night?
She wears her crown of old magnificence,
Though thou art exiled thence—
No desert seems to part those urns of light,
'Midst the far depths of purple gloom intense.

"They rise in joy, the starry myriads, burning—
The shepherd greets them on his mountains free;
And from the silvery sea
To them the sailor's wakeful eye is turning—
Unchang'd they rise; they have not mourn'd for thee!

"Couldst thou be shaken from thy radiant place,
E'en as a dew-drop from the myrtle spray,
Swept by the wind away?
Wert thou not peopled by some glorious race?
And was there power to smite them with decay?

"Then who shall talk of thrones, of sceptres riv'n?
Bow'd be our hearts to think on what *we* are!
When from its height afar
A World sinks thus—and yon majestic heav'n
Shines not the less for that one vanish'd star!"

The following, on "The Dying Improvisatore," have a rich lyrical cadence, and glow of deep feeling:—

"Never, oh! never more,
On thy Rome's purple heaven mine eye shall dwell,
Or watch the bright waves melt along thy shore—
My Italy, farewell!

"Alas!—thy hills among,
Had I but left a memory of my name,
Of love and grief one deep, true, fervent song,
Unto immortal fame!

"But like a lute's brief tone,
Like a rose-odour on the breezes cast,
Like a swift flush of dayspring, seen and gone,
So hath my spirit pass'd!

"Yet, yet remember me!
Friends! that upon its murmurs oft have hung,
When from my bosom, joyously and free,
The fiery fountain sprung!

"Under the dark rich blue
Of midnight heav'ns, and on the star-lit sea,
And when woods kindle into spring's first hue,
Sweet friends! remember me!

"And in the marble halls,
Where life's full glow the dreams of beauty wear,
And poet-thoughts embodied light the walls,
Let me be with you there!

"Fain would I bind, for you,
My memory with all glorious things to dwell;
Fain bid all lovely sounds my name renew—
Sweet friends! bright land! farewell!"

But we must stop here. There would be no end of our extracts, if we were to yield to the temptation of noting down every beautiful passage which arrests us in turning over the leaves of the volumes before us. We ought to recollect, too, that there are few to whom our pages are likely to come, who are not already familiar with their beauties; and, in fact, we have made these extracts, less with the presumptuous belief that we are introducing Mrs. Hemans for the first time to the knowledge or admiration of our readers, than from a desire of illustrating, by means of them, that singular felicity in the choice and employment of her imagery, of which we have already spoken so much at large;—that fine accord she has established between the world of sense and of soul—that delicate blending of our deep inward emotions with their splendid symbols and emblems without.

We have seen too much of the perishable nature of modern literary fame, to venture to predict to Mrs. Hemans that hers will be immortal, or even of very long duration. Since the beginning of our critical career we have seen a vast deal of beautiful poetry pass into oblivion, in spite of our feeble efforts to recall or retain it in remembrance. The tuneful quartos of Southey are already little better than lumber:—and the rich melodies of Keats and Shelley,—and the fantastical emphasis of Wordsworth,—and the plebeian pathos of Crabbe, are melting fast from the field of our vision. The novels of Scott have put out his poetry. Even the splendid strains of Moore are fading into distance and dimness, except where they have been married to immortal music; and the blazing star of Byron himself is receding from its place of pride. We need say nothing of Milman, and Croly, and Atherstone, and Hood, and a legion of others, who, with no ordinary gifts of taste and fancy, have not so properly survived their fame, as been excluded by some hard fatality, from what seemed their just inheritance. The two who have the longest withstood this rapid withering of the laurel, and with the least marks of decay on their branches, are Rogers and Campbell; neither of them, it may be remarked, voluminous writers, and both distinguished rather for the fine taste and consummate elegance of their writings, than for that fiery passion, and disdainful vehemence, which seemed for a time to be so much more in favour with the public.

If taste and elegance, however, be titles to enduring fame, we might venture securely to promise that rich boon to the author before us; who adds to those great merits a tenderness and loftiness of feeling, and an ethereal purity of sentiment, which could only emanate from the soul of a woman. She must beware, however, of becoming too voluminous; and must not venture again on any thing so long as the "Forest Sanctuary." But if the next generation inherits our taste for short poems, we are persuaded it will not readily allow her to be forgotten. For we do not hesitate to say, that she is, beyond all comparison, the most touching and accomplished writer of occasional verses that our literature has yet to boast of.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MIND, METAPHYSICS, AND JURISPRUDENCE.

I AM aware that the title prefixed to this head or Division of the present publication, is not likely to attract many readers; and, for this reason, I have put much less under it, than under any of the other divisions. But, having been at one time more addicted to the studies to which it relates than to any other — and still confessing to a certain partiality for them — I could not think of letting this collection of old speculations go forth to the world, without *some* specimen of those which once found so much favour in my eyes.

I will confess, too, that I am not unwilling to have it known that, so long ago as 1804, I adventured to break a spear (and I trust not quite ingloriously) in these perilous lists, with two such redoubted champions as Jeremy Bentham and Dugald Stewart, then in the maturity of their fame; and also to assail, with equal gallantry, what appeared to me the opposite errors of the two great Dogmatical schools of Priestley and of Reid.

I will venture also to add, that on looking back on what I have now reprinted of these early lucubrations, I cannot help indulging a fond, though probably delusive expectation, that the brief and familiar exposition I have there attempted, both of the fallacy of the Materialist theory, and of the very moderate practical value that can be assigned to Metaphysical discussions generally, and especially of the real shallowness and utter insignificance of the thorough-going Scepticism (even if unanswerable) to which they have been supposed to lead, may be found neither so tedious, nor so devoid of interest even to the general reader, as the mere announcement of the subjects might lead him to apprehend.

JEREMY BENTHAM.

(APRIL, 1804.)

Traités de Législation Civile et Pénale; précédés de Principes Généraux de Législation, et d'une Vue d'un Corps complet de Droit; terminés par un Essai sur l'Influence des tems et des lieux relativement aux Lois. Par M. JÉRÉMIE BENTHAM, Jurisconsulte Anglois. Publiés en François par M. DUMONT de Genève, d'après les Manuscrits confiés par l'Auteur. 8vo. 3 tom. Paris, an X. 1802.

THE title-page of this work exhibits a curious instance of the division of labour; and of the combinations that hold together the literary commonwealth of Europe. A living author consents to give his productions to the world in the language of a foreign editor; and the speculations of an English philosopher are published at Paris, under the direction of a *redacteur* from Geneva. This arrangement is not the most obvious or natural in the world; nor is it very flattering to the literature of this country; but we have no doubt that it was adopted for sufficient reasons.

It is now about fifteen years since Mr. Bentham first announced to the world his design of composing a great work on the Principles of morals and legislation. The specimen which he then gave of his plan, and of his abilities, was calculated, we think, to excite considerable expectation, and considerable alarm, in the reading part of the community. While the author displayed, in many places, great originality and accuracy of thinking, and gave proofs throughout of a very uncommon degree of courage, acuteness, and impartiality, it was easy to perceive that he was encumbered with the magnitude of his subject, and that his habits of discussion were but ill adapted to render it popular with the greater part of his readers. Though fully possessed of his subject, he scarcely ever appeared to be properly the master of it; and seemed evidently to move in

his new career with great anxiety and great exertion. In the subordinate details of his work, he is often extremely ingenious, clear, and satisfactory; but in the grouping and distribution of its several parts, he is apparently irresolute or capricious; and has multiplied and distinguished them by such a profusion of divisions and subdivisions, that the understanding is nearly as much bewildered from the excessive labour and complexity of the arrangement, as it could have been from its absolute omission. In following out the discussions into which he is tempted by every incidental suggestion, he is so anxious to fix a precise and appropriate principle of judgment, that he not only loses sight of the general scope of his performance, but pushes his metaphysical analysis to a degree of subtlety and minuteness that must prove repulsive to the greater part of his readers. In the extent and the fineness of those speculations, he sometimes appears to lose all recollection of his subject, and often seems to have tasked his ingenuity to weave snares for his understanding.

The powers and the peculiarities which were thus indicated by the preliminary treatise, were certainly such as to justify some solicitude as to the execution of the principal work. While it was clear that it would be well worth reading, it was doubtful if it would be very fit for being read: and while it was certain that it would contain many admirable remarks and much original reasoning, there was room for apprehending that the author's love of method and metaphysics might place his discoveries beyond the reach of ordinary students, and repel the curiosity which the importance of the subject was so likely to excite. Actuated probably, in part, by the consciousness of those propensities (which nearly disqualified him from being the editor of his own speculations), and still too busily occupied with the prosecution of his great work to attend to the nice finishing of its parts, Mr. Bentham, about six years ago, put into the hands of M. Dumont a large collection of manuscripts, containing the greater part of the reasonings and observations which he proposed to embody into his projected system. These materials, M. Dumont assures us, though neither arranged nor completed, were rather redundant than defective in quantity; and left nothing to the *redacteur*, but the occasional labour of selection, arrangement, and compression. This task he has performed, as to a considerable part of the papers entrusted to him, in the work now before us; and has certainly given a very fair specimen, both of the merit of the original speculations, and of his own powers of expression and distribution. There are some passages, perhaps, into which a degree of levity has been introduced that does not harmonize with the general tone of the composition; and others in which we miss something of that richness of illustration and homely vigour of reasoning which delighted us in Mr. Bentham's original publications; but, in point of neatness and perspicuity, conciseness and precision, we have no sort of doubt that M. Dumont has been of the most essential service to his principal; and are inclined to suspect that, without this assistance, we should never have been able to give any account of his labours.*

The principle upon which the whole of Mr. Bentham's system depends is, that *Utility*, and utility alone, is the criterion of right and wrong, and ought to be the sole object of the legislator. This principle, he admits, has often been suggested, and is familiarly recurred to both in action and deliberation; but he maintains that it has never been followed out with sufficient steadiness and resolution, and that the necessity of assuming it as the exclusive test of our proceedings has never been sufficiently understood. There are two principles, he alleges, that have been admitted to a share of that moral authority which belongs of right to utility alone, and have exercised a control over the conduct and opinions of society, by which legislators have been very frequently misled. One of these he denominates the *Ascetic principle*, or that which enjoins the mortification of the senses as a duty, and proscribes their gratification as a sin; and the other, which has had a much more extensive influence, he calls *the principle of Sympathy* or *Antipathy;* under which name he comprehends all those systems which place the basis of morality in the indications of a moral Sense, or in the maxims of a rule of Right; or which,

* A considerable portion of the original paper is here omitted; and those parts only retained which relate to the general principle and scope of the system.

under any other form of expression, decide upon the propriety of human actions by any reference to internal feelings, and not solely on a consideration of their consequences.

As utility is thus assumed as the test and standard of action and approbation, and as it consists in procuring pleasure and avoiding pain, Mr. Bentham has thought it necessary, in this place, to introduce a catalogue of all the pleasures and pains of which he conceives man to be susceptible; since these, he alleges, are the elements of that moral calculation in which the wisdom and the duty of legislators and individuals must ultimately be found to consist. The simple pleasures of which man is susceptible are fourteen, it seems, in number; and are thus enumerated—1. pleasures of sense: 2. of wealth: 3. of dexterity: 4. of good character: 5. of friendship: 6. of power: 7. of piety: 8. of benevolence: 9. of malevolence: 10. of memory, 11. of imagination: 12. of hope: 13. of association: 14. of relief from pain. The pains, our readers will be happy to learn, are only eleven; and are almost exactly the counterpart of the pleasures that have now been enumerated. The construction of these catalogues, M. Dumont considers as by far the greatest improvement that has yet been made in the philosophy of human nature!

It is chiefly by the fear of pain that men are regulated in the choice of their deliberate actions; and Mr. Bentham finds that pain may be attached to particular actions in four different ways: 1. by nature: 2. by public opinion: 3. by positive enactment: and 4. by the doctrines of religion. Our institutions will be perfect when all these different sanctions are in harmony with each other.

But the most difficult part of our author's task remains. In order to make any use of those "elements of moral arithmetic," which are constituted by the lists of our pleasures and pains, it was evidently necessary to ascertain *their relative Value*,—to enable him to proceed in his legislative calculations with any degree of assurance. Under this head, however, we are only told that the value of a pleasure or a pain, considered in itself, depends, 1. upon its intensity, 2. upon its proximity, 3. upon its duration, and 4. upon its certainty; and that, considered with a view to its consequences, its value is further affected, 1. by its *fecundity*, *i. e.* its tendency to produce other pleasures or pains; 2. by its *purity*, *i. e.* its being unmixed with other sensations; and 3. by the number of persons to whom it may extend. These considerations, however, the author justly admits to be still inadequate for his purpose; for, by what means is the *Intensity* of any pain or pleasure to be measured, and how, without a knowledge of this, are we to proportion punishments to temptations, or adjust the measures of recompense or indemnification? To solve this problem, Mr. Bentham seems to have thought it sufficient to recur to his favourite system of Enumeration; and to have held nothing else necessary than to make out a fair catalogue of "the circumstances by which the sensibility is affected." These he divides into two branches—the primary and the secondary. The first he determines to be exactly fifteen, viz. temperament—health—strength—bodily imperfection—intelligence—strength of understanding—fortitude—perseverance—dispositions—notions of honour—notions of religion—sympathies—antipathies—folly or derangement—fortune. The secondary are only nine, viz. sex—age—rank—education—profession—climate—creed—government—religious creed. By carefully attending to these twenty-four circumstances, Mr. Bentham is of opinion that we may be able to estimate the value of any particular pleasure or pain to an individual, with sufficient exactness; and to judge of the comparative magnitude of crimes, and of the proportionate amount of pains and compensations.

Now the first remark that suggests itself is, that if there is little that is false or pernicious in this system, there is little that is either new or important. That laws were made to promote the general welfare of society, and that nothing should be enacted which has a different tendency, are truths that can scarcely claim the merit of novelty, or mark an epoch by the date of their promulgation; and we have not yet been able to discover that the vast technical apparatus here provided by Mr. Bentham can be of the smallest service in improving their practical application.

The basis of the whole system is the undivided sovereignty of the principle of Utility,

and the necessity which there is for recurring strictly to it in every question of legislation. Moral feelings, it is admitted, will frequently be found to coincide with it; but they are on no account to be trusted to, till this coincidence has been verified. They are no better, in short, than sympathies and antipathies, mere private and unaccountable feelings, that may vary in the case of every individual; and therefore can afford no fixed standard for general approbation or enjoyment. Now we cannot help thinking, that this fundamental proposition is very defective, both in logical consistency, and in substantial truth. In the first place, it seems very obvious that the principle of utility is liable to the very same objections, on the force of which the authority of moral impressions has been so positively denied. For how shall utility itself be recognized, but by a *feeling* exactly similar to that which is stigmatized as capricious and unaccountable? How are pleasures and pains, and the degrees and relative magnitude of pleasures and pains, to be distinguished, but by the feeling and experience of every individual? And what greater certainty can there be in the accuracy of such determinations, than in the results of other feelings no less general and distinguishable? If *right and wrong*, in short, be not precisely the same to every individual, neither are *pleasure and pain;* and if there be despotism and absurdity in imposing upon another one's own impressions of wisdom and propriety, it cannot be just and reasonable to erect a standard of enjoyment, and a consequent rule of conduct, upon the narrow basis of our own measure of sensibility.' It is evident, therefore, that by assuming the principle of utility, we do not get rid of the risk of variable feeling; and that we are still liable to all the uncertainty that may be produced by this cause, under the influence of any other principle.

The truth is, however, that this uncertainty is in all cases of a very limited nature; and that the common impressions of morality, the vulgar distinctions of right and wrong, virtue and vice, are perfectly sufficient to direct the conduct of the individual, and the judgment of the legislator, for all useful purposes, without any reference to the nature or origin of those distinctions. In many respects, indeed, we conceive them to be much fitter for this purpose than Mr. Bentham's oracles of utility. In the first place, it is necessary to observe, that it is a very gross and unpardonable mistake to represent the notions of right and wrong, which are here in question, as depending altogether upon the private and capricious feelings of an individual. Certainly no man was ever so arrogant or so foolish, as to insist upon establishing his own individual persuasion as an infallible test of duty and wisdom for all the rest of the world. The moral feelings, of which Mr. Bentham would make so small account, are the feelings which observation has taught us to impute to *all* men; those in which, under every variety of circumstances, they are found pretty constantly to agree, and as to which the uniformity of their conclusions may be reasoned and reckoned upon, with almost as much security as in the case of their external perceptions. The existence of such feelings, and the uniformity with which they are excited in all men on the same occasions, are *facts*, in short, that admit of no dispute; and, in point of certainty and precision, are exactly on a footing with those perceptions of utility that can only be relied on after they also have been verified by a similar process of observation. Now, we are inclined to think, in opposition to Mr. Bentham, that a legislator will proceed more safely by following the indications of those moral distinctions as to which all men are agreed, than by setting them altogether at defiance, and attending exclusively to those perceptions of utility which, after all, he must collect from the same general agreement.

It is now, we believe, universally admitted, that nothing can be generally the object of moral approbation, which does not tend, upon the whole, to the good of mankind; and we are not even disposed to dispute with Mr. Bentham, that the true source of this moral approbation is in all cases a perception or experience of what may be called utility in the action or object which excites it. The difference between us, however, is considerable; and it is precisely this — Mr. Bentham maintains, that in all cases we ought to disregard the presumptions arising from moral approbation, and, by a resolute and scrupulous analysis, to get at the actual, naked utility upon which it is founded; and then, by the appli-

cation of his new moral arithmetic, to determine its quantity, its composition, and its value; and, according to the result of this investigation, to regulate our moral approbation for the future. We, on the other hand, are inclined to hold, that those feelings, where they are uniform and decided, are by far the surest tests of the quantity and value of the utility by which they are suggested; and that if we discredit their report, and attempt to ascertain this value by any formal process of calculation or analysis, we desert a safe and natural standard, in pursuit of one for the construction of which we neither have, nor ever can have, any rules or materials. A very few observations, we trust, will set this in a clear light.

The amount, degree, or intensity of any pleasure or pain, is ascertained by feeling; and not determined by reason or reflection. These feelings however are transitory in their own nature, and, when they occur separately, and, as it were, individually, are not easily recalled with such precision as to enable us, upon recollection, to adjust their relative values. But when they present themselves in combination, or in rapid succession, their relative magnitude or intensity is generally perceived by the mind without any exertion, and rather by a sort of immediate feeling, than in consequence of any intentional comparison: and when a particular combination or succession of such feelings is repeatedly or frequently suggested to the memory, the relative value of all its parts is perceived with great readiness and rapidity, and the general result is fixed in the mind, without our being conscious of any act of reflection. In this way, moral maxims and impressions arise in the minds of all men, from an instinctive and involuntary valuation of the good and the evil which they have perceived to be connected with certain actions or habits; and those impressions may safely be taken for the just result of that valuation, which we may afterwards attempt, unsuccessfully, though with great labour, to repeat. They may be compared, on this view of the matter, to those *acquired perceptions of sight* by which the eye is enabled to judge of distances; of the process of acquiring which we are equally unconscious, and yet by which it is certain that we are much more safely and commodiously guided, within the range of our ordinary occupations, than we ever could be by any formal scientific calculations, founded on the faintness of the colouring, and the magnitude of the angle of vision, compared with the average tangible bulk of the kind of object in question.

The comparative value of such good and evil, we have already observed, can obviously be determined by feeling alone; so that the interference of technical and elaborate reasoning, though it may well be supposed to disturb those perceptions upon the accuracy of which the determination must depend, cannot in any case be of the smallest assistance. Where the preponderance of good or evil is distinctly felt by all persons to whom a certain combination of feelings has been thus suggested, we have all the evidence for the reality of this preponderance that the nature of the subject will admit: and must try in vain to traverse that judgment, by any subsequent exertion of a faculty that has no jurisdiction in the cause. The established rules and impressions of morality, therefore, we consider as the grand recorded result of an infinite multitude of experiments upon human feeling and fortune, under every variety of circumstances; and as affording, therefore, by far the nearest approximation to a just standard of the good and the evil that human conduct is concerned with, which the nature of our faculties will allow. In endeavouring to correct or amend this general verdict of mankind, in any particular instance, we not only substitute our own individual feelings for that large average which is implied in those moral impressions, which are universally prevalent, but obviously run the risk of omitting or mistaking some of the most important elements of the calculation. Every one at all accustomed to reflect upon the operations of his mind, must be conscious how difficult it is to retrace exactly those trains of thought which pass through the understanding almost without giving us any intimation of their existence, and how impossible it frequently is to repeat any process of thought, when we propose to make it the subject of observation. The reason of this is, that our feelings are not in their natural state when we would thus make them the objects of study or analysis; and their force and direction are far better estimated, therefore, from the traces

which they leave in their spontaneous visitations, than from any forced revocation of them for the purpose of being measured or compared. When the object itself is inaccessible, it is wisest to compute its magnitude from its shadow; where the cause cannot be directly examined, its qualities are most securely inferred from its effects.

One of the most obvious consequences of disregarding the general impressions of morality, and determining every individual question upon a rigorous estimate of the utility it might appear to involve, would be, to give an additional force to the causes by which our judgments are most apt to be perverted, and entirely to abrogate the authority of those *General rules* by which alone men are commonly enabled to judge of their own conduct with any tolerable impartiality. If we were to dismiss altogether from our consideration those authoritative maxims, which have been sanctioned by the general approbation of mankind, and to regulate our conduct entirely by a view of the good and the evil that promises to be the consequence of every particular action, there is reason to fear, not only that inclination might occasionally slip a false weight into the scale, but that many of the most important consequences of our actions might be overlooked. Those actions are bad, according to Mr. Bentham, that produce more evil than good: but actions are performed by individuals; and all the good may be to the individual, and all the evil to the community. There are innumerable cases in which the advantages to be gained by the commission of a crime are incalculably greater (looking only to this world) than the evils to which it may expose the criminal. This holds in almost every instance where unlawful passions may be gratified with very little risk of detection. A mere calculation of utilities would never prevent such actions; and the truth undoubtedly is, that the greater part of men are only withheld from committing them by those general impressions of morality, which it is the object of Mr. Bentham's system to supersede. Even admitting, what might well be denied, that, in all cases, the utility of the individual is inseparably connected with that of society, it will not be disputed, at least, that this connexion is of a nature not very striking or obvious, and that it may frequently be overlooked by an individual deliberating on the consequences of his projected actions. It is in aid of this oversight, of this omission, of this partiality, that we refer to the *General rules* of morality; rules, which have been suggested by a larger observation, and a longer experience, than any individual can dream of pretending to, and which have been accommodated, by the joint action of our sympathies with delinquents and with sufferers, to the actual condition of human fortitude and infirmity. If they be founded on utility, it is on an utility that cannot always be discovered; and that can never be correctly estimated, in deliberating upon a particular measure, or with a view to a specific course of conduct: it is on an utility that does not discover itself till it is accumulated; and only becomes apparent after a large collection of examples have been embodied in proof of it. Such summaries of utility, such records of uniform observation, we conceive to be the *General rules of Morality*, by which, and by which alone, legislators or individuals can be safely directed in determining on the propriety of any course of conduct. They are observations taken in the calm, by which we must be guided in the darkness and the terror of the tempest; they are beacons and strongholds erected in the day of peace, round which we must rally, and to which we must betake ourselves, in the hour of contest and alarm.

For these reasons, and for others which our limits will not now permit us to hint at, we are of opinion, that the old established morality of mankind ought upon no account to give place to a bold and rigid investigation into the *utility* of any particular act, or any course of action that may be made the subject of deliberation; and that the safest and the shortest way to the good which we all desire, is the beaten highway of morality, which was formed at first by the experience of good and of evil.

But our objections do not apply merely to the foundation of Mr. Bentham's new system of morality: we think the plan and execution of the superstructure itself defective in many particulars. Even if we could be persuaded that it would be wiser in general to follow the dictates of utility than the impressions of moral duty, we should still say that the system

contained in these volumes does not enable us to adopt that substitute; and that it really presents us with no means of measuring or comparing utilities. After perusing M. Dumont's eloquent observations on the incalculable benefits which his author's discoveries were to confer on the science of legislation, and on the genius and good fortune by which he had been enabled to reduce morality to the precision of a science, by fixing a precise standard for the good and evil of our lives, we proceeded with the perusal of Mr. Bentham's endless tables and divisions, with a mixture of impatience, expectation, and disappointment. Now that we have finished our task, the latter sentiment alone remains; for we perceive very clearly that M. Dumont's zeal and partiality have imposed upon his natural sagacity, and that Mr. Bentham has just left the science of morality in the same imperfect condition in which it was left by his predecessors. The whole of Mr. Bentham's catalogues and distinctions tend merely to point out the *Number* of the causes that produce our happiness or misery, but by no means to ascertain their *relative Magnitude or force;* and the only effect of their introduction into the science of morality seems to be, to embarrass a popular subject with a technical nomenclature, and to perplex familiar truths with an unnecessary intricacy of arrangement.

Of the justice of this remark any one may satisfy himself, by turning back to the tables and classifications which we have exhibited in the former part of this analysis, and trying if he can find there any rules for estimating the comparative *value* of pleasures and pains, that are not perfectly familiar to the most uninstructed of the species. In the table of simple pleasures, for instance, what satisfaction can it afford to find the pleasure of riches set down as a distinct genus from the pleasure of power, and the pleasure of the senses—unless some scale were annexed by which the respective value of these several pleasures might be ascertained? If a man is balancing between the pain of privation and the pain of shame, how is he relieved by merely finding these arranged under separate titles? or, in either case, will it give him any information, to be told that the value of a pain or pleasure depends upon its intensity, its duration, or its certainty? If a legislator is desirous to learn what degree of punishment is suitable to a particular offence, will he be greatly edified to read that the same punishment may be more or less severe according to the temperament, the intelligence, the rank or the fortune of the delinquent; and that the circumstances that influence sensibility, though commonly reckoned to be only nine, may fairly be set down at fifteen? Is there any thing, in short, in this whole book, that realizes the triumphant Introduction of the editor, or that can enable us in any one instance to decide upon the *relative magnitude* of an evil, otherwise than by a reference to the common feelings of mankind? It is true, *we* are perfectly persuaded, that by the help of these feelings, we can form a pretty correct judgment in most cases that occur; but Mr. Bentham is not persuaded of this; and insists upon our renouncing all faith in so incorrect a standard, while he promises to furnish us with another that is liable to no sort of inaccuracy. This promise we do not think he has in any degree fulfilled; because he has given us no rule by which the intensity of any pain or pleasure can be determined: and furnished us with no instrument by which we may take the altitude of enjoyment, or fathom the depths of pain. It is no apology for having made this promise, that its fulfilment was evidently impossible.

In multiplying these distinctions and divisions, which form the basis of the system, Mr. Bentham appears to us to bear less resemblance to a philosopher of the present times, than to one of the old scholastic doctors, who substituted classification for reasoning, and looked upon the ten categories as the most useful of all human inventions. Their distinctions were generally real, as well as his, and could not have been made without the misapplication of much labour and ingenuity: but it is now generally admitted that they are of no use whatever, either for the promotion of truth, or the detection of error; and that they only serve to point out differences that cannot be overlooked, or need not be remembered. There are many differences and many points of resemblance in all actions, and in all substances, that are absolutely indifferent in any serious reasoning that may be entered into with regard to them; and though much industry and much

acuteness may be displayed in finding them out, the discovery is just as unprofitable to science, as the enumeration of the adverbs in the creed, or the dissyllables in the decalogue, would be to theology. The greater number of Mr. Bentham's distinctions, however, are liable to objection, because they state, under an intricate and technical arrangement, those facts and circumstances only that are necessarily familiar to all mankind, and cannot possibly be forgotten on any occasion where it is of importance to remember them. If bad laws have been enacted, it certainly is not from having forgotten that the good of society is the ultimate object of all law, or that it is absurd to repress one evil by the creation of a greater. Legislators have often bewildered themselves in the choice of means; but they have never so grossly mistaken the *ends* of their institution, as to need to be reminded of these obvious and elementary truths.

If there be any part of Mr. Bentham's classification that might be supposed to assist us in appreciating the comparative value of pleasures and pains, it must certainly be his enumeration of the circumstances that affect the sensibility of individuals. Even if this table were to fulfil all that it promises, however, it would still leave the system fundamentally deficient, as it does not enable us to compare the relative amount of any two pleasures or pains, to individuals in *the same* circumstances. In its particular application, however, it is truly no less defective; for though we are told that temperament, intelligence, &c., should vary the degree of punishment or reward, we are not told to what extent, or in what proportions, it should be varied by these circumstances. Till this be done, however, it is evident that the elements of Mr. Bentham's moral arithmetic have no determinate value; and that it would be perfectly impossible to work any practical problem in legislation by the help of them. It is scarcely necessary to add, that even if this were accomplished, and the cognizance of all these particulars distinctly enjoined by the law, the only effect would be, to introduce a puerile and fantastic complexity into our systems of jurisprudence, and to encumber judicial procedure with a multitude of frivolous or impracticable observances. The circumstances, in consideration of which Mr. Bentham would have the laws vary the punishment, are so numerous and so indefinite, that it would require a vast deal more labour to ascertain their existence in any particular case, than to establish the principal offence. The first is Temperament; and in a case of flogging, we suppose Mr. Bentham would remit a few lashes to a sanguine and irritable delinquent, and lay a few additional stripes on a phlegmatic or pituitous one. But how is the temperament to be given in evidence? or are the judges to aggravate or alleviate a punishment upon a mere inspection of the prisoner's complexion. Another circumstance that should affect the pain, is the offender's firmness of mind; and another his strength of understanding. How is a court to take cognizance of these qualities? or in what degree are they to affect their proceedings? If we are to admit such considerations into our law at all, they ought to be carried a great deal farther than Mr. Bentham has indicated; and it should be expressed in the statutes, what alleviation of punishment should be awarded to a culprit on account of his wife's pregnancy, or the colour of his children's hair. We cannot help thinking that the undistinguishing grossness of our actual practice is better than such foppery. We fix a punishment that is calculated for the common average condition of those to whom it is to be applied; and, in almost all cases, we leave with the judge a discretionary power of accommodating it to any peculiarities that may seem to require an exception. After all, this is the most plausible part of Mr. Bentham's arrangements.

In what he has said of the false notions which legislators have frequently followed in preference to the polar light of utility, we think we discover a good deal of inaccuracy, and some little want of candour. Mr. Bentham must certainly be conscious that no one ever pretended that the mere antiquity of a law was a sufficient reason for retaining it, in spite of its evident inutility: but when the utility of parting with it is doubtful, its antiquity may fairly be urged as affording a presumption in its favour, and as a reason for being cautious at least in the removal of what must be incorporated with so many other institutions. We plead the antiquity of our Constitution as an additional reason for not yielding it up to in-

novators: but nobody ever thought, we believe, of advancing this plea in support of the statutes against Witchcraft. In the same way, we think, there is more wit than reason in ascribing the errors of many legislators to their being misled by a metaphor. The metaphor, we are inclined to think, has generally arisen from the principle or practice to which Mr. Bentham would give effect independent of it. The law of England respects the sanctity of a free citizen's dwelling so much, as to yield it some privilege; and *therefore* an Englishman's house is called his Castle. The piety or superstition of some nations has determined that a criminal cannot be arrested in a place of worship. This is the whole fact: the usage is neither explained nor convicted of absurdity, by saying that such people call a church the House of God. If it were the house of God, does Mr. Bentham conceive that it *ought* to be a sanctuary for criminals? In what is said of the Fictions of law, there is much of the same misapprehension. Men neither are, nor ever were, misguided by these fictions; but the fictions are merely certain quaint and striking methods of expressing a rule that has been adopted in an apprehension of its utility. To deter men from committing treason, their offspring is associated to a certain extent in their punishment. The motive and object of this law is plain enough; and calling the effect "Corruption of blood," will neither aggravate nor hide its injustice. When it is said that the heir is the same person with the deceased, it is but a pithy way of intimating that he is bound in all the obligations, and entitled to all the rights of his predecessor. That the King never dies, is only another phrase for expressing that the office is never vacant; and that he is every where, is true, if it be lawful to say that a person can act by deputy. In all these observations, and in many that are scattered through the subsequent part of his book, Mr. Bentham seems to forget that there is such a thing as common sense in the world; and to take it for granted, that if there be an opening in the letter of the law for folly, misapprehension, or abuse, its ministers will eagerly take advantage of it, and throw the whole frame of society into disorder and wretchedness. A very slight observation of the actual business of life might have taught him, that expediency may, for the most part, be readily and certainly discovered by those who are interested in finding it; and that in a certain stage of civilization there is generated such a quantity of intelligence and good sense, as to disarm absurd institutions of their power to do mischief, and to administer defective laws into a system of practical equity. This indeed is the grand corrective which remedies all the errors of legislators, and retrenches all that is pernicious in prejudice. It makes us independent of technical systems, and indifferent to speculative irregularities; and he who could increase its quantity, or confirm its power, would do more service to mankind than all the philosophers that ever speculated on the means of their reformation.

In the following chapter we meet with a perplexity which, though very ingeniously produced, appears to us to be wholly gratuitous. Mr. Bentham for a long time can see no distinction between Civil and Criminal jurisprudence; and insists upon it, that *rights* and *crimes* necessarily and virtually imply each other. If I have a right to get your horse, it is only because it would be a crime for you to keep it from me; and if it be a crime for me to take your horse, it is only because you have a right to keep him. This we think is very pretty reasoning: but the distinction between the civil and the criminal law is not the less substantial and apparent. The civil law is that which directs and enjoins — the criminal law is that which punishes. This is enough for the legislator; and for those who are to obey him. It is a curious inquiry, no doubt, how far all rights may be considered as the counterpart of crimes; and whether every regulation of the civil code necessarily implies a delict in the event of its violation. On this head there is room for a good deal of speculation: but in our opinion Mr. Bentham pushes the principle much too far. There seems to be nothing gained, for instance, either in the way of clearness or consistency, by arranging under the head of criminal law, those cases of refusal to fulfil contracts, or to perform obligations, for which no other punishment is or ought to be provided, but a compulsory fulfilment or performance. This is merely following out the injunction of the civil code, and cannot, either in law or in logic, be correctly regarded as a

punishment. The proper practical test of a crime, is where, over and above the restitution of the violated right (where that is possible), the violator is subjected to a direct pain, in order to deter from the repetition of such offences.

In passing to the code of criminal law, Mr. Bentham does not forget the necessity of classifying and dividing. Delicts, according to him, are either, 1. Private, or against one or a few individuals; 2. Reflective, or against the delinquent himself; 3. Semipublic, or against some particular class or description of persons; and, finally, Public, or against the whole community. Private delicts, again, relate either to the person, the property, the reputation or the condition; and they are distributed into complex and simple, principal and accessory, positive and negative, &c., &c. The chief evil of a crime is the alarm which it excites in the community; and the degree of this alarm, Mr. Bentham assumes, depends upon *eight* circumstances, the particular situation of the delinquent, his motives, his notoriety, his character, the difficulties or facilities of the attempt, &c. But here again, we see no sense in the enumeration; the plain fact being, that the alarm is increased by every thing which renders it probable that such acts may be frequently repeated. In one case, and one of considerable atrocity, there is no alarm at all; because the only beings who can be affected by it, are incapable of fear or suspicion — this is the case of infanticide; and Mr. Bentham ingeniously observes, that it is probably owing to this circumstance that the laws of many nations have been so extremely indifferent on that subject. In modern Europe, however, he conceives that they are barbarously severe. In the case of certain crimes against the community, such as misgovernment of all kinds, the danger again is always infinitely greater than the alarm.

The remedies which law has provided against the mischief of crimes, Mr. Bentham says, are of four orders; preventive—repressive — compensatory — or simply penal. Upon the subject of compensation or satisfaction, Mr. Bentham is most copious and most original; and under the title of satisfaction in honour, he presents us with a very calm, acute, and judicious inquiry into the effects of duelling; which he represents as the only remedy which the impolicy or impotency of our legislators has left for such offences.

We do not think, however, that the same good sense prevails in what he subjoins, as to the means that might be employed to punish insults and attacks upon the honour of individuals. According to the enormity of the offence, he is for making the delinquent pronounce a discourse of humiliation, either standing, or on his knees, before the offended party, and clothed in emblematical robes, with a mask of a characteristic nature on his head, &c. There possibly may be countries where such contrivances might answer; but, with us, they would not only be ineffectual, but ridiculous.

In the choice of punishments, Mr. Bentham wishes legislators to recollect, that punishment is itself an evil; and that it consists of five parts; — the evil of restraint — the evil of suffering — the evil of apprehension — the evil of groundless persecution — and the evils that extend to the innocent connexions of the delinquent. For these reasons, he is anxious that no punishment should be inflicted without a real cause, or without being likely to influence the will; or where other remedies might have been employed; or in cases where the crime produces less evil than the punishment. These admonitions are all very proper, and, we dare say, sincere; but we cannot think that they are in any way recommended by their novelty.

In the section upon the indirect means of preventing crimes, there is a great deal of genius and strong reasoning; though there are many things set down in too rash and peremptory a manner, and some that are supported with a degree of flippancy not very suitable to the occasion. The five main sources of offence he thinks are, want of occupation, the angry passions, the passion of the sexes, the love of intoxication, and the love of gain. As society advances, all these lose a good deal of their mischievous tendency, excepting the last; against which, of course, the legislature should be more vigilant than ever. In the gradual predominance of the avaricious passions over all the rest, however, Mr. Bentham sees many topics of consolation; and concludes this part of his work by declaring, that it should be the great object of the criminal law to reduce all

offences to that species which can be completely atoned for and repaired by payment of a sum of money. It is a part of his system, which we have forgotten to mention, that persons so injured should in all cases be entitled to reparation out of the public purse.

DUGALD STEWART.

(January, 1804.)

Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Reid, D. D., F. R. S., Edinburgh, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. By Dugald Stewart, F. R. S. Edinburgh: Read at different meetings of the Royal Society at Edinburgh. 8vo. pp. 225. Edinburgh and London: 1803.

Although it is impossible to entertain greater respect for any names than we do for those that are united in the title of this work, we must be permitted to say, that there are many things with which we cannot agree, both in the system of Dr. Reid, and in Mr. Stewart's elucidation and defence of it. That elucidation begins, indeed, with a remark, which we are not at all disposed to controvert: that the distinguishing feature of Dr. Reid's philosophy is the systematical steadiness with which he has adhered to the course of correct observation, and the admirable self-command by which he has confined himself to the clear statements of the facts he has collected: but then Mr. Stewart immediately follows up this observation with a warm encomium on the inductive philosophy of Lord Bacon, and a copious and eloquent exposition of the vast advantage that may be expected from applying to the science of mind those sound rules of experimental philosophy that have undoubtedly guided us to all the splendid improvements in modern physics. From the time indeed that Mr. Hume published his treatise of human nature, down to the latest speculations of Condorcet and Mr. Stewart himself, we have observed this to be a favourite topic with all metaphysical writers; and that those who have differed in almost every thing else, have agreed in magnifying the importance of such inquiries, and in predicting the approach of some striking improvement in the manner of conducting them.

Now, in these speculations we cannot help suspecting that those philosophers have been misled in a considerable degree by a false analogy; and that their zeal for the promotion of their favourite studies has led them to form expectations somewhat sanguine and extravagant, both as to their substantial utility and as to the possibility of their ultimate improvement. In reality, it does not appear to us that any great advancement in our knowledge of the operations of mind is to be expected from any improvement in the plan of investigation; or that the condition of mankind is likely to derive any great benefit from the cultivation of this interesting but abstracted study.

Inductive philosophy, or that which proceeds upon the careful observation of facts, may be applied to two different classes of phenomena. The first are those that can be made the subject of proper Experiment: where the substances are actually in our power, and the judgment and artifice of the enquirer can be effectually employed to arrange and combine them in such a way as to disclose their most hidden properties and relations. The other class of phenomena are those that occur in substances that are placed altogether beyond our reach; the order and succession of which we are generally unable to control; and as to which we can do little more than collect and record the laws by which they appear to be governed. Those substances are not the subject of *Experiment*, but of *Observation;* and the knowledge we may obtain, by carefully watching their variations, is of a kind that does not directly increase the power which we might otherwise have had over them. It seems evident, however, that it is principally in the former of these departments, or the strict *experimental philosophy*, that those splendid improvements have been made, which have erected so vast a trophy to the prospective genius of Bacon. The astronomy of Sir Isaac Newton is no exception to this general remark: all that mere *Observation* could do to determine the movements of the heavenly bodies, had been accomplished by the stargazers who preceded him; and the law of gravitation, which he afterwards applied to the planetary system, was first calculated and ascertained by *experiments* performed upon substances which were entirely at his disposal.

It will scarcely be denied, either, that it is almost exclusively to this department of proper Experiment, that Lord Bacon has directed the attention of his followers. His fundamental maxim is, that knowledge is power; and the great problem which he constantly aims at resolving is, in what manner the nature of any substance or quality may, by experiment, be so detected and ascertained as to enable us to manage it at our pleasure. The greater part of the *Novum Organum* accordingly is taken up with rules and examples for contriving and conducting experiments; and the chief advantage which he seems to have expected from the progress of those inquiries, appears to be centred in the enlargement of man's dominion over the material universe which he inhabits. To the mere Observer, therefore, his laws of philosophizing, except where they are prohibitory laws, have but little application; and to such an inquirer, the rewards of his philosophy scarcely appear to have been promised. It is evident indeed that no *direct* utility can result from the most accurate observations of occurrences which we cannot control; and that for the uses to which such observation may afterwards be turned, we are indebted not so much to the observer, as to the person who discovered the application. It also appears to be pretty evident that in the art of observation itself, no very great or fundamental improvement can be expected. Vigilance and attention are all that can ever be required in an observer; and though a talent for methodical arrangement may facilitate to others the study of the facts that have been collected, it does not appear how our actual knowledge of those facts can be increased by any new method of describing them. Facts that we are unable to modify or direct, in short, can only be the objects of observation; and observation can only inform us that they exist, and that their succession appears to be governed by certain general laws.

In the proper Experimental philosophy, every acquisition of knowledge is an increase of power; because the knowledge is necessarily derived from some intentional disposition of materials which we may always command in the same manner. In the philosophy of observation, it is merely a gratification of our curiosity. By experiment, too, we generally acquire a pretty correct knowledge of the causes of the phenomena we produce; as we ourselves have distributed and arranged the circumstances upon which they depend; while, in matters of mere observation, the assignment of causes must always be in a good degree conjectural, inasmuch as we have no means of separating the preceding phenomena, or deciding otherwise than by analogy, to which of them the succeeding event is to be attributed.

Now, it appears to us to be pretty evident that the phenomena of the human mind are almost all of the latter description. We feel, and perceive, and remember, without any purpose or contrivance of ours, and have evidently no power over the mechanism by which those functions are performed. We may observe and distinguish those operations of mind, indeed, with more or less attention or exactness; but we cannot subject them to experiment, or alter their nature by any process of investigation. We cannot decompose our perceptions in a crucible, nor divide our sensations with a prism; nor can we, by art and contrivance, produce any combination of thoughts or emotions, besides those with which all men have been provided by nature. No metaphysician expects by analysis to discover a new power, or to excite a new sensation in the mind, as a chemist discovers a new earth or a new metal; nor can he hope by any process of synthesis, to exhibit a mental combination different from any that nature has produced in the minds of other persons. The science of metaphysics, therefore, depends upon observation, and not upon experiment: and all reasonings upon mind proceed accordingly upon a reference to that general observation which all men are supposed to have made, and not to any particular experiments, which are known only to the inventor. — The province of philosophy in this department, therefore, is the province of observation only; and in this department the greater part of that code of laws which Bacon has provided for the regulation of experimental induction is plainly without authority. In metaphysics, certainly, knowledge is not power; and instead of producing new phenomena to elucidate the old, by well-contrived and well-conducted experiments, the most diligent inquirer can

do no more than register and arrange the appearances, which he can neither account for nor control.

But though our power can in no case be directly increased by the most vigilant and correct observation alone, our knowledge may often be very greatly extended by it. In the science of mind, however, we are inclined to suspect that this is not the case. From the very nature of the subject, it seems necessarily to follow, that all men must be practically familiar with all the functions and qualities of their minds; and with almost all the laws by which they appear to be governed. Every one knows exactly what it is to perceive and to feel, to remember, imagine, and believe; and though he may not always apply the words that denote these operations with perfect propriety, it is not possible to suppose that any one is ignorant of the things. Even those laws of thought, or connexions of mental operation, that are not so commonly stated in words, appear to be universally known; and are found to regulate the practice of those who never thought of enouncing them in precise or abstract propositions. A man who never heard it asserted that memory depends upon attention, yet attends with uncommon care to any thing that he wishes to remember; and accounts for his forgetfulness, by acknowledging that he had paid no attention. A groom, who never heard of the association of ideas, feeds the young war-horse to the sound of a drum; and the unphilosophical artists who tame elephants and train dancing dogs, proceed upon the same obvious and admitted principle. The truth is, that as we only know the existence of mind by the exercise of its functions according to certain laws, it is impossible that any one should ever discover or bring to light any functions or any laws of which men would admit the existence, unless they were previously convinced of their operation on themselves. A philosopher may be the first to state these laws, and to describe their operation distinctly in words; but men must be already familiarly acquainted with them in reality, before they can assent to the justice of his descriptions.

For these reasons, we cannot help thinking that the labours of the metaphysician, instead of being assimilated to those of the chemist or experimental philosopher, might, with less impropriety, be compared to those of the grammarian who arranges into technical order the words of a language which is spoken familiarly by all his readers; or of the artist who exhibits to them a correct map of a district with every part of which they were previously acquainted. We acquire a perfect knowledge of our own minds without study or exertion, just as we acquire a perfect knowledge of our native language or our native parish; yet we cannot, without much study and reflection, compose a grammar of the one, or a map of the other. To arrange in correct order all the particulars of our practical knowledge, and to set down, without omission and without distortion, every thing that we actually know upon a subject, requires a power of abstraction, recollection, and disposition, that falls to the lot of but few. In the science of mind, perhaps, more of those qualities are required than in any other; but it is not the less true of this, than of all the rest, that the materials of the description must always be derived from a previous acquaintance with the subject — that nothing can be set down technically that was not practically known — and that no substantial addition is made to our knowledge by a scientific distribution of its particulars. After such a systematic arrangement has been introduced, and a correct nomenclature applied, we may indeed conceive more clearly, and will certainly describe more justly, the nature and extent of our information; but our information itself is not really increased, and the consciousness by which we are supplied with all the materials of our reflections, does not become more productive, by this disposition of its contributions.

But though we have been induced in this way to express our scepticism, both as to the probable improvement and practical utility of metaphysical speculations, we would by no means be understood as having asserted that these studies are absolutely without interest or importance. With regard to perception, indeed, and some of the other primary functions of the mind, it seems now to be admitted, that philosophy can be of no use to us, and that the profoundest reasonings lead us back to the creed, and the ignorance, of the vulgar. As to the laws of Association, however, the case is somewhat different. Instances of the appli-

cation of such laws are indeed familiar to every one, and there are few who do not of themselves arrive at some imperfect conception of their general limits and application: but that they are sooner learned, and may be more steadily and extensively applied, when our observations are assisted by the lessons of a judicious instructor, seems scarcely to admit of doubt; and though there are no errors of opinion perhaps that may not be corrected without the help of metaphysical principles, it cannot be disputed, that an habitual acquaintance with those principles leads us more directly to the source of such errors, and enables us more readily to explain and correct some of the most formidable aberrations of the human understanding. After all, perhaps, the chief value of such speculations will be found to consist in the wholesome exercise which they afford to the faculties, and the delight which is produced by the consciousness of intellectual exertion. Upon this subject, we gladly borrow from Mr. Stewart the following admirable quotations: —

"An author well qualified to judge, from his own experience, of whatever conduces to invigorate or to embellish the understanding, has beautifully remarked, that 'by turning the soul inward on itself, its forces are concentrated, and are fitted for stronger and bolder flights of science; and that, in such pursuits, whether we take, or whether we lose the game, the Chase is certainly of service.' In this respect, the philosophy of the mind (abstracting entirely from that pre-eminence which belongs to it in consequence of its practical applications) may claim a distinguished rank among those preparatory disciplines, which another writer of equal talents has happily compared to 'the crops which are raised, not for the sake of the harvest, but to be ploughed in as a dressing to the land.'" — Pp. 166, 167.

In following out his observations on the scope and spirit of Dr. Reid's philosophy, Mr. Stewart does not present his readers with any general outline or summary of the peculiar doctrines by which it is principally distinguished. This part of the book indeed appears to be addressed almost exclusively to those who are in some degree initiated in the studies of which it treats, and consists of a vindication of Dr. Reid's philosophy from the most important objections that had been made to it by his antagonists. The first is proposed by the materialist, and is directed against the gratuitous assumption of the existence of mind. To this Mr. Stewart answers with irresistible force, that the philosophy of Dr. Reid has in reality no concern with the theories that may be formed as to the *causes* of our mental operations, but is entirely confined to the investigation of those phenomena which are known to us by internal consciousness, and not by external perception. On the theory of Materialism itself, he makes some admirable observations: and, after having stated the perceptible improvement that has lately taken place in the method of considering those intellectual phenomena, he concludes with the following judicious and eloquent observations: —

"The authors who form the most conspicuous exceptions to this gradual progress, consist chiefly of men, whose errors may be easily accounted for, by the prejudices connected with their circumscribed habits of observation and inquiry; — of Physiologists, accustomed to attend to that part alone of the human frame, which the knife of the Anatomist can lay open; or of Chemists, who enter on the analysis of Thought, fresh from the decompositions of the laboratory; carrying into the Theory of Mind itself (what Bacon expressively calls) 'the smoke and tarnish of the furnace.' Of the value of such pursuits, none can think more highly than myself; but I must be allowed to observe, that the most distinguished pre-eminence in them does not necessarily imply a capacity of collected and abstracted reflection; or an understanding superior to the prejudices of early association, and the illusions of popular language. I will not go so far as Cicero, when he ascribes to those who possess these advantages, a more than ordinary vigour of intellect: '*Magni est ingenii revocare mentem a sensibus, et cogitationem a consuetudine abducere.*' I would only claim for them, the merit of patient and cautious research; and would exact from their antagonists the same qualifications." — Pp. 110, 111.

The second great objection that has been made to the doctrines of Dr. Reid, is, that they tend to damp the ardour of philosophical curiosity, by stating as ultimate facts many phenomena which might be resolved into simpler principles; and perplex the science of mind with an unnecessary multitude of internal and unaccountable properties. As to the first of these objections, we agree entirely with Mr. Stewart. It is certainly better to damp the ardour of philosophers, by exposing their errors and convincing them of their ignorance, than to gratify it by subscribing to their blunders. It is one step towards a true explanation of any phenomenon, to expose the fallacy of an erroneous one; and though the contem-

plation of such errors may render us more diffident of our own success, it will probably teach us some lessons that are far from diminishing our chance of obtaining it. But to the charge of multiplying unnecessarily the original and instinctive principles of our nature, Mr. Stewart, we think, has not made by any means so satisfactory an answer. The greater part of what he says indeed upon this subject, is rather an apology for Dr. Reid, than a complete justification of him. In his classification of the active powers, he admits that Dr. Reid has multiplied, without necessity, the number of our original affections; and that, in the other parts of his doctrine, he has manifested a leaning to the same extreme. It would have been better if he had rested the defence of his author upon those concessions; and upon the general reasoning with which they are very skilfully associated, to prove the superior safety and prudence of a tardiness to generalize and assimilate: for, with all our deference for the talents of the author, we find it impossible to agree with him in those particular instances in which he has endeavoured to expose the injustice of the accusation. After all that Mr. Stewart has said, we can still see no reason for admitting a principle of credulity, or a principle of veracity, in human nature; nor can we discover any sort of evidence for the existence of an instinctive power of interpreting natural signs.

Dr. Reid's only reason for maintaining that the belief we commonly give to the testimony of others is not derived from reasoning and experience, is, that this credulity is more apparent and excessive in children, than in those whose experience and reason is mature. Now, to this it seems obvious to answer, that the experience of children, though not extensive, is almost always entirely *uniform* in favour of the veracity of those about them. There can scarcely be any temptation to utter serious falsehood to an infant; and even if that should happen, they have seldom such a degree of memory or attention as would be necessary for its detection. In all cases, besides, it is admitted that children learn the general rule, before they begin to attend to the exceptions; and it will not be denied that the general rule is, that there is a connexion between the assertions of mankind and the realities of which they are speaking. Falsehood is like those irregularities in the construction of a language, which children always overlook for the sake of the general analogy.

The principle of *veracity* is in the same situation. Men speak and assert, in order to accomplish some purpose: but if they did not *generally* speak truth, their assertions would answer no purpose at all — not even that of deception. To speak falsehood, too, even if we could suppose it to be done without a motive, requires a certain exercise of imagination and of the inventive faculties, which is not without labour: while truth is suggested spontaneously — not by the principle of veracity, but by our consciousness and memory. Even if we were not rational creatures, therefore, but spoke merely as a consequence of our sensations, we would speak truth much oftener than falsehood; but being rational, and addressing ourselves to other beings with a view of influencing their conduct or opinions, it follows, as a matter of necessity, that we must almost always speak truth: even the principle of credulity would not otherwise be sufficient to render it worth while for us to speak at all.

With regard to the principle by which we are enabled to interpret the natural signs of the passions, and of other connected events, we cannot help entertaining a similar scepticism. There is no evidence, we think, for the existence of such a principle; and all the phenomena may be solved by the help of memory and the association of ideas. The "inductive principle" is very nearly in the same predicament; though the full discussion of the argument that might be maintained upon that subject would occupy more room than we can now spare.

After some very excellent observations on the nature and the functions of instinct, Mr. Stewart proceeds to consider, as the last great objection to Dr. Reid's philosophy, the alleged tendency of his doctrines on the subject of *common sense*, to sanction an appeal from the decisions of the learned to the voice of the multitude. Mr. Stewart, with great candour, admits that the phrase was unluckily chosen; and that it has not always been employed with perfect accuracy, either by Dr. Reid or his followers: but he maintains, that the greater part of the truths which Dr. Reid has referred

to this authority, are in reality originally and unaccountably impressed on the human understanding, and are necessarily implied in the greater part of its operations. These, he says, may be better denominated "Fundamental laws of belief;" and he exemplifies them by such propositions as the following: "I am the same person to-day that I was yesterday.—The material world has a real existence. — The future course of nature will resemble the past." We shall have occasion immediately to offer a few observations on some of those propositions.

With these observations Mr. Stewart concludes his defence of Dr. Reid's philosophy: but we cannot help thinking that there was room for a farther vindication, and that some objections may be stated to the system in question, as formidable as any of those which Mr. Stewart has endeavoured to obviate. We shall allude very shortly to those that appear the most obvious and important. Dr. Reid's great achievement was undoubtedly the subversion of the Ideal system, or the confutation of that hypothesis which represents the immediate objects of the mind in perception, as certain *images* or *pictures* of external objects conveyed by the senses to the sensorium. This part of his task, it is now generally admitted that he has performed with exemplary diligence and complete success: but we are by no means so entirely satisfied with the uses he has attempted to make of his victory. After considering the subject with some attention, we must confess that we have not been able to perceive how the destruction of the Ideal theory can be held as a demonstration of the real existence of matter, or a confutation of those most ingenious reasonings which have brought into question the popular faith upon this subject. The theory of images and pictures, in fact, was in its original state more closely connected with the supposition of a real material prototype, than the theory of direct perception; and the sceptical doubts that have since been suggested, appear to us to be by no means exclusively applicable to the former hypothesis. He who believes that certain forms or images are actually transmitted through the organs of sense to the mind, must believe, at least, in the reality of the organs and the images, and probably in their origin from real external existences. He who is contented with stating that he is conscious of certain sensations and perception, by no means assumes the independent existence of matter, and gives a safer account of the phenomena than the idealist.

Dr. Reid's sole argument for the real existence of a material world, is founded on the *irresistible belief of it* that is implied in Perception and Memory; a belief, the foundations of which, he seems to think, it would be something more than absurd to call in question. Now the reality of this general persuasion or belief, no one ever attempted to deny. The question is only about its justness or truth. It is conceivable, certainly, in every case, that our belief should be erroneous; and there can be nothing absurd in suggesting reasons for doubting of its conformity with truth. The obstinacy of our belief, in this instance, and its constant recurrence, even after all our endeavours to familiarize ourselves with the objections that have been made to it, are not absolutely without parallel in the history of the human faculties. All children believe that the earth is at rest; and that the sun and the fixed stars perform a diurnal revolution round it. They also believe that the place which they occupy on the surface is absolutely the uppermost, and that the inhabitants of the opposite surface must be suspended in an inverted position. Now of this universal, practical, and irresistible belief, all persons of education are easily disabused in speculation, though it influences their ordinary language, and continues, in fact, to be the habitual impression of their minds. In the same way, a Berkeleian might admit the constant recurrence of the illusions of sense, although his speculative reason were sufficiently convinced of their fallacy.

The phenomena of Dreaming and of Delirium, however, appear to afford a sort of *experimentum crucis*, to demonstrate that a real external existence is not necessary to produce sensation and perception in the human mind. Is it utterly absurd and ridiculous to maintain, that all the objects of our thoughts may be "such stuff as dreams are made of?" or that the uniformity of Nature gives us some reason to presume that the *perceptions* of maniacs and of rational men are manufactured, like their organs, out of the same materials? There is a species of insanity known among medical

men by the epithet *notional*, in which, as well as in *delirium tremens*, there is frequently no general depravation of the reasoning and judging faculties, but where the disease consists entirely in the patient mistaking the objects of his thought or imagination for real and present existences. The error of his perceptions, in such cases, is only detected by comparing them with the perceptions of other people; and it is evident that he has just the same reason to impute error to them, as they can have individually for imputing it to him. The majority, indeed, necessarily carries the point, as to all practical consequences: but is there any absurdity in alleging that we can have no absolute or infallible assurance of that as to which the internal conviction of an individual must be supported, and *may be overruled* by the testimony of his fellow-creatures?

Dr. Reid has himself admitted that "we might probably have been so made, as to have all the perceptions and sensations which we now have, without any impression on our bodily organs at all." But it is surely altogether as reasonable to say, that we might have had all those perceptions, without the aid or intervention of any material existence at all. Those perceptions, too, might still have been accompanied with a belief that would not have been less universal or irresistible for being utterly without a foundation in reality. In short, our perceptions can never afford any complete or irrefragable proof of the real existence of external things; because it is easy to conceive that we might have such perceptions without them. We do not know, therefore, with certainty, that our perceptions are ever produced by external objects; and in the cases to which we have just alluded, we actually find perception and its concomitant belief, where we do know with certainty that it is *not* produced by any external existence.

It has been said, however, that we have the same evidence for the existence of the material world, as for that of our own thoughts or conceptions; — as we have no reason for believing in the latter, but that we cannot help it; which is equally true of the former. Now, this appears to us to be very inaccurately argued. Whatever we doubt, and whatever we prove, we must plainly *begin with consciousness.* That alone is certain — all the rest is inference. Does Dr. Reid mean to assert, that our perception of external objects is not a necessary *preliminary* to any proof of their reality, or that our belief in their reality is not founded upon our *consciousness* of perceiving them? It is only our perceptions, then, and not the existence of their objects, which we cannot help believing; and it would be nearly as reasonable to say that we must take all our dreams for realities, because we cannot doubt that we dream, as it is to assert that we have the same evidence for the existence of an external world, as for the existence of the sensations by which it is suggested to our minds.

We dare not now venture farther into this subject; yet we cannot abandon it without observing, that the question is entirely a matter of philosophical and abstract speculation, and that by far the most reprehensible passages in Dr. Reid's writings, are those in which he has represented it as otherwise. When we consider, indeed, the exemplary candour, and temper, and modesty, with which this excellent man has conducted the whole of his speculations, we cannot help wondering that he should ever have forgotten himself so far as to descend to the vulgar raillery which he has addressed, instead of argument, to the abettors of the Berkeleian hypothesis. The old joke, of the sceptical philosophers running their noses against posts, tumbling into kennels, and being sent to madhouses, is repeated at least ten times in different parts of Dr. Reid's publications, and really seems to have been considered as an objection not less forcible than facetious. Yet Dr. Reid surely could not be ignorant that those who have questioned the reality of a material universe, never affected to have perceptions, ideas, and sensations, of a different nature from other people. The debate was merely about the *origin* of these sensations; and could not possibly affect the conduct or feelings of the individual. The sceptic, therefore, who has been taught by experience that certain perceptions are connected with unpleasant sensations, will avoid the occasions of them as carefully as those who look upon the object of their perceptions as external realities. Notions and sensations he cannot deny to exist; and this limited faith will regulate his conduct exactly in the same manner as the more extensive creed of his antagonists. We are persuaded that Mr. Stewart would

reject the aid of such an argument for the existence of an external world.

The length to which these observations have extended, deters us from prosecuting any farther our remarks on Dr. Reid's philosophy. The other points in which it appears to us that he has left his system vulnerable are, his explanation of our idea of *cause and effect*, and his speculations on the question of *liberty and necessity*. In the former, we cannot help thinking that he has dogmatized, with a degree of confidence which is scarcely justified by the cogency of his arguments; and has endeavoured to draw ridicule on the reasoning of his antagonists, by illustrations that are utterly inapplicable. In the latter, also, he has made something more than a just use of the prejudices of men and the ambiguity of language; and has more than once been guilty, if we be not mistaken, of what, in a less respectable author, we should not have scrupled to call the most palpable sophistry. We are glad that our duty does not require us to enter into the discussion of this very perplexing controversy; though we may be permitted to remark, that it is somewhat extraordinary to find the dependence of human actions on Motives so positively denied by those very philosophers with whom the doctrine of Causation is of such high authority.

DR. PRIESTLEY.

(October, 1806.)

Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley, to the year 1795, *written by himself: With a continuation to the time of his decease, by his Son, Joseph Priestley; and Observations on his Writings.* By Thomas Cooper, President Judge of the Fourth District of Pennsylvania, and the Reverend William Christie. 8vo. Pp. 481. London: 1805.

Dr. Priestley has written more, we believe, and on a greater variety of subjects, than any other English author; and probably believed, as his friend Mr. Cooper appears to do at this moment, that his several publications were destined to make an æra in the respective branches of speculation to which they bore reference. We are not exactly of that opinion: but we think Dr. Priestley a person of no common magnitude in the history of English literature; and have perused this miscellaneous volume with more interest than we have usually found in publications of the same description. The memoirs are written with great conciseness and simplicity, and present a very singular picture of that indefatigable activity, that bigoted vanity, that precipitation, cheerfulness, and sincerity, which made up the character of this restless philosopher. The observations annexed by Mr. Cooper are the work, we think, of a powerful, presumptuous, and most untractable understanding. They are written in a defying, dogmatical, unaccommodating style; with much force of reasoning, in many places, but often with great rashness and arrogance; and occasionally with a cant of philosophism, and a tang of party politics, which communicate an air of vulgarity to the whole work, and irresistibly excite a smile at the expense of the magnanimous despiser of all sorts of prejudice and bigotry.*

In the Second part of his book, Mr. Cooper professes to estimate the *Metaphysical* writings of Dr. Priestley, and delivers a long and very zealous defence of the doctrines of Materialism, and of the necessity of human actions. A good deal of learning and a good deal of talent are shown in this production: but we believe that most of our readers will be surprised to find that Mr. Cooper considers both these questions as having been finally set at rest by the disquisitions of his learned friend!

"Indeed," he observes, "those questions must now be considered as settled; for those who can resist Collins's philosophical inquiry, the section of Dr. Hartley on the mechanism of the mind, and the review of the subject taken by Dr. Priestley and his opponents, are not to be reasoned with. *Interest reipublicæ ut denique sic finis litium*, is a maxim of technical law. It will apply equally to the republic of letters; and the time seems to have arrived, when the separate existence of the human Soul, the freedom of the Will, and the eternal duration of Future punishment, like the doctrines of the Trinity! and Transubstantiation, may be regarded as no longer entitled to public discussion." — P. 335.

---

* I omit now a very considerable portion of this review, containing a pretty full account of Dr. Priestley's life and conversation, and of his various publications on subjects of theology, natural philosophy, and chemistry; retaining only the following examination of his doctrine of Materialism.

The advocates of Necessity, we know, have long been pretty much of this opinion; and we have no inclination to disturb them at present with any renewal of the controversy: but we really did not know that the advocates of Materialism laid claim to the same triumph; and certainly find some difficulty in admitting that all who believe in the existence of mind are unfit to be reasoned with. To us, indeed, it has always appeared that it was much easier to prove the existence of mind, than the existence of matter; and with whatever contempt Mr. Cooper and his friends may regard us, we must be permitted to say a word or two in defence of the vulgar opinion.

The sum of the argument against the existence of mind, in case any of our readers should be ignorant of it, is shortly as follows. The phenomena of thinking, or perception, are always found connected with a certain mass of organized matter, and have never been known to exist in a separate or detached state. It seems natural, therefore, to consider them as *qualities* of that substance: nor is it any objection to say, that the quality of thinking has no sort of resemblance or affinity to any of the other qualities with which we know matter to be endowed. This is equally true of all the primary qualities of matter, when compared with each other. Solidity, for instance, bears no sort of resemblance or affinity to extension; nor is there any other reason for our considering them as qualities of the same substance, but that they are always found in conjunction — that they occupy the same portion of space, and present themselves together, on all occasions, to our observation. Now, this may be said, with equal force, of the quality of thinking. It is always found in conjunction with a certain mass of solid and extended matter — it inhabits the same portion of space, and presents itself invariably along with those other qualities the assemblage of which makes up our idea of organized matter. Whatever substratum can support and unite the qualities of solidity and extension, may therefore support the quality of thinking also; and it is eminently unphilosophical to suppose, that it inheres in a separate substance to which we should give the appellation of Mind. All the phenomena of thought, it is said, may be resolved, by the assistance of Dr. Hartley, into perception and association. Now, perception is evidently produced by certain mechanical impulses upon the nerves, transmitted to the brain, and can therefore be directly proved to be merely a peculiar species of motion; and association is something very like the vibration of musical chords in juxtaposition, and is strictly within the analogy of material movement.

In answering this argument, we will fairly confess that we have no distinct idea of Substance; and that we are perfectly aware that it is impossible to combine three propositions upon the subject, without involving a contradiction. All that we know of substance, are its qualities; yet qualities must belong to something — and of that something to which they belong, and by which they are united, we neither know any thing nor can form any conception. We cannot help believing that it exists; but we have no distinct notion as to the mode of its existence.

Admitting this, therefore, in the first place, we may perhaps be permitted to observe, that it seems a little disorderly and unphilosophical to class conception among the qualities of matter, when it is obvious, that it is by means of perception alone that we get any notion of matter or its qualities; and that it is impossible, with perfect consistency, to maintain the existence of our perceptions, and to deny that of matter altogether. The other qualities of matter are perceived by us; but *perception cannot be perceived:* and all we know about it is, that it is that by which we perceive every thing else. It certainly does sound somewhat absurd and unintelligible, therefore, to say, that perception is that quality of matter by which it becomes conscious of its own existence, and acquainted with its other qualities: since it is plain that this is not a quality, but a knowledge of qualities; and that *the percipient* must necessarily be distinct from that which is perceived. We must always *begin* with perception; and the followers of Berkeley will tell us, that we must *end* there also. At all events, it certainly never entered into the head of any plain man to conceive that the faculty of perception was itself one of the qualities with which that faculty made him acquainted: or that it could possibly belong to a substance, which his earliest intimations and most indestructible impressions taught

him to regard as something external and separate.*

This, then, is the first objection to the doctrine of Materialism, — that it makes the faculty of perception a quality of the thing perceived; and converts, in a way that must at first sight appear absurd to all mankind, our knowledge of the qualities of matter into another quality of the same substance. The truth is, however, that it is a gross and unwarrantable abuse of language, to call perception a *quality* at all. It is an act or an event — a fact or a phenomenon — of which the percipient is conscious: but it cannot be intelligibly conceived as a quality; and, least of all, as a quality of that substance which is known to us as solid and extended. 1*st*, All the qualities of matter, it has been already stated, are perceived by the senses: but the *sensation* itself cannot be so perceived: nor is it possible to call it an object of sense, without the grossest perversion of language. 2*ndly*, All the qualities of matter have a direct reference to *Space* or extension; and are conceived, in some measure, as attributes or qualities of the space within which they exist. When we say that a particular body is solid, we mean merely that a certain portion of space is impenetrable: when we say that it is coloured, we mean that the same portion of space appears of one hue, — and so of the other qualities: but sensation or thought is never conceived so to occupy space, or to characterize it; nor can these faculties be at all conceived as being merely definite portions of space, endued with perceptible properties. In the *third* place, all the primary qualities of matter are inseparable from it, and enter necessarily into its conception and definition. *All matter* must necessarily be conceived as extended, solid, and figured: and also as universally capable of all the secondary qualities. It is obvious, however, that thought or sensation is not an *inseparable* attribute of matter; as by far the greater part of matter is entirely destitute of it; and it is found in connexion only with those parts which we term organized; and with those, only while they are in a certain state, which we call alive. If it be said, however, that thought may resemble those accidental qualities of matter, such as heat or colour, which are not inseparable or permanent; then we reply, that neither of these things can, in strictness, be termed qualities of matter, more than thought or sensation: they are themselves substances, or matter possessed of inseparable and peculiar qualities, as well as those which address themselves to the other senses. Light is a material substance, from which the quality of colour is inseparable; and heat is a material substance which has universally the quality of exciting the sensation of warmth: and both address themselves to, and are distinctly perceived through, our senses. If thought be allowed to be a substance in this sense, it will remain to show that it also is material; by being referable to space, capable of subsisting in every sort of body, of being perceived by the senses, of being transferred from one body to another, and liable to attraction, repulsion, condensation, or reflection — like heat or light.

It is to be remarked also, that wherever any proper *quality*, primary or secondary, can be ascribed generally to any perceptible body or mass of matter, that quality must exist and be recognized in every part of it. If the whole of any such body is hard, or coloured, or weighty, or hot, or cold, every part of it, whether merely considered and examined as separable, or actually separated and detached, must be hard, coloured, and weighty also: these qualities being truly conditions, and, in fact, the only real proofs of the material existence of such a body, and of all the parts of it. But though thought or volition may be

* We are not very partial to the practice of quoting poetry in illustration of metaphysics; but the following lines seem to express so forcibly the universal and natural impression of mankind on this subject, that we cannot help offering them to the consideration of the reader.

"Am I but what I seem, mere flesh and blood?
A branching channel, and a mazy flood?
The purple stream, that through my vessels glides,
Dull and unconscious flows like common tides.
The pipes, through which the circling juices stray,
Are not that thinking I, no more than they.
This frame compacted with transcendent skill,
Of moving joints, obedient to my will,
Nurs'd from the fruitful glebe, like yonder tree,
Waxes and wastes: I call it MINE, NOT ME.
New matter still the mould'ring mass sustains;
The mansion chang'd, the tenant still remains,
And, from the fleeting stream repair'd by food,
Distinct, as is the swimmer from the flood."

said to have their residence somewhere within a human body, they certainly are not qualities of its material mass, in this sense; or to the effect of being sensibly present in every part or portion of it! We never, at least, have happened to hear it surmised that there is thought in the elbow-joint, or volition in the nail of the great toe: and if it be said that these *phenomena* are results only of the *living organization* as a whole, it seems to us that this is a substantial abandonment of the whole argument, and an admission that they are not qualities of matter (for *results* and *qualities* belong not to the same category), but mere facts or *phenomena* of a totally different description, for the production of which the apparatus of some such organization may, for the time, be necessary.

But the material thing is, that it is not to the whole mass of our bodies, or their living organization in general, that these phenomena are said by Dr. Priestley and his disciples to belong, as proper qualities. On the contrary, they distinctly admit that they are not qualities of that physical mass generally, nor even of those finer parts of it which constitute our organs of sense. They admit that the eye and the ear act the parts merely of optical or acoustic instruments; and are only useful in transmitting impulses (or, it may be, fine substances) to the nervous parts of *the brain:* of which alone, therefore, and indeed only of its minute and invisible portions, these singular *phenomena* are alleged to be proper physical qualities! It is difficult, we think, to make the absurdity of such a doctrine more apparent than by this plain statement of its import and amount. The only ground, it must always be recollected, for holding that mind and all its *phenomena* are mere *qualities of matter*, is the broad and popular one, that we always find them connected with a certain *visible* mass of organized matter, called a living body: but when it is admitted they are not qualities of this mass generally, or even of any part of it *which is visible* or perceptible by our senses, the allegation of their being mere material qualities of a part of the brain, must appear not merely gratuitous, but inconsistent and absolutely absurd. If the eye and the ear, with their delicate structures and fine sensibility, are but vehicles and apparatus, why should the attenuated and unknown tissues of the cerebral nerves be supposed to be any thing else? or why should the resulting sensations, to which both are apparently ministrant, and no more than ministrant, and which have no conceivable resemblance or analogy to any attribute of matter, be put on the list of the physical qualities of the latter — which is of itself too slight and subtle to enable us to say what are its common physical qualities? But we have yet another consideration to suggest, before finally closing this discussion.

It probably has not escaped observation, that throughout the preceding argument, we have allowed the advocates for Materialism to assume that what (to oblige them) we have called thought or perception generally, was one uniform and identical thing; to which, therefore, the appellation of a *quality* might possibly be given, without manifest and palpable absurdity. But in reality there is no ground, or even room, for claiming such an allowance. The acts or functions which *we* ascribe to mind, are at all events not one, but many and diverse. Perception no doubt is one of them — but it is not identical with sensation; and still less with memory or imagination, or volition, — or with love, anger, fear, deliberation, or hatred. Each of these, on the contrary, is a separate and distinguishable act, function, or *phenomenon*, of the existence of which we become aware, not through perception, or the external senses at all, but through consciousness or reflection alone: and none of them (with the single exception, perhaps, of perception) have any necessary or natural reference to any external or material existence whatever. It is not disputed, however, that it is only by perception and the senses, that we can gain any knowledge of matter; and, consequently, whatever we come to know by consciousness only, cannot possibly belong to that category, or be either material or external. But we are not aware that any materialist has ever gone the length of directly maintaining that volition for example, or memory, or anger, or fear, or any other such affection, were proper material qualities of our bodily frames, or could be perceived and recognized as such, by the agency of the external senses; in the same way as the weight, heat, colour, or elasticity which may belong to these frames. But if they are not each of them capable of being so per-

ceived, as separate physical qualities, it is plain that nothing can be gained in argument, by affecting to disregard their palpable diversity, and seeking to class them all under one vague name, of thought or perception. Even with that advantage, we have seen that the doctrine, of perception or thought being a mere quality of matter, is not only untenable, but truly self-contradictory and unintelligible. But when the number and diversity of the phenomena necessarily covered by that general appellation is considered, along with the fact that most of them have no reference to matter, and do in no way imply its existence, the absurdity of representing them as so many of its distinct perceptible qualities, must be too apparent, we think, to admit of any serious defence.

The sum of the whole then is, that all the knowledge which we gain only by Perception and the use of our external Senses, is knowledge of Matter, and its qualities and attributes alone; and all which we gain only by Consciousness and Reflection in our own inward feelings, is necessarily knowledge of Mind, and its states, attributes, and functions. *This* in fact is the whole basis and *rationale* of the distinction between mind and matter: and, consequently, unless it can be shown that love, anger, and sorrow, as well as memory and volition, are direct objects of sense or external perception, like heat and colour, or figure and solidity, there must be an end, we think, of all question as to their being material qualities.

But, though the very basis and foundation of the argument for Materialism is placed upon the assumption, that thought and perception are qualities of our bodies, it is remarkable that Dr. Priestley, and the other champions of that doctrine, do ultimately give up that point altogether, and maintain, that thought is nothing else than Motion! Now this, we cannot help thinking, was very impolitic and injudicious in these learned persons: for, so long as they stuck to the general assertion, that thought might, in some way or other, be represented as a quality of matter,—although it was not perceived by the senses, and bore no analogy to any of its other qualities, — and talked about the inherent capacity of substance, to support all sorts of qualities; although their doctrine might elude our comprehension, and revolt all our habits of thinking, — still it might be difficult to demonstrate its fallacy; and a certain perplexing argumentation might be maintained by a person well acquainted with the use and abuse of words: but when they cast away the protection of this most convenient obscurity, and, instead of saying that they do not know what thought is, have the courage to refer it to the known category of Motion, they evidently subject their theory to the test of rational examination, and furnish us with a criterion by which its truth may be easily determined.

We shall not be so rash as to attempt any definition of motion; but we believe we may take it for granted that our readers know pretty well what it is. At all events, it is not *a quality* of matter. It is an act, a phenomenon, or a fact: — but it makes no part of the description or conception of matter; though it can only exist with reference to that substance. Let any man ask himself, however, whether the motion of matter bears any sort of resemblance to thought or sensation; or whether it be even *conceivable* that these should be one and the same thing? — But, it is said, we find sensation always produced by motion, and as we can discover nothing else in conjunction with it, we are justified in ascribing it to motion. But this, we beg leave to say, is not the question. It is not necessary to inquire, whether motion may *produce* sensation or not, but whether sensation *be* motion, and nothing else? It seems pretty evident, to be sure, that motion can never produce any thing but motion or impulse; and that it is at least as inconceivable that it should ever produce sensation in matter, as that it should produce a separate substance, called mind. But this, we repeat, is not the question with the materialists. Their proposition is, not that motion produces sensation—which might be as well in the mind as in the body; but, that sensation *is* motion; and that all the phenomena of thought and perception are intelligibly accounted for by saying, that they are certain little shakings in the pulpy part of the brain.

There are certain propositions which it is difficult to confute, only because it is impossible to comprehend them: and this, the substantive article in the creed of Materialism, really seems to be of this description. To say that thought is motion, is as unintelligible to

us, as to say that it is space, or time, or proportion.

There may be little shakings in the brain, for any thing we know, and there may even be shakings of a different kind, accompanying every act of thought or perception; — but, that the shakings themselves *are* the thought or perception, we are so far from admitting, that we find it absolutely impossible to comprehend what is meant by the assertion. The shakings are certain throbbings, vibrations or stirrings, in a whitish, half-fluid substance, like custard, which we might see perhaps, or feel, if we had eyes and fingers sufficiently small or fine for the office. But what should we see or feel, upon the supposition that we could detect, by our senses, every thing that actually took place in the brain? We should see the particles of this substance change their place a little, move a little up or down, to the right or left, round about, or zig-zag, or in some other course or direction. This is all that we could see, if Hartley's conjecture were proved by actual observation; because this is all that exists in motion, — according to our conception of it; and all that we mean, when we say that there is motion in any substance. Is it intelligible, then, to say, that this motion, the whole of which we see and comprehend, is *thought and feeling?* — and that thought or feeling will exist wherever we can excite a similar motion in a similar substance? — In our humble apprehension, the proposition is not so much false, as utterly unmeaning and incomprehensible. That sensation may follow motion in the brain, or may even be produced by it, is conceivable at least, and may be affirmed with perfect precision and consistency; but that the motion is itself sensation, and that the proper and complete definition of thought and feeling is; that they are certain vibrations in the brain, is a doctrine, we think, that can only be wondered at, and that must be comprehended before it be answered.

No advocate for the existence of mind ever thought it necessary to deny that there was a certain bodily apparatus necessary to thought and sensation in man — and that, on many occasions, the sensation was preceded or introduced by certain impulses and corresponding movements of this material machinery: — we cannot see without eyes and light, nor think without living bodies. All that they maintain is, that these impulses and movements are not feelings or thought, but merely the occasions of feeling and thought; and that it is impossible for them to confound the material motions which precede those sensations, with the sensations themselves, which have no conceivable affinity with matter.

The theory of Materialism, then, appears to us to be altogether unintelligible and absurd; and, without recurring to the reasoning of the Berkeleians, it seems quite enough to determine us to reject it, that it confounds the act of perception with the qualities perceived, and classes among the objects of perception, the faculty by which these objects are introduced to our knowledge, — and which faculty must be exercised, before we can attain to any conception, either of matter or its qualities.

We do not pretend to have looked through the whole controversy which Dr. Priestley's publications on this subject appear to have excited: but nothing certainly has struck us with more astonishment, than the zeal with which he maintains that this doctrine, and that of Necessity, taken together, afford the greatest support to the cause of religion and morality! We are a little puzzled, indeed, to discover what use, or what room, there can be for a God at all, upon this hypothesis of Materialism; as well as to imagine what species of being the God of the Materialist must be. If the mere organization of matter produces reason, memory, imagination, and all the other attributes of mind, — and if these different phenomena be the necessary result of certain motions impressed upon matter; then there is no need for any other reason or energy in the universe: and things may be administered very comfortably, by the intellect spontaneously evolved in the different combinations of matter. But if Dr. Priestley will have a superfluous Deity notwithstanding, we may ask what sort of a Deity he can expect? He denies the existence of mind or spirit altogether; so that his Deity must be material; and his wisdom, power, and goodness must be the necessary result of a certain organization. But how can a material Deity be immortal! How could he have been formed? Or why should there not be more, — formed by himself, or by his creator? We will not affirm that Dr.

Priestley has not attempted to answer these questions; but we will take it upon us to say, that he cannot have answered them in a satisfactory manner. As to his paradoxical doctrines, with regard to the natural mortality of man, and the incomprehensible gift of immortality conferred on a material structure which visibly moulders and is dissolved, we shall only say that it exceeds in absurdity any of the dogmas of the Catholics; and can only be exceeded by his own supposition, that our Saviour, being only a man, and yet destined to live to the day of judgment, is still alive in his original human body upon earth, and is really the Wandering Jew of vulgar superstition.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

(October, 1805.)

Academical Questions. By the Right Honourable William Drummond, K.C., F.R.S, F.R.S.E. Author of a Translation of Persius. Vol. I. 4to. Pp. 412. Cadell and Davies. London: 1805.

We do not know very well what to say of this very learned publication. To some readers it will probably be enough to announce, that it is occupied with Metaphysical speculations. To others, it may convey a more precise idea of its character, to be told, that though it gave a violent headache, in less than an hour, to the most intrepid logician of our fraternity, he could not help reading on till he came to the end of the volume.*

Mr. Drummond begins with the doctrine of Locke; and exposes, we think, very successfully, the futility of that celebrated author's definition of Substance, as "*one knows not what*" support of such qualities as are capable of producing simple ideas in us. This notion of substance he then shows to be derived from the old Platonic doctrine of the primary matter, or ὑλη, to which the same objections are applicable.

Having thus discarded Substance in general from the list of existences, Mr. Drummond proceeds to do as much for the particular substance called *Matter*, and all its qualities. In this chapter, accordingly, he avows himself to be a determined Idealist; and it is the scope of his whole argument to prove, that what we call qualities in external substances, are in fact nothing more than sensations in our own minds; and that what have been termed primary qualities, are in this respect entirely upon a footing with those which are called secondary. His reasoning upon this subject coincides very nearly with that of Bishop Berkeley; of whom, indeed, he says, that if his arguments be not really conclusive, it is certainly to be lamented that they should have been so imperfectly answered.

To us, we will confess, it does not seem of very great consequence to determine whether there be any room for a distinction between the primary and secondary qualities of matter; for though we are rather inclined to hold that Dr. Reid's observations have established its possibility, we cannot help saying, that it is a distinction which does not touch at all upon the fundamental question, as to the evidence which we have, by our senses, for the existence of a material world. Dr. Reid and his followers contend as strenuously for the real existence of those material qualities which produce in us the sensations of heat, or of colour, as of those which give us intimations of solidity, figure, or extension. We know a little more, indeed, according to them, about the one sort of qualities than the other; but the evidence we have for their existence is exactly the same in both cases; nor is it more a law of our nature, that the sensation of resistance should suggest to us the definable quality of solidity in an external object, than that the sensation of heat should suggest to us that quality in an external object, which we cannot define otherwise than as the external cause of this sensation.

Mr. Drummond, we think, has not attended sufficiently to this part of his antagonist's position; and after assuming, somewhat too precipitately, that secondary qualities are universally admitted to have no existence but in the mind of him who perceives them, proceeds,

* For the reason stated in the note prefixed to this division of the book, I refrain from reprinting the greater part of this review; and give only that part of it which is connected with the speculations in the preceding articles, and bears upon the question of the existence of an external world, and the faith to be given to the intimations of our senses, and other internal convictions.

with an air of triumph that is at all events premature, to demonstrate, that there is nothing in the case of primary qualities by which they can be distinguished in this respect from the secondary. The fact unquestionably is, that Dr. Reid and his followers assert the positive and independent existence of secondary, as well as of primary qualities in matter; and that there is, upon their hypothesis, exactly the same evidence for the one as for the other. The general problem, as to the probable existence of matter—unquestionably the most fundamental and momentous in the whole science of metaphysics—may be fairly and intelligibly stated in a very few words.

Bishop Berkeley, and after him Mr. Drummond, have observed that, by our senses, we can have nothing but sensations; and that sensations, being affections of mind, cannot possibly bear any resemblance to matter, or any of its qualities; and hence they infer, that we cannot possibly have any evidence for the existence of matter; and that what we term our perception of its qualities, is in fact nothing else than a sensation in our own minds. Dr. Reid, on the other hand, distinctly admitting that the primary functions of our senses is to make us conscious of certain sensations, which can have no sort of resemblance or affinity to the qualities of matter, has asserted it as a *fact* admitting of no dispute, but recognized by every human creature, that these sensations *necessarily suggest to us* the notion of certain external existences, endowed with particular definable qualities; and that these *perceptions*, by which our *sensations* are accompanied, are easily and clearly distinguishable from the sensations themselves, and cannot be confounded with them, without the most wilful perversity. Perception, again, he holds, necessarily implies the existence of the object perceived; and the reality of a material world is thus as clearly deduced from the exercise of *this* faculty, as the reality of our own existence can be from our *consciousness*, or other sensations. It appears, therefore, that there are two questions to be considered in determining on the merits of this controversy. *First*, whether there be any room for a distinction between sensation and perception; and, *secondly*, if we shall allow such a distinction, whether perception does necessarily imply the real and external existence of the objects perceived.

If by perception, indeed, we understand, as Dr. Reid appears to have done, the immediate and positive discovery of external existences, it is evident that the mere assumption of this faculty puts an end to the whole question; since it necessarily takes those existences for granted, and, upon that hypothesis, defines the faculty in question to be that by which we discover their qualities. This, however, it is plain, is not reasoning, but assertion; and it is not the mere assertion of a fact, which in these subjects is the whole perhaps of our legitimate philosophy, but of something which may or may not be inferred from the fact, according to the views of the inquirer. The inquiry is an inquiry into the functions and operations of *mind;* and all that can possibly be stated as *fact* on such an occasion, must relate to the state and affections of mind only: but to assume the existence of a material world, in order afterwards to define one function of mind to be that by which it discovers material qualities, is evidently blending hypothesis in the statement, and prejudging the controversy by assumption. The fact itself, we really conceive not to be liable to any kind of doubt or dispute; and yet the statement of it, obvious as it is, seems calculated to retrench a good deal from each of the opposite assertions. The fact, if we be not greatly mistaken, is confessedly as follows.

We have occasionally certain sensations which we call heat, pain, resistance, &c. These feelings, of course, belong only to the mind, of which they are peculiar affections; and both parties are agreed in asserting, that they have no resemblance, or necessary reference, to any thing external. Dr. Reid has made this indeed the very groundwork of his reasonings on the subject of perception; and it will not probably be called in question by his antagonists, who go the length of inferring from it, that nothing but mind can be conceived to have an existence in nature. This, then, is one fact which we may safely assume as quite certain and indisputable, viz., that our sensations are affections of the mind, and have no necessary reference to any other existence. But there is another fact at least as obvious and indisputable, which the one party seems disposed to overlook, and

the other to invest with undue authority in the discussion. This second fact is, that some of the sensations in question are uniformly and irresistibly *accompanied* by the apprehension and belief of certain external existences, distinguished by peculiar qualities. The fact certainly admits of no dispute; and, accordingly, the philosophers who first attempted to prove that this belief was without foundation, have uniformly claimed the merit of disabusing mankind of a natural and universal illusion. Now this apprehension and belief in external existences, is in itself as much an affection of mind, as the sensations by which it is accompanied; and those who deny the distinction between perception and sensation, might be justified perhaps in asserting, that it is only a sensation of another kind: at the same time, as the essence of it consists in the apprehension of an independent existence, there can be no harm in distinguishing it, by a separate appellation, from those sensations which centre in the sentient being, and suggest to him no idea of any other existence. It is in this sense alone, it appears to us, that perception can be understood in strict philosophical language. It means no more than that affection of the mind which consists in an apprehension and belief in the existence of external objects.

Now in this sense of the word, there can be no doubt that there is a real distinction between mere sensation and perception; inasmuch as there is a distinction between our feelings of pain, resistance, &c., and our conception and belief of real external existences; but they differ merely as one affection of mind may differ from another; and it is plainly unwarrantable to assume the real existence of external objects as a part of the statement of a purely intellectual phenomenon. After allowing the reality of this distinction, there is still room therefore for considering the second question to which we alluded in the outset, viz., Whether perception does necessarily imply the existence of external objects.

Upon this subject we entertain an opinion which will not give satisfaction, we are afraid, to either of the contending parties. We think that the existence of external objects is not *necessarily* implied in the phenomena of perception; but we think that there is no complete proof of their non-existence; and that philosophy, instead of being benefited, would be subjected to needless embarrassments, by the absolute assumption of the ideal theory.

The reality of external existences is not necessarily implied in the phenomena of perception; because we can easily imagine that our impressions and conceptions might have been exactly as they are, although matter had never been created. Belief we familiarly know to be no infallible criterion of actual existence; and it is impossible to doubt, that we might have been so framed as to receive all the impressions which we now ascribe to the agency of external objects, from the mechanism of our own minds, or the particular volition of the Deity. The phenomena of dreaming, and of some species of madness, seem to afford experimental proofs of the possibility we have now stated; and demonstrate, in our apprehension, that perception, as we have defined it (*i.e.* an apprehension and belief of external existences), does not necessarily imply the independent reality of its objects. Nor is it less absurd to say that we have the same evidence for the existence of external objects that we have for the existence of our own sensations: for it is quite plain, that our belief in the former is founded altogether on our consciousness of the latter; and that the evidence of this belief is consequently of a *secondary* nature. We cannot doubt of the existence of our sensations, without being guilty of the grossest contradiction: but we may doubt of the existence of the material world, without any contradiction at all. If we annihilate our sensations, we annihilate ourselves; and, of course, leave no being to doubt or to reason. If we annihilate the external world, we still leave entire all those sensations and perceptions which a different hypothesis would refer to its mysterious agency on our minds.

On the other hand, it is certainly going too far to assert, that the non-existence of matter is *proved* by such evidence as necessarily to command our assent: since it evidently implies no contradiction to suppose, that such a thing as matter may exist, and that an omnipotent being might make us capable of discovering its qualities. The instinctive and insurmountable belief that we have of its existence, certainly is not to be surrendered, merely because it is possible to suppose it er-

roneous; or difficult to comprehend how a material and immaterial substance can act upon each other. The evidence of this universal and irresistible belief, in short, is not to be altogether disregarded; and, unless it can be shown that it leads to actual contradictions and absurdities, the utmost length that philosophy can warrantably go, is to conclude that it may be delusive; but that it may also be true.

The rigorous maxim, of giving no faith to any thing short of direct and immediate consciousness, seems more calculated, we think, to perplex than to simplify our philosophy, and will run us up, in two vast strides, to the very brink of absolute annihilation. We deny the existence of the material world, because we have not for it the primary evidence of consciousness; and because the clear conception and indestructible belief we have of it, *may be* fallacious, for any thing we can prove to the contrary. This conclusion annihilates at once all external objects; and, among them, our own bodies, and the bodies *and minds* of all other men; for it is quite evident that we can have no evidence of the existence of other minds, except through the mediation of the matter they are supposed to animate; and if matter be nothing more than an affection of our own minds, there is an end to the existence of every other. This first step, therefore, reduces the whole universe to the mind of the individual reasoner; and leaves no existence in nature, but *one mind*, with its complement of sensations and ideas. The second step goes still farther, and no one can hesitate to take it, who has ventured deliberately on the first. If our senses may deceive us, so may our *memory;* —if we will not believe in the existence of matter, because it is not vouched by internal consciousness, and because it is conceivable that it should not exist, we cannot consistently believe in the reality of any past impression: for which, in like manner, we cannot have the direct evidence of consciousness, and of which our present recollection may possibly be fallacious. Even upon the vulgar hypothesis, we know that memory is much more deceitful than perception; and there is still greater hazard in assuming the reality of any past existence, from our present recollection of it, than in relying on the reality of a present existence from our immediate perception. If we discredit our *memory*, however, and deny all existence of which we have not a present consciousness or sensation, it is evident that we must annihilate *our own personal identity*, and refuse to believe that we had thought or sensation at any previous moment. There can be no reasoning, therefore, nor knowledge, nor opinion; and we must end by virtually annihilating ourselves, and denying that any thing whatsoever exists in nature, but the present solitary and momentary impression

This is the legitimate and inevitable termination of that determined scepticism which refuses to believe any thing without the highest of all evidence, and chooses to conclude positively that every thing is not, which may possibly be conceived not to be. The process of reasoning which it implies, is neither long nor intricate; and its conclusion would be undeniably just, if every thing was necessarily true which could be asserted without a contradiction. It is perfectly true, that we are *absolutely sure* of nothing but what we feel at the present moment; and that it is possible to distinguish between the evidence we have for the existence of the present impression, and the evidence of any other existence. The first alone is complete and unquestionable; we may hesitate about all the rest without any absolute contradiction. But the distinction, we apprehend, is in itself of as little use in philosophy, as in ordinary life; and the absolute and positive denial of all existence, except that of our immediate sensation, altogether rash and unwarranted. The objects of our perception and of our recollection, certainly *may* exist, although we cannot demonstrate that they *must;* and when, in spite of all our abstractions, we find that we must come back, and not only reason with our fellow creatures as separate existences, but engage daily in speculations about the qualities and properties of matter, it must appear, at least, an unprofitable refinement which would lead us to dwell much on the possibility of their non-existence. There is no sceptic, probably, who would be bold enough to maintain, that this single doctrine of the non-existence of any thing but our present impressions, would constitute a just or useful system of logic and moral philosophy; and if, after flourishing with it as an unfruitful paradox in the outset, we are obliged to recur

to the ordinary course of observation and conjecture as to the nature of our faculties, it may be doubted whether any real benefit has been derived from its promulgation, or whether the hypothesis can be received into any sober system of philosophy. To deny the existence of matter and of mind, indeed, is not to philosophize, but to destroy the materials of philosophy. It requires no extraordinary ingenuity or power of reasoning to perceive the grounds upon which their existence may be *doubted;* but we acknowledge that we cannot see how it can be said to have been *disproved;* and think we perceive very clearly, that philosophy will neither be simplified nor abridged by refusing to take it for granted.

Upon the whole, then, we are inclined to think, that the conception and belief which we have of material objects (which is what we mean by the perception of them) does not amount to a complete proof of their existence, but renders it sufficiently probable: that the superior and complete assurance we have of the existence of our present sensations, does by no means entitle us positively to deny the reality of every other existence; and that as this speculative scepticism neither renders us independent of the ordinary modes of investigation, nor assists us materially in the use of them, it is inexpedient to dwell long upon it in the course of our philosophical inquiries, and much more advisable to proceed upon the supposition that the real condition of things is conformable to our natural apprehensions.

The little sketch we have now ventured to offer of the abstract, or thoroughgoing philosophy of scepticism, will render it unnecessary for us to follow our author minutely through the different branches of this inquiry. Overlooking, or at least undervaluing the indisputable fact, that our sensations are uniformly accompanied with a distinct apprehension, and firm belief in the existence of real external objects, he endeavours to prove, that the qualities which we ascribe to them are in reality nothing more than names for our peculiar sensations; and maintains accordingly, that because men differ in their opinions of the same object, it is impossible to suppose that they actually perceive any real object at all; as a real existence must always appear the same to those who actually perceive it.

His illustrations are of this nature. Water, which feels tepid to a Laplander, would appear cold to a native of Sumatra: but the same water cannot be both hot and cold: therefore it is to be inferred that neither of them is affected by any real quality in the external body, but that each describes merely his own sensations. Now, the conclusion here is plainly altogether unwarranted by the fact; since it is quite certain that both the persons in question perceive the same quality in the water, though they are affected by it in a different manner. The solution of the whole puzzle is, that heat and cold are not different qualities; but different degrees of the same quality, and probably exist only relatively to each other. If the water is of a higher temperature than the air, or the body of the person who touches it, he will call it warm; if of a lower temperature, he will call it cold. But this does not prove, by any means, that the difference between two distinct temperatures is ideal, or that it is not always perceived by all individuals in the very same way. If Mr. Drummond could find out a person who not only thought the water cold which other people called warm, but also thought that warm which they perceived to be cold, he might have some foundation for his inference; but while all mankind agree that ice is cold, and steam hot, and concur indeed most exactly in their judgments of the *comparative* heat of all external bodies, it is plainly a mere quibble on the convertible nature of these qualities, to call in question the identity of their perceptions, because they make the variable standard of their own temperature the rule for denominating other bodies hot or cold.

In the same way, Mr. Drummond goes on to say, one man calls the flavour of assafœtida nauseous, and another thinks it agreeable;—one nation delights in a species of food which to its neighbours appears disgusting. How, then, can we suppose that they perceive the same real qualities, when their judgments in regard to them are so diametrically opposite? Now, nothing, we conceive, is more obvious than the fallacy of this reasoning. The *liking*, or *disliking*, of men to a particular object, has nothing to do with the perception of its external qualities; and they may differ entirely as to their opinion of its *agreeableness*, though they concur perfectly as to the description of

all its properties. One man may admire a tall, woman, and another a short one; but it would be rather rash to infer, that they did not agree in recognizing a difference in stature, or that they had no uniform ideas of magnitude in general. In the same way, one person may have an antipathy to salt, and another a liking for it; but they both perceive it to be salt, and both agree in describing it by that appellation. To give any degree of plausibility to Mr. Drummond's inferences, it would be necessary for him to show that some men thought brandy and Cayenne pepper insipid and tasteless, and objected at the same time to milk and spring water as excessively acrid and pungent.

In the concluding part of his book, Mr. Drummond undertakes nothing less than a defence of the theory of ideas, against the arguments of Dr. Reid. This is a bold attempt; but, we are inclined to think, not a successful one. Mr. Drummond begins with the old axiom, that nothing can act but where it is; and infers, that as real material objects cannot penetrate to the seat of the soul, that sentient principle can only perceive certain images or ideas of them; against the assumption of which he conceives there can be no considerable obstacle. Now, it is needless, we think, to investigate the legitimacy of this reasoning very narrowly, because the foundation, we are persuaded, is unsound. The axiom, we believe, is now admitted to be fallacious (in the sense at least here assigned to it) by all who have recently paid any attention to the subject. But what does Mr. Drummond understand exactly by *ideas!* Does he mean certain films, shadows, or *simulacra*, proceeding from real external existences, and passing through real external organs to the local habitation of the soul? If he means this, then he admits the existence of a material world as clearly as Dr. Reid does; and subjects himself to all the ridicule which he has himself so justly bestowed upon the hypothesis of animal spirits, or any other supposition, which explains the intercourse between mind and matter, by imagining some matter of so fine a nature as almost to graduate into mind! If, on the other hand, by ideas, Mr. Drummond really means nothing but sensations and perceptions (as we have already explained that word), it is quite obvious that Dr. Reid has never called their existence in question; and the whole debate comes back to the presumptions for the existence of an external world; or the reasonableness of trusting to that indestructible belief which certainly accompanies those sensations, as evidence of their having certain external causes. We cannot help doubting, whether Mr. Drummond has clearly stated to himself, in which of these two senses he proposes to defend the doctrine of ideas. The doctrine of IMAGES proceeding from actual external existences, is the only one in behalf of which he can claim the support of the ancient philosophers; and it is to it he seems to allude, in several of the remarks which he makes on the illusions of sight. On the other supposition, however, he has no occasion to dispute with Dr. Reid about the existence of ideas; for the Doctor assuredly did not deny that we had sensations and perceptions, notions, recollections, and all the other affections of mind to which the word idea may be applied, in that other sense of it. There can be no question upon that supposition, but about the *origin* of these ideas — which belongs to another chapter.

Mr. Drummond seems to lay the whole stress of his argument upon a position of Hume's, which he applies himself to vindicate from the objections which Dr. Reid has urged against it. "The table which I see," says Mr. Hume, "diminishes as I remove from it; but the real table suffers no alteration: — it could be nothing but its image, therefore, which was present to my mind." Now this statement, we think, admits pretty explicitly, that there is a real table, the image of which is presented to the mind: but, at all events, we conceive that the phenomenon may be easily reconciled with the supposition of its real existence. Dr. Reid's error, if there be one, seems to consist in his having asserted positively, and without any qualification, that it is the real table which we perceive, when our eyes are turned towards it. When the matter however is considered very strictly, it will be found that by the sense of seeing we can perceive nothing but *light*, variously arranged and diversified: and that, when we look towards a table, we do not actually see the table itself, but only the rays of light which are re-

flected from it to the eye. Independently of the co-operation of our other senses, it seems generally to be admitted, that we should perceive nothing by seeing but an assemblage of colours, divided by different lines; and our only *visual* notion of the table (however real it might be) would, therefore, be that of a definite portion of light, distinguished by its colours from the other portions that were perceived at the same time. It seems equally impossible to dispute, however, that we should receive from this impression the belief and conception of an external existence, and that we should have the very same evidence for its reality, as for that of the objects of our other senses. But if the external existence of light be admitted, a very slight attention to its laws and properties will show how its appearances must vary, according to our distance from the solid objects which emit it. We perceive the form of bodies by sight, in short, very nearly as a blind man perceives them, by tracing their extremities with his stick: it is only the light in one case, and the stick in the other, that is properly felt or perceived; but the real form of the object is indicated, in both cases, by the state and disposition of the medium which connects it with our sensations. It is by intimations formerly received from the sense of Touch, no doubt, that we ultimately discover that the rays of light which strike our eyes with the impressions of form and colour, proceed from distant objects, which are solid and extended in three dimensions; and it is only by recollecting what we have learned from *this* sense, that we are enabled to conceive them as endued with these qualities. By the eye itself we do not perceive these qualities: nor, in strictness of speech, do we perceive, by this sense, any qualities whatever of the reflecting object; we perceive merely the light which it reflects; distinguished by its colour from the other light that falls on the eye along with it, and assuming a new form and extension, according as the distance or position of the body is varied in regard to us. These variations are clearly explained by the known properties of light, as ascertained by experiment; and evidently afford no ground for supposing any alteration in the object which emits it, or for throwing any doubts upon the real existence of such an object. Because the divergence of the rays of light varies with the distance between their origin and the eye, is there the slightest reason for pretending, that the magnitude of the object from which they proceed must be held to have varied also?

DR. BEATTIE.

(April, 1807.)

An Account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie, LL.D., late Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic in the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen: including many of his original Letters. By Sir W. Forbes, of Pitsligo, Baronet, one of the Executors of Dr. Beattie. 2 vols. 4to. Pp. 840. Edinburgh and London: 1806.*

Dr. Beattie's great work, and that which was undoubtedly the first foundation of his celebrity, is the "Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth;" on which such unmeasured praises are bestowed, both by his present biographer, and by all the author's male and female correspondents, that it is with difficulty we can believe that they are speaking of the performance which we have just been wearying ourselves with looking over. That the author's intentions were good, and his convictions sincere, we entertain not the least doubt; but that the merits of his book have been prodigiously overrated, we think, is equally undeniable. It contains absolutely nothing, in the nature of argument, that had not been previously stated by Dr. Reid in his "Inquiry into the Human Mind;" and, in our opinion, in a much clearer and more unexceptionable form. As to the merits of that philosophy, we have already taken occasion, in more places than one, to submit our opinion to the judgment of our readers; and, after having settled our accounts with Mr. Stewart and Dr. Reid, we really do not think it worth while to enter the lists again with Dr. Beattie. Whatever may be the excellence of the common-sense school of philosophy, he certainly has no claim to the honours of a founder. He invented none of it: and it is very doubtful with us,

* The greater part of this article also is withheld from the present reprint, for the reasons formerly stated; and only those parts given which bear upon points of metaphysics.

whether he ever rightly understood the principles upon which it depends. It is unquestionable, at least, that he has exposed it to considerable disadvantage, and embarrassed its more enlightened supporters, by the misplaced confidence with which he has urged some propositions, and the fallacious and fantastic illustrations by which he has aimed at recommending many others.

His confidence and his inaccuracy, however, might have been easily forgiven. Every one has not the capacity of writing philosophically: but every one may at least be temperate and candid; and Dr. Beattie's book is still more remarkable for being abusive and acrimonious, than for its defects in argument or originality. There are no subjects, however, in the wide field of human speculation, upon which such vehemence appears more groundless and unaccountable, than the greater part of those which have served Dr. Beattie for topics of declamation or invective.

His first great battle is about the real existence of external objects. The sceptics say, that perception is merely an act or affection of the mind, and consequently might exist without any external cause. It is a sensation or affection of the mind, to be sure, which consists in the apprehension and belief of such external existences: but being in itself a phenomenon purely mental, it is a mere supposition or conjecture to hold that there are any such existences, by whose operation it is produced. It is impossible, therefore, to bring any evidence for the existence of material objects; and the belief which is admitted to be inseparable from the act of perception, can never be received as such evidence. The whole question is about the *grounds* of this belief, and not about its existence; and the phenomena of dreaming and madness prove experimentally, that perception, as characterized by belief, may exist where there is no external object. Dr. Beattie answers, after Dr. Reid, that the mere existence of this instinctive and indestructible belief in the reality of external objects, is a complete and sufficient proof of their reality; that nature meant us to be satisfied with it; and that we cannot call it in question, without running into the greatest absurdity.

This is the whole dispute; and a pretty correct summary of the argument upon both sides of the question. But is there any thing here that could justify the calling of names, or the violation of decorum among the disputants? The question is, of all other questions that can be suggested, the most purely and entirely speculative, and obviously disconnected from any practical or moral consequences. After what Berkeley has written on the subject, it must be a gross and wilful fallacy to pretend that the *conduct* of men can be in the smallest degree affected by the opinions they entertain about the existence or non-existence of matter. The system which maintains the latter, leaves all our sensations and perceptions unimpaired and entire; and as it is by these, and by these only, that our conduct can ever be guided, it is evident that it can never be altered by the adoption of that system. The whole dispute is about the *cause* or *origin* of our perceptions; which the one party ascribes to the action of external bodies, and the other to the inward development of some mental energy. It is a question of pure curiosity; it never can be decided; and as its decision is perfectly indifferent and immaterial to any practical purpose, so it might have been expected that the discussion should be conducted without virulence or abuse.

The next grand dispute is about the evidence of Memory. The sceptics will have it, that we are sure of nothing but our present sensations; and that, though these are sometimes characterized by an impression and belief that other sensations did formerly exist, we can have no evidence of the justice of this belief, nor any certainty that this illusive conception of former sensation, which we call memory, may not be an *original* affection of our minds. The orthodox philosophers, on the other hand, maintain, that the instinctive reliance we have on memory is complete and satisfactory proof of its accuracy: and it is absurd to ask for the grounds of this belief; and that we cannot call it in question without manifest inconsistency. The same observations which were made on the argument for the existence of matter, apply also to this controversy. It is purely speculative, and without application to any practical conclusion.* The sceptics do not deny that they remember like other people, and, consequently, that they

have an indestructible belief in past events or existences. All the question is about the *origin*, or the justice of this belief; — whether it arise from such events having actually happened before, or from some original affection of the mind, which is attended with that impression.

The argument, as commonly stated by the sceptics, leads only to a negative or sceptical conclusion. It amounts only to this, that the present sensation, which we call memory, affords *no conclusive evidence* of past existence; and that for any thing that can be *proved* to the contrary, nothing of what we remember *may* have existed. We think this undeniably true; and so we believe did Dr. Beattie. He thought it also very useless; and there, too, we agree with him: but he thought it very wicked, and very despicably silly; and there we cannot agree with him at all. It is a very pretty and ingenious puzzle, — affords a very useful mortification to human reason, — and leads us to that state of philosophical wonder and perplexity in which we feel our own helplessness, and in which we *ought* to feel the impropriety of all dogmatism or arrogance in reasoning upon such subjects. This is the only use and the only meaning of such sceptical speculations. It is altogether unfair, and indeed absurd, to suppose that their authors could ever mean positively to maintain that we should try to get the better of any reliance on our memories, or that they themselves really doubted more than other people as to the past reality of the things they remembered. The very arguments they use, indeed, to show that the evidence of memory *may* be fallacious, prove, completely, that, *in point of fact*, they relied as implicitly as their antagonists on the accuracy of that faculty. If they were not sure that they recollected the premises of their own reasonings, it is evidently impossible that they should ever have come to any conclusion. If they did not believe that they had seen the books they answered, it is impossible they should have set about answering them.

The truth is, however, that all men have a practical and irresistible belief both in the existence of matter, and in the accuracy of memory; and that no sceptical writer ever meant or expected to destroy this practical belief in other persons. All that they aimed at was to show their own ingenuity, and the narrow limits of the human understanding: — to point out a curious distinction between the evidence of immediate consciousness, and that of perception of memory, — and to show that there was a kind of logical or argumentative *possibility*, that the objects of the latter faculties might have no existence. There never was any danger of their persuading men to distrust their senses or their memory; nor can they be rationally suspected of such an intention. On the contrary, they necessarily took for granted the instinctive and indestructible belief for which they found it so difficult to account. Their whole reasonings consist of an attempt to explain that admitted fact, and to ascertain the grounds upon which that belief depends. In the end, they agree with their adversaries that those grounds cannot be ascertained: and the only difference between them is, that the adversary maintains that they need no explanation; while the sceptic insists that the want of it still leaves a possibility that the belief may be fallacious; and at any rate establishes a distinction, in degree, between the *primary* evidence of consciousness, which it is impossible to distrust without a contradiction, and the *secondary* evidence of perception and memory, which may be clearly conceived to be erroneous.

To this extent, we are clearly of opinion that the sceptics are right; and though the value of the discovery certainly is as small as possible, we are just as well satisfied that its consequences are perfectly harmless. Their reasonings are about as ingenuous and as innocent as some of those which have been employed to establish certain strange paradoxes as to the nature of motion, or the infinite divisibility of matter. The argument is perfectly logical and unanswerable; and yet no man in his senses can practically admit the conclusion. Thus, it may be strictly demonstrated, that the swiftest moving body can never overtake the slowest which is before it at the commencement of the motion; or, in the words of the original problem, that the swift-footed Achilles could never overtake a snail that had a few yards the start of him. The reasoning upon which this valuable proposition is founded, does not admit, we believe, of any direct confutation; and yet there are

few, we suppose, who, upon the faith of it, would take a bet as to the result of such a race. The sceptical reasonings as to the mind led to no other practical conclusion; and may be answered or acquiesced in with the same good nature.

Such, however, are the chief topics which Dr. Beattie has discussed in this Essay, with a vehemence of temper, and an impotence of reasoning, equally surprising and humiliating to the cause of philosophy. The subjects we have mentioned occupy the greater part of the work, and are indeed almost the only ones to which its title at all applies. Yet we think it must be already apparent, that there is nothing whatever in the doctrines he opposes, to call down his indignation, or to justify his abuse. That there are other doctrines in some of the books which he has aimed at confuting, which would justify the most zealous opposition of every friend to religion, we readily admit; but these have no necessary dependence on the general speculative scepticism to which we have now been alluding, and will be best refuted by those who lay all that general reasoning entirely out of consideration. Mr. Hume's theory of morals, which, when rightly understood, we conceive to be both salutary and true, certainly has no connexion with his doctrine of ideas and impressions; and the great question of liberty and necessity, which Dr. Beattie has settled, by mistaking, throughout, the power of *doing* what we will, for the power of *willing* without motives, evidently depends upon considerations altogether apart from the nature and immutability of truth. It has always appeared to us, indeed, that too much importance has been attached to *Theories* of morals, and to speculations on the sources of approbation. Our feelings of approbation and disapprobation, and the moral distinctions which are raised upon them, are *Facts* which no theory can alter, although it may fail to explain. While these facts remain, they must regulate the conduct, and affect the happiness of mankind, whether they are well or ill accounted for by the theories of philosophers. It is the same nearly with regard to the controversy about cause and effect. It does not appear to us, however, that Mr. Hume ever meant to deny the existence of such a relation, or of the relative idea of power. He has merely given a new theory as to its genealogy or descent; and detected some very gross inaccuracies in the opinions and reasonings which were formerly prevalent on the subject.

If Dr. Beattie had been able to refute these doctrines, we cannot help thinking that he would have done it with more temper and moderation; and disdained to court popularity by so much fulsome cant about common sense, virtue, and religion, and his contempt and abhorrence for infidels, sophists, and metaphysicians; by such babyish interjections, as, "fy on it! fy on it!" — such triumphant exclamations, as, "say, ye candid and intelligent!" — or such terrific addresses, as, "ye traitors to human kind! ye murderers of the human soul!" — "vain hypocrites! perfidious profligates!" and a variety of other embellishments, as dignified as original in a philosophical and argumentative treatise. The truth is, that the Essay acquired its popularity, partly from the indifference and dislike which has long prevailed in England, as to the metaphysical inquiries which were there made the subject of abuse; partly from the perpetual appeal which it affects to make from philosophical subtlety to common sense; and partly from the accidental circumstances of the author. It was a great matter for the orthodox scholars of the south, who knew little of metaphysics themselves, to get a Scotch professor of philosophy to take up the gauntlet in their behalf. The contempt with which he chose to speak of his antagonists was the very tone which they wished to be adopted; and, some of them, imposed on by the confidence of his manner, and some resolved to give it all chances of imposing on others, they joined in one clamour of approbation, and proclaimed a triumph for a mere rash skirmisher, while the leader of the battle was still doubtful of the victory. The book, thus dandled into popularity by bishops and good ladies, contained many pieces of nursery eloquence, and much innocent pleasantry: it was not fatiguing to the understanding; and read less heavily, on the whole, than most of the Sunday library. In consequence of all these recommendations, it ran through various editions, and found its way into most well-regulated families; and, though made up of such stuff, as we really believe no grown man who had ever thought of the subject could

possibly go through without nausea and compassion, still retains its place among the meritorious performances, by which youthful minds are to be purified and invigorated. We shall hear no more of it, however, among those who have left college.

DUGALD STEWART.

(NOVEMBER, 1810.)

Philosophical Essays. By DUGALD STEWART, Esq. F.R.S. Edinburgh, Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, &c. &c. 4to. Pp. 590. Edinburgh: 1810.

THE studies to which Mr. Stewart has devoted himself, have lately fallen out of favour with the English public; and the nation which once placed the name of Locke immediately under those of Shakspeare and of Newton, and has since repaid the metaphysical labours of Berkeley and of Hume with such just celebrity, seems now to be almost without zeal or curiosity as to the progress of the Philosophy of Mind.

The causes of this distaste it would be curious, and probably not uninstructive, to investigate: but the inquiry would be laborious, and perhaps not very satisfactory. It is easy, indeed, to say, that the age has become frivolous and impatient of labour; and has abandoned this, along with all other good learning, and every pursuit that requires concentration of thought, and does not lead to immediate distinction. This is satire, and not reasoning; and, were it even a fair statement of the fact, such a revolution in the intellectual habits and character of a nation, is itself a phenomenon to be accounted for, — and not to be accounted for upon light or shallow considerations. To us, the phenomenon, in so far as we are inclined to admit its existence, has always appeared to arise from the great multiplication of the branches of liberal study, and from the more extensive diffusion of knowledge among the body of the people, — and to constitute, in this way, a signal example of that *compensation*, by which the good and evil in our lot is constantly equalized, or reduced at least to no very variable standard.

The progress of knowledge has given birth, of late years, to so many arts and sciences, that a man of liberal curiosity finds both sufficient occupation for his time, and sufficient exercise to his understanding, in acquiring a superficial knowledge of such as are most inviting and most popular; and, consequently, has much less leisure, and less inducement than formerly, to dedicate himself to those abstract studies which call for more patient and persevering attention. In older times, a man had nothing for it, but either to be absolutely ignorant and idle, or to take seriously to theology and the school logic. When things grew a little better, the classics and mathematics filled up the measure of general education and private study; and, in the most splendid periods of English philosophy, had received little addition, but from these investigations into our intellectual and moral nature. Some few individuals might attend to other things; but a knowledge of these was all that was required of men of good education; and was held accomplishment enough to entitle them to the rank of scholars and philosophers. Now-a-days, however, the necessary qualification is prodigiously raised,—at least in denomination; and a man can scarcely pass current in the informed circles of society, without knowing something of political economy, chemistry, mineralogy, geology, and etymology, — having a small notion of painting, sculpture, and architecture, with some sort of taste for the picturesque, — and a smattering of German and Spanish literature, and even some idea of Indian, Sanscrit, and Chinese learning and history, — over and above some little knowledge of trade and agriculture; with a reasonable acquaintance with what is called the philosophy of politics, and a far more extensive knowledge of existing parties, factions, and eminent individuals, both literary and political, at home and abroad, than ever were required in any earlier period of society. The dissipation of time and of attention occasioned by these multifarious occupations, is, of course, very unfavourable to the pursuit of any abstract or continued study; and even if a man could, for himself, be content to remain ignorant of many things, in order to obtain a profound knowledge of a few, it would be difficult for him, in the present state of the world, to resist the

impulse and the seductions that assail him from without. Various and superficial knowledge is now not only so common, that the want of it is felt as a disgrace; but the facilities of acquiring it are so great, that it is scarcely possible to defend ourselves against its intrusion. So many easy and pleasant elementary books, — such tempting summaries, abstracts and tables, — such beautiful engravings, and ingenious charts, and *coups-d'œil* of information, — so many museums, exhibitions, and collections, meet us at every corner,—and so much amusing and provoking talk in every party, that a taste for miscellaneous and imperfect information is formed, almost before we are aware; and our time and curiosity irrevocably devoted to a sort of Encyclopedical trifling.

In the mean time, the misfortune is, that there is no popular nor royal road to the profounder and more abstract truths of philosophy; and that these are apt, accordingly, to fall into discredit or neglect, at a period when it is labour enough for most men to keep themselves up to the level of that great tide of popular information, which has been rising, with such unexampled rapidity, for the last forty years.

Such, we think, are the most general and uncontrollable causes which have recently depressed all the sciences requiring deep thought and solitary application, far below the level of their actual importance; and produced the singular appearance of a partial falling off in intellectual enterprise and vigour, in an age distinguished, perhaps, above all others, for the rapid development of the human faculties. *The effect* we had formerly occasion to observe, when treating of the singular decay of Mathematical science in England; and so powerful and extensive is the operation of *the cause*, that, even in the intellectual city which we inhabit, we have known instances of persons of good capacity who had never found leisure to go beyond the first elements of mathematical learning; and were even suspected of having fallen into several heresies in metaphysics, merely from want of time to get regularly at the truth!

If the philosophy of mind has really suffered more, from this universal hurry, than all her sister sciences of the same serious complexion, we should be inclined to ascribe this misfortune, partly to the very excellence of what has been already achieved by her votaries, and partly to the very severe treatment which their predecessors have received at their hands. Almost all the great practical maxims of this mistress of human life, such as the use of the principle of Association in education, and the generation and consequences of Habits in all periods of life, have been lately illustrated in the most popular and satisfactory manner; and rendered so clear and familiar, as rules of practical utility, that few persons think it necessary to examine into the details of that fine philosophy by which they may have been first suggested, or brought into notice. There is nothing that strikes one as very important to be known upon these subjects which may not now be established in a more vulgar and empirical manner, — or which requires, in order to be understood, that the whole process of a scientific investigation should be gone over. By most persons, therefore, the labour of such an investigation will be declined; and the practical benefits applied — with ungrateful indifference to the sources from which they were derived. Of those, again, whom curiosity might still tempt to look a little closer upon this great field of wonders, no small part are dismayed at the scene of ruin which it exhibits. The destruction of ancient errors has hitherto constituted so very large a part of the task of modern philosophers, that they may be said to have been employed rather in throwing down, than in building up, and have as yet established very little but the fallacy of all former philosophy. Now, they who had been accustomed to admire that ancient philosophy, cannot be supposed to be much delighted with its demolition; and, at all events, are naturally discouraged from again attaching themselves to a system, which they may soon have the mortification of seeing subverted in its turn. In their minds, therefore, the opening of such a course of study is apt only to breed a general distrust of philosophy, and to rivet a conviction of its extreme and irremediable uncertainty; while those who had previously been indifferent to the systems of error, are displeased with the labour of a needless refutation; and disappointed to find, that, after a long course of inquiry, they are brought back to that very state of ignorance from which they had expected it would relieve them.

If any thing could counteract the effect of these and some other causes, and revive in England that taste for abstract speculation for which it was once so distinguished, we should have expected this to be accomplished by the publications of the author before us. — The great celebrity of his name, and the uniform clearness, simplicity, and good sense of his statements, might indeed have failed to attract those whom similar merits could no longer tempt to look into the pages of Locke or of Berkeley. But the singular eloquence with which Mr. Stewart has contrived to adorn the most unpromising parts of his subject, — the rich lights which his imagination has every where thrown in, with such inimitable judgment and effect,—the warm glow of moral enthusiasm which he has spread over the whole of his composition, — and the tone of mildness, dignity, and animation which he has uniformly sustained, in controversy, as well as in instruction, are merits which we do not remember to have seen united in any other philosophical writer; and which might have recommended to general notice, topics far less engaging than those on which they were employed. His former work, on the Philosophy of the Human Mind, has accordingly been more read than any other modern book on such subjects; and the volume before us, we think, is calculated to be still more popular.*

But it is in the second part of the Preliminary Dissertation that we take the chief interest — as Mr. Stewart has there taken occasion to make a formal reply to some of our hasty speculations, and has done us the honour of embodying several of our transitory pages in this enduring volume. If we were at liberty to yield to the common weaknesses of authors, we should probably be tempted to defend ourselves in a long dissertation; but we know too well what is due to our readers and to the public, to think of engaging any considerable share of their attention with a controversy which may be considered in some measure as personal to ourselves; and therefore, however honourable we think it, to be thus singled out for equal combat by such an antagonist, we shall put what we have to say within the shortest possible compass.

The observations to which Mr. Stewart has here condescended to reply, occur in an early number of our publication, and were intended to show, that as mind was not the proper subject of *Experiment*, but of *Observation*, so there could be no very close analogy between the rules of metaphysical investigation, and the most approved methods of inquiry as to those physical substances which are subject to our disposal and control; — that as all the facts with regard to mind must be derived from previous and universal Consciousness, it was difficult to see how any arrangement of them could add to our substantial knowledge; and that there was, therefore, no reason either to expect Discoveries in this branch of science, or to look to it for any real augmentation of our *Power*.

With regard to Perception and the other primary functions of mind, it was observed, that this doctrine seemed to hold without any limitation; and as to the Associating principle, while it was admitted that the case was somewhat different, it was observed, that all men were in reality aware of its existence, and acted upon it on all important occasions, though they might never have made its laws a subject of reflection, nor ever stated its general phenomena in the form of an abstract proposition.

To all this Mr. Stewart proceeds to answer, by observing, that the distinction between experiment and observation is really of no importance whatever, in reference to this argument; because the facts disclosed by experiment are merely phenomena that are observed; and the inferences and generalizations that are deduced from the observation of *spontaneous* phenomena, are just of the same sort with those that are inferred from experiment, and afford equally certain grounds of conclusion, provided they be sufficiently numerous and consistent. The justice of the last proposition, we do not mean to dispute; and assuredly, if any thing inconsistent with it is to be found in our former speculations, it must have arisen from that haste and inadvertence, which, we make no doubt, have often betrayed us into still greater errors. But it is very far from following from this, that there is not a material difference between experiment and observation; or that

* A portion of the original article, containing a general view of the subject of these Essays, is here omitted, for the reasons stated at the head of this division.

the philosophy of mind is not necessarily restrained within very narrow limits, in consequence of that distinction. Substances which are in our power, are the objects of experiment; those which are not in our power, of observation only. With regard to the former, it is obvious, that, by well-contrived experiments, we may discover many things that could never be disclosed by any length of observation. With regard to the latter, an attentive observer may, indeed, see more in them than strikes the eye of a careless spectator: but he can see nothing that *may* not be seen by every body; and, in cases where the appearances are very few, or very interesting, the chance is, that he *does* see nothing more — and that all that is left to philosophy is, to distinguish them into classes, and to fit them with appropriate appellations. Now, Mind, we humbly conceive, considered as a subject of investigation, is the subject of observation only; and is known nearly as well by all men, as by those who have most diligently studied its phenomena. "We cannot decompose our sensations," we formerly observed, "in a crucible, nor divide our perceptions with a prism." The metaphor was something violent; but, the meaning obviously was, that we cannot subject those faculties to any analogous processes; nor discover more of their nature than consciousness has taught all the beings who possess them. Is it a satisfactory answer, then, for Mr. Stewart, to say, that we may analyze them by reflection and attention, and other instruments better suited than prisms or crucibles, to the intellectual laboratory which furnishes their materials? Our reply is, that *we cannot analyze them at all;* and can never know more of them than has always been known to all to whom they had been imparted; and that, for this plain reason, that the truth of every thing that is said with regard to the mind, can be determined by an appeal to consciousness alone, and would not be even intelligible, if it informed men of any thing that they did not previously feel to be true.

With regard to the actual *experiments* to which Mr. Stewart alludes, as having helped to explain the means by which the eye judges of distances and magnitudes, these, we must observe, are, according to our conception, very clearly experiments, not upon mind, but upon *matter:* and are only entitled to that name at all, in so far as they are carried on by means of the power we possess of disposing certain pieces of matter in certain masses and intervals. Strictly considered, they are optical experiments on the effects produced by distance on the light reflected from known bodies; and are nearly akin to experiments on the effects produced on such reflected rays by the interposition of *media* of different refracting powers, whether in the shape of prisms, or in any other shape. At all events, they certainly are not investigations carried on solely by attending to the subjects of our Consciousness; which is Mr. Stewart's own definition of the business of the philosophy of Mind.

In answer to our remark, that "no metaphysician expects, by analysis, to discover a new power, or to excite a new sensation in the mind, as the chemist discovers a new earth or a new metal," Mr. Stewart is pleased to observe —

"That it is no more applicable to the anatomy of the mind, than to the anatomy of the body. After all the researches of physiologists on this last subject, both in the way of observation and of experiment, no discovery has yet been made of a new organ, either of power or of pleasure, or even of the means of adding a cubit to the human stature; but it does not therefore follow that these researches are useless. By enlarging his knowledge of his own internal structure, they increase the *power of man,* in that way in which alone they profess to increase it. They furnish him with resources for remedying many of the accidents to which his health and his life are liable; for recovering, in some cases, those active powers which disease has destroyed or impaired; and, in others, by giving sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, for awakening powers of perception which were dormant before. Nor must we overlook what they have contributed, in conjunction with the arts of the optician and of the mechanist, to extend the sphere of those senses, and to prolong their duration." — *Prelim. Diss.*, pp. xlvi. xlvii.

Now, ingenious and elegant as this parallel must be admitted to be, we cannot help regarding it as utterly fallacious—for this simple reason — that the business of anatomy is to lay open, with the knife, the secrets of that internal structure, which could never otherwise be apparent to the keenest eye; while the metaphysical inquirer can disclose nothing of which all his pupils are not previously aware. There is no opaque skin, in short, on the mind,

to conceal its interior mechanism; nor does the metaphysician, when he appeals to the consciousness of all thinking beings for the truth of his classifications, perform any thing at all analogous to the dissector, when he removes those outer integuments, and reveals the wonders of the inward organization of our frame. *His* statements do not receive their proof from the previous, though perhaps undigested knowledge of his hearers, but from the actual revelation which he makes to their senses; and his services would evidently be more akin to those of the metaphysician, if, instead of actually disclosing what was not previously known, or suspected to exist, he had only drawn the attention of an incurious generation to the fact that they had each ten fingers and ten toes, or that most of them had thirty-two teeth, distinguishable into masticators and incisors.

When, from these, and some other considerations, we had ventured to infer, that the knowledge derived from mere observation could scarcely make any addition to our power, Mr. Stewart refers triumphantly to the instance of astronomy; and, taking it almost for granted, that all the discoveries in that science have been made by observation alone, directs the attention of his readers to the innumerable applications which may be made of it, to purposes of unquestioned utility.

"In compensation," he observes, "for the inability of the astronomer to control those movements of which he studies the laws, he may boast, as I already hinted, of the immense accession of a more useful power which his discoveries have added to the human race, on the surface of their own planet. It would be endless to enumerate all the practical uses to which his labours are subservient. It is sufficient for me to repeat an old, but very striking reflection, that the only accurate knowledge which Man yet possesses of the surface of the earth has been derived from the previous knowledge he had acquired of the phenomena of the stars. Is it possible to produce a more apposite, or a more undeniable proof of the universality of Bacon's maxim, that '*knowledge is power*,' than a fact which demonstrates the essential aid which man has derived, in asserting his dominion over this lower world, from a branch of science which seems, at first view, fitted only to gratify a speculative curiosity; and which, in its infancy, served to amuse the leisure of the Chaldean shepherd?" — *Prelim. Diss.*, pp. xxxviii. xxxix.

To this we have to answer, in the first place, that astronomical science has *not* been perfected by observation alone; but that all the elements which have imparted to it the certainty, the simplicity, and the sublimity which it actually possesses, have been derived from *experiments* made upon substances in the power of their contrivers; — from experiments performed with small pieces of matter, on the laws of projectile motion — the velocities of falling bodies — and on centrifugal and centripetal forces. The knowledge of those laws, like all other valuable knowledge, was obtained by experiment only; and their application to the movements of the heavenly bodies was one of those splendid generalizations, which derive their chief merit from those inherent imperfections of *observation* by which they were rendered necessary.

But, in the second place, we must observe, that, even holding astronomy to be a science of mere observation, the power which Mr. Stewart says we have obtained by means of it, is confessedly a power, *not* over the substances with which that science is conversant, but over *other* substances which stand in some relation to them; and to which, accordingly, that science is capable of being applied. It is over the earth and the ocean that we have extended our dominion by means of our knowledge of the stars. Now, applying this case to that of the philosophy of Mind, and assuming, as we seem here entitled to assume, that it has invested us with no new power over mind itself, — what, we would ask, are the *other* objects over which our power is increased by means of our knowledge of mind? Is there any other substance to which that knowledge can possibly be applied? Is there any thing else that we either know better, or can dispose of more effectually in consequence of our observations on our own intellectual constitution? It is evident, we humbly conceive, that these questions must be answered in the negative. The most precise knowledge which the metaphysician can acquire by reflecting on the subjects of his consciousness, can give him no new power over the mind in which he discovers those subjects; and it is almost a self-evident proposition, that the most accurate knowledge of the subjects of consciousness can give him no power over any thing but mind.

There is one other little point connected with this argument, which we wish to settle with Mr.

Stewart. In speaking of the useful *applications* that may be ultimately made of the knowledge derived from observation, we had said, that for the power or the benefit so obtained, mankind were indebted—not to the observer, but to him who suggested the application. Mr. Stewart admits the truth of this — but adds, that the case is exactly the same with the knowledge derived from experiment;—and that the mere empiric is on a footing with the mere observer. Now, we do not think the cases exactly the same; — and it is in their difference that we conceive the great disadvantage of observation to consist. Whoever makes an experiment, must have the power at least to repeat that experiment, — and, in almost every case, to repeat it with some variation of circumstances. Here, therefore, is one power necessarily ascertained and established, and an invitation held out to increase that power, by tracing it through all the stages and degrees of its existence: while he who merely observes a phenomenon over which he has no control, neither exercises any power, nor holds out the prospect of acquiring any power, either over the subject of his observation, or over any other substance. He who first ascertained, by experiment, the expansive force of steam, and its destruction by cold — or the identity of lightning and electricity, and the consequent use of the conducting rod, plainly bestowed, in that instant, a great power upon mankind, of which it was next to impossible that some important application should not be speedily made. But he who first observed the periodical immersions and emersions of the satellites of Jupiter, certainly neither acquired nor bestowed any power in the first instance; and seems to have been but a remote and casual auxiliary to him whose genius afterwards found the means of employing those phenomena to guide him through the trackless waters of the ocean. — Experiment, therefore, necessarily implies power; and, by suggesting analogous experiments, leads naturally to the interminable expansion of inquiry and of knowledge: — but observation, for the most part, centres in itself, and tends rather to gratify and allay our curiosity, than to rouse or inflame it.

After having thus attempted to prove that experiment has no prerogative above mere observation, Mr. Stewart thinks it worth while to recur again to the assertion, that the philosophy of Mind does admit of experiments; and, after remarking, rather rashly, that "the whole of a philosopher's life, if he spends it to any purpose, is one continued series of experiments on his own faculties and powers," he goes on to state

"—— hardly any experiment can be imagined, which has not already been tried by the hand of Nature; displaying, in the infinite varieties of human genius and pursuits, the astonishingly diversified effects, resulting from the possible combinations, of those elementary faculties and principles, of which every man is conscious in himself. Savage society, and all the different modes of civilization; — the different callings and professions of individuals, whether liberal or mechanical; the prejudiced clown; — the factitious man of fashion; — the varying phases of character from infancy to old age; — the prodigies effected by human art in all the objects around us;— laws, — government, — commerce, — religion: — but above all, the records of thought, preserved in those volumes which fill our libraries; what are they but *experiments*, by which Nature illustrates, for our instruction, on her own grand scale, the varied range of man's intellectual faculties, and the omnipotence of education in fashioning his mind?" — *Prel. Diss.*, pp. xlv. xlvi.

If experiment be rightly defined the intentional arrangement of substances in our power, for the purpose of observing the result, then these are *not* experiments; and neither imply, nor tend to bestow, that power which enters into the conception of all experiment. But the argument, in our apprehension, is chargeable with a still more radical fallacy. The philosophy of mind is distinctly defined, by Mr. Stewart himself, to be that which is employed "on phenomena of which we are conscious;" its peculiar object and aim is stated to be, "to ascertain the laws of our constitution, in so far as they can be ascertained, by attention to the subjects of our consciousness;" and in a great variety of passages, it is explained, that the powers by which all this is to be effected, are, reflection upon our own mental operations, and the faculty of calm and patient attention to the sensations of which we are conscious. But, if this be the proper province and object of the philosophy of mind, what benefit is the student to receive from observing the various effects of manners and situation, in imparting a peculiar colour or bias to the character of the savage and the citizen, "the prejudiced

clown, and factitious man of fashion?" The observation of such varieties is, no doubt, a very curious and a very interesting occupation; — but we humbly conceive it to form no part, or, at least, a very small and inconsiderable part, of the occupation of a student of philosophy. It is an occupation which can only be effectually pursued, in the world, by travelling, and intercourse with society; and, at all events, by vigilant observation of what is shown to us, by our senses, of the proceedings of our fellow-men. The philosophy of mind, however, is to be cultivated in solitude and silence — by calm reflection on *our own* mental experiences, and patient attention to the subjects of our consciousness. But can we ever be *conscious* of those varieties of temper and character that distinguish the different conditions of human life? — or, even independent of Mr. Stewart's definition — is it reconcilable to common usage or general understanding, to call our attention to such particulars the study of the philosophy of mind? — Is it not, on the contrary, universally understood to be the peculiar and limited province of that philosophy, to explain the nature and distinctions of those primary functions of the mind, which are possessed in common by men of *all* vocations and *all* conditions? — to treat, in short, of perception, and attention, and memory, and imagination, and volition, and judgment, and all the other powers or faculties into which our intellectual nature may be distinguished? — Is it not with *these*, that Hobbes, and Locke, and Berkeley, and Reid, and all the other philosophers who have reasoned or philosophized about mind, have been occupied? — or, what share of Mr. Stewart's own invaluable publications is devoted to those slighter shades of individual character, to which alone his supposed *experiments* have any reference? The philosophy of the human mind, we conceive, is conversant only with what is common to all human beings — and with those faculties of which every individual of the species is equally conscious: and though it may occasionally borrow illustrations, or even derive some reflected light from the contemplation of those slighter varieties that distinguish one individual from another, this evidently does not form any part of the study of the subjects of our consciousness, and can never be permitted to rank as a legitimate part of that philosophy.

This exhausts almost all that we have to say in defence of our supposed heresies as to the importance and practical value of the philosophy of Mind, considered with reference to the primary and more elementary faculties of man. With regard to the Associating principle, we have still a word or two to add. In our original observations we admitted, that this principle seemed to stand in a situation somewhat different from the simpler phenomena of the Mind — and that the elucidations which Philosophy had furnished with regard to its operations, were not so easily recognized as previously impressed on our consciousness, as most of her other revelations. We allowed, therefore, that some utility might be derived from the clear exposition of this more complicated part of our mental organization, in respect both to the certainty and the extent of its application; at the same time that we felt ourselves constrained to add, that, even as to this habit of the mind, Philosophy could lay no claim to the honours of a *discovery;* since the principle was undoubtedly familiar to the feelings of all men, and was acted upon, with unvarying sagacity, in almost every case where it could be employed with advantage; though by persons who had never thought of embodying it in a maxim, or attending to it as a law of general application. The whole scheme of education, it was observed, has been founded on this principle, in every age of the world. "The groom," it was added, "who never heard of ideas or associations, feeds the young war-horse to the sound of the trumpet; and the unphilosophical artists who tame elephants, or train dancing dogs, proceed on the same obvious and familiar principle."

As this part of our speculations has incurred more of Mr. Stewart's disapprobation than any thing which we have hitherto attempted to defend, we think ourselves called upon to state the substance of his objections, in his own eloquent and impressive words. After quoting the sentence we have already transcribed, he proceeds: —

"This argument, I suspect, leads a little too far for the purpose of its author; inasmuch as it concludes still more forcibly (in consequence of the great familiarity of the subject) against Physics, strictly so

called, than against the Science of Mind. The savage, who never heard of the accelerating force of gravity, yet knows how to add to the momentum of his missile weapons, by gaining an eminence; though a stranger to Newton's third law of motion, he applies it to its practical use, when he sets his canoe afloat, by pushing with a pole against the shore: in the use of his sling, he illustrates, with equal success, the doctrine of centrifugal forces, as he exemplifies (without any knowledge of the experiments of Robins) the principle of the rifle-barrel, in feathering his arrow. The same groom who, 'in feeding his young war-horse to the sound of the drum,' has nothing to learn from Locke or from Hume concerning the laws of association, might boast, with far greater reason, that, without having looked into Borelli, he can train that animal to his various paces; and that, when he exercises him with the *longe*, he exhibits an experimental illustration of the centrifugal force, and of the centre of gravity, which was known in the riding-school long before their theories were unfolded in the Principia of Newton. Even the operations of the animal which is the subject of his discipline, seem to involve an acquaintance with the same physical laws when we attend to the mathematical accuracy with which he adapts the obliquity of his body to the rate of his circular speed. In both cases (in that of the man as well as of the brute) this practical knowledge is obtruded on the organs of external sense by the hand of Nature herself; but it is not on that account the less useful to evolve the general theorems which are thus embodied with their particular applications; and to combine them in a systematical and scientific form, for our own instruction and that of others. Does it detract from the value of the theory of pneumatics to remark, that the same effects of a *vacuum*, and of the elasticity and pressure of the air, which afford an explanation of its most curious phenomena, are recognized in an instinctive process coeval with the first breath which we draw; and exemplified in the mouth of every babe and suckling?"—*Prel. Diss.*, pp. lx. lxi.

Now, without recurring to what we have already said as to the total absence of power in all cases of mere observation, we shall merely request our readers to consider, what is the circumstance that bestows a value, an importance, or an utility, upon the discovery and statement of those general laws, which are admitted, in the passage now quoted, to have been previously exemplified in practice. Is it any thing else, than their capacity of a more extensive application? — the possibility or facility of employing them to accomplish many things to which they had *not* been previously thought applicable? If Newton's third law of motion could never have been employed for any other purpose than to set afloat the canoe of the savage — or if the discovery of the pressure of the atmosphere had led to nothing more than an explanation of the operation of sucking — would there have been any thing gained by stating that law, or that discovery, in general and abstract terms? Would there have been any utility, any dignity or real advancement of knowledge, in the mere technical arrangement of these limited and familiar phenomena under a new classification?

There can be but one answer to these interrogatories. But we humbly conceive, that all the laws of mental operation which philosophy may collect and digest, are exactly in this last predicament. They have no application to any other phenomena than the particular ones by which they are suggested — and which they were familiarly employed to produce. They are not capable of being extended *to any other cases*; and all that is gained by their digestion into a system, is a more precise and methodical enumeration of truths that were always notorious.

From the experience and consciousness of all men, in all ages, we learn, that when two or more objects are frequently presented together, the mind passes spontaneously from one to the other, and invests both with something of the colouring which belongs to the most important. This is the law of association; which is known to every savage, and to every clown, in a thousand familiar instances: and, with regard to its capacity of useful application, it seems to be admitted, that it has been known and acted upon by parents, pedagogues, priests, and legislators, in all ages of the world; and has even been employed, as an obvious and easy instrument, by such humble judges of intellectual resources, as common horse-jockies and bear-dancers.

If this principle, then, was always known, and regularly employed wherever any advantage could be expected from its employment, what reason have we to imagine, that any substantial benefit is to be derived from its scientific investigation, or any important uses hereafter discovered for it, in consequence merely of investing it with a precise name, and stating, under one general theorem, the common law of its operation? If such persons as grooms and masters of menageries have

been guided, by their low intellects and sordid motives, to its skilful application as a means of directing even the lower animals, is it to be believed, that there can be many occasions for its employment in the government of the human mind, of which men have never yet had the sense to bethink themselves? Or, can it be seriously maintained, that it is capable of applications as much more extensive and important than those which have been vulgarly made in past ages, as are the uses of Newton's third law of motion, compared with the operation of the savage in pushing his canoe from the shore? If Mr. Stewart really entertained any such opinion as this, it was incumbent upon him to have indicated, in a general way, the departments in which he conceived that these great discoveries were to be made; and to have pointed out some, at least, of the new applications, on the assumption of which alone he could justify so ambitious a parallel.* Instead of this, however, we do not find that he has contemplated any other spheres for the application of this principle, than those which have been so long conceded to it — the formation of taste, and the conduct of education: and, with regard to the last and most important of these, he has himself recorded an admission, which to us, we will confess, appears a full justification of all that we have now been advancing, and a sufficient answer to the positions we have been endeavouring to combat. "In so far," Mr. Stewart observes, "as education is effectual and salutary, it is founded on those principles of our nature which *have forced themselves upon general observation*, in consequence of the experience of ages." That the principle of association is to be reckoned in the number of these, Mr. Stewart certainly will not deny; and our proposition is, that *all* the principles of our nature which are capable of any useful application, have thus "forced themselves on general observation," many centuries ago, and can now receive little more than a technical nomenclature and description from the best efforts of philosophy.

The sentiments to which we have ventured to give expression in these and our former hasty observations, were suggested to us, we will confess, in a great degree, by the striking contrast between the wonders which have been wrought by the cultivation of modern Physics, and the absolute nothingness of the effects that have hitherto been produced by the labours of the philosophers of mind. We have only to mention the names of Astronomy, Chemistry, Mechanics, Optics, and Navigation; — nay, we have only to look around us, in public or in private, — to cast a glance on the machines and manufactories, the ships, observatories, steam engines, and elaboratories, by which we are perpetually surrounded, — or to turn our eyes on the most common articles of our dress and furniture, — on the mirrors, engravings, books, fire-arms, watches, barometers, thunder-rods, and opera-glasses, that present themselves in our ordinary dwellings, to feel how vast a progress has been made in exploring and subduing the physical elements of nature, and how stupendous an increase the power of man has received, by the experimental investigation of her laws. Nor is any thing in this astonishing survey more remarkable, than the feeling with which it is always accompanied, that what we have hitherto done in any of these departments is but a small part of what we are yet destined to accomplish; and that the inquiries which have led us so far, will infallibly carry us still farther. When we ask, however, for the trophies of the philosophy of Mind, or inquire for the vestiges of *her* progress in the more plastic and susceptible elements of human genius and character, we are answered only by ingenuous silence, or vague anticipations — and find nothing but a blank in the record of her actual achievements. The knowledge and the power of man over inanimate nature has been increased tenfold in the course of the last two centuries. The knowledge and the power of man over the mind of man remains almost exactly where it was at the first development of his faculties. The natural philosophy of antiquity is mere childishness and dotage, and their physical inquirers are mere pigmies and drivellers, compared with their successors in the present age; but their logicians, and meta-

* Upwards of thirty years have now elapsed since this was written; during which a taste for metaphysical inquiry has revived in France, and been greatly encouraged in Germany. Yet I am not aware to what useful applications of the science its votaries can yet point; or what practical improvement or increase of human power they can trace to its cultivation.

physicians, and moralists, and, what is of infinitely more consequence, the practical maxims and the actual *effects* resulting from *their* philosophy of mind, are very nearly on a level with the philosophy of the present day. The end and aim of all *that* philosophy is to make education rational and effective, and to train men to such sagacity and force of judgment, as to induce them to cast off the bondage of prejudices, and to follow happiness and virtue with assured and steady steps. We do not know, however, what modern work contains juster, or more profound views on the subject of education, than may be collected from the writings of Xenophon and Quintilian, Polybius, Plutarch, and Cicero; and, as to that sagacity and justness of thinking, which, after all, is the fruit by which this tree of knowledge must be ultimately known, we are not aware of many modern performances that exemplify it in a stronger degree, than many parts of the histories of Tacitus and Thucydides, or the Satires and Epistles of Horace. In the conduct of business and affairs, we shall find Pericles, and Cæsar, and Cicero, but little inferior to the philosophical politicians of the present day; and, for lofty and solid principles of practical ethics, we might safely match Epictetus and Antoninus (without mentioning Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch, Xenophon, or Polybius) with most of our modern speculators.

Where, then, it may be asked, are the performances of this philosophy, which makes such large promises? or, what are the grounds upon which we should expect to see so much accomplished, by an instrument which has hitherto effected so little? It is in vain for Mr. Stewart to say, that the science is yet but in its infancy, and that it will bear its fruit in due season. The truth is, that it has, of necessity, been more constantly and diligently cultivated than any other. It has always been the first object with men of talent and good affections, to influence and to form the minds of others, and to train their own to the highest pitch of vigour and perfection: and accordingly, it is admitted by Mr. Stewart, that the most important principles of this philosophy have been long ago "forced upon general observation" by the feelings and experiences of past ages. Independently, however, of this, the years that have passed since Hobbes, and Locke, and Malebranche, and Leibnitz, drew the attention of Europe to this study, and the very extraordinary genius and talents of those who have since addicted themselves to it, are far more than enough to have brought it, if not to perfection, at least to such a degree of excellence, as no longer to leave it a matter of dispute, whether it was really destined to add to our knowledge and our power, or to produce any sensible effects upon the happiness and condition of mankind. That society has made great advances in comfort and intelligence, during that period, is indisputable; but we do not find that Mr. Stewart himself imputes any great part of this improvement to our increased knowledge of our mental constitution; and indeed it is quite obvious, that it is an effect resulting from the increase of political freedom — the influences of reformed Christianity — the invention of printing — and that improvement and multiplication of the mechanical arts, that have rendered the body of the people far more busy, wealthy, inventive, and independent, than they ever were in any former period of society.

To us, therefore, it certainly does appear, that the lofty estimate which Mr. Stewart has again made of the *practical* importance of his favourite studies, is one of those splendid visions by which men of genius have been so often misled, in the enthusiastic pursuit of science and of virtue. That these studies are of a very dignified and interesting nature, we admit most cheerfully; — that they exercise and delight the understanding by reasonings and inquiries, at once subtle, cautious, and profound, and either gratify or exalt a keen and aspiring curiosity, must be acknowledged by all who have been initiated into their elements. Those who have had the good fortune to be so initiated by the writings of Mr. Stewart, will be delighted to add, that they are blended with so many lessons of gentle and of ennobling virtue — so many striking precepts and bright examples of liberality, high-mindedness, and pure taste — as to be calculated, in an eminent degree, to make men love goodness and aspire to elegance, and to improve at once the understanding, the imagination, and the heart. But this must be the limit of our praise.

The sequel of this article is not now reprinted, for the reasons already stated.

NOVELS, TALES, AND PROSE WORKS OF FICTION.

As I perceive I have, in some of the following papers, made a sort of apology for seeking to direct the attention of my readers to things so insignificant as *Novels*, it may be worth while to inform the present generation that, *in my youth*, writings of this sort were rated very low with us — scarcely allowed indeed to pass as part of a nation's permanent literature — and generally deemed altogether unworthy of any grave critical notice. Nor, in truth — in spite of Cervantes and Le Sage — and Marivaux, Rousseau, and Voltaire abroad — and even our own Richardson and Fielding at home — would it have been easy to controvert that opinion, in our England, at the time: for certainly a greater mass of trash and rubbish never disgraced the press of any country, than the ordinary Novels that filled and supported our circulating libraries, down nearly to the time of Miss Edgeworth's first appearance. There had been the Vicar of Wakefield, to be sure, before; and Miss Burney's Evelina and Cecilia — and Mackenzie's Man of Feeling, and some bolder and more varied fictions of the Misses Lee. But the staple of our Novel market was, beyond imagination, despicable; and had consequently sunk and degraded the whole department of literature, of which it had usurped the name.

All this, however, has since been signally and happily changed; and that rabble rout of abominations driven from our confines for ever. The *Novels* of Sir Walter Scott are, beyond all question, the most remarkable productions of the present age; and have made a sensation, and produced an effect, all over Europe, to which nothing parallel can be mentioned since the days of Rousseau and Voltaire; while, in our own country, they have attained a place, inferior only to that which must be filled for ever by the unapproachable glory of Shakspeare. With the help, no doubt, of their political revolutions, they have produced, in France, Victor Hugo, Balsac, Paul de Cocq, &c., the *promessi sposi* in Italy — and Cooper, at least, in America. — In England, also, they have had imitators enough; in the persons of Mr. James, Mr. Lover, and others. But the works most akin to them in excellence have rather, I think, been related as collaterals than as descendants. Miss Edgeworth, indeed, stands more in the line of their ancestry; and I take Miss Austen and Sir E. Bulwer to be as intrinsically original; — as well as the great German writers, Goethe, Tiek, Jean Paul, Richter, &c. Among them, however, the honour of this branch of literature has at any rate been splendidly redeemed; — and now bids fair to maintain its place, at the head of all that is graceful and instructive in the productions of modern genius.

MISS EDGEWORTH.

(July, 1809.)

Tales of Fashionable Life. By Miss Edgeworth, Author of "Practical Education," "Belinda," "Castle Rackrent," &c. 12mo. 3 vols. London: 1809.

If it were possible for reviewers to *envy* the authors who are brought before them for judgment, we rather think we should be tempted to envy Miss Edgeworth; — not, however, so much for her matchless powers of probable invention — her never-failing good sense and cheerfulness — nor her fine discrimination of characters — as for the delightful consciousness of having done more good than any other writer, male or female, of her generation. Other arts and sciences have their use, no doubt; and Heaven knows, they have their reward and their fame. But the great art is the art of living; and the chief science the science of being happy. Where there is an absolute deficiency of good sense, these cannot indeed be taught; and, with an extraordinary share of it, they may be acquired without an instructor: but the most common case is, to be capable of learning, and yet to require teaching; and a far greater part of the misery

which exists in society arises from ignorance, than either from vice or from incapacity.

Miss Edgeworth is the great modern mistress in this school of true philosophy; and has eclipsed, we think, the fame of all her predecessors. By her many excellent tracts on education, she has conferred a benefit on the whole mass of the population; and discharged, with exemplary patience, as well as extraordinary judgment, a task which superficial spirits may perhaps mistake for an humble and easy one. By her Popular Tales, she has rendered an invaluable service to the middling and lower orders of the people; and by her novels, and by the volumes before us, has made a great and meritorious effort to promote the happiness and respectability of the higher classes. On a former occasion we believe we hinted to her, that these would probably be the least successful of all her labours; and that it was doubtful whether she could be justified for bestowing so much of her time on the case of a few persons, who scarcely deserved to be cured, and were scarcely capable of being corrected. The foolish and unhappy part of the fashionable world, for the most part, "is not fit to bear itself convinced." It is too vain, too busy, and too dissipated to listen to, or remember any thing that is said to it. Every thing serious it repels, by "its dear wit and gay rhetoric;" and against every thing poignant, it seeks shelter in the impenetrable armour of its conjunct audacity.

"Laugh'd at, it laughs again; — and, stricken hard,
Turns to the stroke its adamantine scales,
That fear no discipline of human hands."

A book, on the other hand, and especially a witty and popular book, is still a thing of consequence, to such of the middling classes of society as are in the habit of reading. They dispute about it, and think of it; and as they occasionally make themselves ridiculous by copying the manners it displays, so they are apt to be impressed with the great lessons it may be calculated to teach; and, on the whole, receive it into considerable authority among the regulators of their lives and opinions. But a fashionable person has scarcely any leisure to read; and none to think of what he has been reading. It would be a derogation from his dignity to speak of a book in any terms but those of frivolous derision; and a strange desertion of his own superiority, to allow himself to receive, from its perusal, any impressions which could at all affect his conduct or opinions.

But though, for these reasons, we continue to think that Miss Edgeworth's fashionable patients will do less credit to her prescriptions than the more numerous classes to whom they might have been directed, we admit that her plan of treatment is in the highest degree judicious, and her conception of the disorder most luminous and precise.

There are two great sources of unhappiness to those whom fortune and nature seem to have placed above the reach of ordinary miseries. The one is *ennui* — that stagnation of life and feeling which results from the absence of all motives to exertion; and by which the justice of providence has so fully compensated the partiality of fortune, that it may be fairly doubted whether, upon the whole, the race of beggars is not happier than the race of lords; and whether those vulgar wants that are sometimes so importunate, are not, in this world, the chief ministers of enjoyment. This is a plague that infects all indolent persons who can live on in the rank in which they were born, without the necessity of working: but, in a free country, it rarely occurs in any great degree of virulence, except among those who are already at the summit of human felicity. Below this, there is room for ambition, and envy, and emulation, and all the feverish movements of aspiring vanity and unresting selfishness, which act as prophylactics against this more dark and deadly distemper. It is the canker which corrodes the full-blown flower of human felicity — the pestilence which smites at the bright hour of noon.

The other curse of the happy, has a range more wide and indiscriminate. It, too, tortures only the comparatively rich and fortunate; but is most active among the least distinguished; and abates in malignity as we ascend to the lofty regions of pure *ennui*. This is the desire of being fashionable; — the restless and insatiable passion to pass for creatures a little more distinguished than we really are — with the mortification of frequent failure, and the humiliating consciousness of being perpetually exposed to it. Among those who are secure of "meat, clothes, and fire," and are

thus above the chief physical evils of existence, we do believe that this is a more prolific source of unhappiness, than guilt, disease, or wounded affection; and that more positive misery is created, and more true enjoyment excluded, by the eternal fretting and straining of this pitiful ambition, than by all the ravages of passion, the desolations of war, or the accidents of mortality. This may appear a strong statement; but we make it deliberately, and are deeply convinced of its truth. The wretchedness which it produces may not be so intense: but it is of much longer duration, and spreads over a far wider circle. It is quite dreadful, indeed, to think what a sweep this pest has taken among the comforts of our prosperous population. To be thought fashionable — that is, to be thought more opulent and tasteful, and on a footing of intimacy with a greater number of distinguished persons than they really are, is the great and laborious pursuit of four families out of five, the members of which are exempted from the necessity of daily industry. In this pursuit, their time, spirits, and talents are wasted: their tempers soured; their affections palsied; and their natural manners and dispositions altogether sophisticated and lost.

These are the giant curses of fashionable life; and Miss Edgeworth has accordingly dedicated her two best tales to the delineation of their symptoms. The history of "Lord Glenthorn" is a fine picture of *ennui* — that of "Almeria" an instructive representation of the miseries of aspirations after fashion. We do not know whether it was a part of the fair writer's *design* to represent these maladies as absolutely incurable, without a change of condition; but *the fact* is, that, in spite of the best dispositions and capacities, and the most powerful inducements to action, the hero of *ennui* makes no advances towards amendment, till he is deprived of his title and estate! and the victim of fashion is left, at the end of the tale, pursuing her weary career, with fading hopes and wasted spirits, but with increased anxiety and perseverance. The moral use of these narratives, therefore, must consist in warning us against the first approaches of evils which can never afterwards be resisted.

These are the great twin scourges of the prosperous: but there are other maladies, of no slight malignity, to which they are peculiarly liable. One of these, arising mainly from want of more worthy occupation, is that perpetual use of stratagem and contrivance — that little, artful diplomacy of private life, by which the simplest and most natural transactions are rendered complicated and difficult, and the common business of existence made to depend on the success of plots and counterplots. By the incessant practice of this petty policy, a habit of duplicity and anxiety is infallibly generated, which is equally fatal to integrity and enjoyment. We gradually come to look on others with the distrust which we are conscious of deserving; and are insensibly formed to sentiments of the most unamiable selfishness and suspicion. It is needless to say, that all these elaborate artifices are worse than useless to the person who employs them; and that the ingenious plotter is almost always baffled and exposed by the downright honesty of some undesigning competitor. Miss Edgeworth, in her tale of "Manœuvring," has given a very complete and most entertaining representation of "the by-paths and indirect crook'd ways," by which these artful and inefficient people generally make their way to disappointment. In the tale, entitled "Madame de Fleury," she has given some useful examples of the ways in which the rich may most effectually do good to the poor — an operation which, we really believe, fails more frequently from want of skill than of inclination: and, in "The Dun," she has drawn a touching and most impressive picture of the wretchedness which the poor so frequently suffer, from the unfeeling thoughtlessness which withholds from them the scanty earnings of their labour.

Of these tales, "Ennui" is the best and the most entertaining — though the leading character is somewhat caricatured, and the *dénouement* is brought about by a discovery which shocks by its needless improbability. Lord Glenthorn is bred up, by a false and indulgent guardian, as the heir to an immense English and Irish estate; and long before he is of age, exhausts almost all the resources by which life can be made tolerable to those who have nothing to wish for. Born on the very pinnacle of human fortune, "he had nothing to do but to sit still and enjoy the barrenness of

the prospect." He tries travelling, gaming, gluttony, hunting, pugilism, and coach-driving; but is so pressed down with the load of life, as to be repeatedly on the eve of suicide. He passes over to Ireland, where he receives a temporary relief, from the rebellion—and from falling in love with a lady of high character and accomplishments; but the effect of these stimulants is speedily expended, and he is in danger of falling into a confirmed lethargy, when it is fortunately discovered that he has been changed at nurse! and that, instead of being a peer of boundless fortune, he is the son of a cottager who lives on potatoes. With great magnanimity, he instantly gives up the fortune to the rightful owner, who has been bred a blacksmith, and takes to the study of the law. At the commencement of this arduous career, he fortunately falls in love, for the second time, with the lady entitled, after the death of the blacksmith, to succeed to his former estate. Poverty and love now supply him with irresistible motives for exertion. He rises in his profession; marries the lady of his heart; and in due time returns, an altered man, to the possession of his former affluence.

Such is the naked outline of a story, more rich in character, incident, and reflection, than any English narrative which we can now call to remembrance:—as rapid and various as the best tales of Voltaire, and as full of practical good sense and moral pathetic as any of the other tales of Miss Edgeworth. The Irish characters are inimitable;—not the coarse caricatures of modern playwrights—but drawn with a spirit, a delicacy, and a precision, to which we do not know if there be any parallel among national delineations. As these are tales of fashionable life, we shall present our readers, in the first place, with some traits of an Irish lady of rank. Lady Geraldine—the enchantress whose powerful magic almost raised the hero of *ennui* from his leaden slumbers, is represented with such exquisite liveliness and completeness of effect, that the reader can scarcely help imagining that he has formerly been acquainted with the original. Every one, at least, we conceive, must have known somebody, the recollection of whom must convince him that the following description is as true to nature as it is creditable to art:—

"As Lady Geraldine entered, I gave one involuntary glance of curiosity. I saw a tall, finely-shaped woman, with the commanding air of a person of rank; she moved well; not with feminine timidity, yet with ease, promptitude, and decision. She had fine eyes, and a fine complexion, yet no regularity of feature The only thing that struck me as really extraordinary was her indifference when I was introduced to her. Every body had seemed extremely desirous that I should see her ladyship, and that her ladyship should see me; and I was rather surprised by her unconcerned air. This piqued me, and fixed my attention. She turned from me, and began to converse with others. Her voice was agreeable, though rather loud: she did not speak with the Irish accent; but, when I listened maliciously, I detected certain Hibernian inflexions—nothing of the vulgar Irish idiom, but something that was more interrogative, more exclamatory, and perhaps more rhetorical, than the common language of English ladies, accompanied with infinitely more animation of countenance and demonstrative gesture. This appeared to me peculiar and unusual, but not affected. She was uncommonly eloquent; and yet, without action, her words were not sufficiently rapid to express her ideas. Her manner appeared foreign, yet it was not quite French. If I had been obliged to decide, I should, however, have pronounced it rather more French than English. To determine which it was, or whether I had ever seen any thing similar, I stood considering her ladyship with more attention than I had ever bestowed on any other woman. The words *striking—fascinating—bewitching*, occurred to me as I looked at her and heard her speak. I resolved to turn my eyes away, and shut my ears; for I was positively determined not to like her; I dreaded so much the idea of a second Hymen. I retreated to the farthest window, and looked out very soberly upon a dirty fish-pond.

"If she had treated me with tolerable civility at first, I never should have thought about her. High-born and high-bred, she seemed to consider more what she should think of others, than what others thought of her. Frank, candid, and affable, yet opinionated, insolent, and an egotist: her candour and affability appeared the effect of a naturally good temper; her insolence and egotism only that of a spoiled child. She seemed to talk of herself purely to oblige others, as the most interesting possible topic of conversation; for such it had always been to her fond mother, who idolized her ladyship as an only daughter, and the representative of an ancient house. Confident of her talents, conscious of her charms, and secure of her station, Lady Geraldine gave free scope to her high spirits, her fancy, and her turn for ridicule. She looked, spoke, and acted, like a person privileged to think, say, and do what she pleased. Her raillery, like the raillery of princes, was without fear of retort. She was not ill-natured, yet careless to whom she gave offence, provided she produced amusement; and in this she seldom failed; for, in her conversation, there was much of the raciness of Irish wit, and the

oddity of Irish humour. The singularity that struck me most about her ladyship was her indifference to flattery. She certainly preferred frolic. Miss Bland was her humble companion; Miss Tracey her *butt*. It was one of Lady Geraldine's delights to humour Miss Tracey's rage for imitating the fashions of fine people. 'Now you shall see Miss Tracey appear at the ball to-morrow, in every thing that I have sworn to her is fashionable. Nor have I cheated her in a single article: but the *tout ensemble* I leave to her better judgment; and you shall see her, I trust, a perfect monster, formed of every creature's best: Lady Kilrush's feathers, Mrs. Moore's wig, Mrs. O'Connor's gown, Mrs. Leighton's sleeves, and all the necklaces of all the Miss Ormsbys. She has no taste, no judgment; none at all, poor thing; but she can imitate as well as those Chinese painters, who, in their drawings, give you the flower of one plant stuck on the stalk of another, and garnished with the leaves of a third.'" —Vol. i. pp. 130—139.

This favourite character is afterwards exhibited in a great variety of dramatic contrasts. For example: —

"Lord Craiglethorpe was, as Miss Tracey had described him, very stiff, cold, and *high*. His manners were in the extreme of English reserve; and his ill-bred show of contempt for the Irish was sufficient provocation and justification of Lady Geraldine's ridicule. He was much in awe of his fair and witty cousin: and she could easily put him out of countenance, for he was, in his way, extremely bashful. Once, when he was out of the room, Lady Geraldine exclaimed, 'That cousin Craiglethorpe of mine is scarcely an agreeable man: the awkwardness of *mauvaise-honte* might be pitied and pardoned, even in a nobleman,' continued her ladyship, 'if it really proceeded from humility; but here, when I know it is connected with secret and inordinate arrogance, 'tis past all endurance. As the Frenchman said of the Englishman, for whom even his politeness could not find another compliment, 'Il faut avouer que ce Monsieur a un grand talent pour le silence;'—he holds his tongue till people actually believe that he has something to say—a mistake they could never fall into if he would but speak.—It is not timidity; it is all pride. I would pardon his dulness, and even his ignorance; for one, as you say, might be the fault of his nature, and the other of his education: but his self-sufficiency is his own fault; and that I will not, and cannot pardon. Somebody says, that nature may make a fool, but a coxcomb is always of his own making. Now, my cousin—(as he is my cousin, I may say what I please of him,)—my cousin Craiglethorpe is a solemn coxcomb, who thinks, because his vanity is not talkative and sociable, that it's not vanity. What a mistake!'"—Vol. i. pp. 146—148.

These other traits of her character are given, on different occasions, by Lord Glenthorn: —

"At first I had thought her merely superficial, and intent solely upon her own amusement; but I soon found that she had a taste for literature beyond what could have been expected in one who lived so dissipated a life; a depth of reflection that seemed inconsistent with the rapidity with which she thought; and, above all, a degree of generous indignation against meanness and vice, which seemed incompatible with the selfish character of a fine lady; and which appeared quite incomprehensible to the imitating tribe of her fashionable companions."—Vol. i. p. 174.

"Lady Geraldine was superior to manœuvring little arts and petty stratagems, to attract attention. She would not stoop, even to conquer. From gentlemen she seemed to expect attention as her right, as the right of her sex; not to beg, or accept of it as a favour: if it were not paid, she deemed the gentleman degraded, not herself. Far from being mortified by any preference shown to other ladies, her countenance betrayed only a sarcastic sort of pity for the bad taste of the men, or an absolute indifference and look of haughty absence. I saw that she beheld with disdain the paltry competitions of the young ladies her companions; as her companions, indeed, she hardly seemed to consider them; she tolerated their foibles, forgave their envy, and never exerted any superiority, except to show her contempt of vice and meanness."—Vol. i. pp. 198, 199.

This may suffice as a specimen of the high life of the piece; which is more original and characteristic than that of Belinda—and altogether as lively and natural. For the low life, we do not know if we could extract a more felicitous specimen than the following description of the equipage in which Lord Glenthorn's English and French servant were compelled to follow their master in Ireland: —

"From the inn yard came a hackney chaise in a most deplorably crazy state; the body mounted up to a prodigious height, on unbending springs, nodding forwards, one door swinging open, three blinds up, because they could not be let down, the perch tied in two places, the iron of the wheels half off, half loose, wooden pegs for linch pins, and ropes for harness. The horses were worthy of the harness; wretched little dog-tired creatures, that looked as if they had been driven to the last gasp, and as if they had never been rubbed down in their lives: their bones starting through their skin; one lame, the other blind; one with a raw back, the other with a galled breast; one with his neck poking down over his collar, and the other with his head dragged forward by a bit of a broken bridle, held at arms' length by a man dressed like a mad beggar, in half a hat and half a wig, both awry in opposite directions; a long tattered coat, tied round his waist by a hay-rope; the jagged rents in the skirts of this coat showing his bare legs, marbled of many colours; while something like stockings hung loose about his ankles. The noises he made by way

of threatening or encouraging his steeds, I pretend not to describe. In an indignant voice I called to the landlord — 'I hope these are not the horses — I hope this is not the chaise intended for my servants.' The innkeeper, and the pauper who was preparing to officiate as postilion, both in the same instant exclaimed — '*Sorrow* better chaise in the county!' '*Sorrow!*' said I — 'what do you mean by sorrow?' 'That there's no better, plase your honour, can be seen. We have two more to be sure — but one has no top, and the other no bottom. Any way, there's no better can be seen than this same.' 'And these horses!' cried I — 'why this horse is so lame he can hardly stand.' 'Oh, plase your honour, tho' he can't stand, he'll *go* fast enough. He has a great deal of the rogue in him, plase your honour. He's always that way at first setting out.' 'And that wretched animal with the galled breast!' 'He's all the better for it, when once he warms; it's he that will go with the speed of light, plase your honour. Sure, is not he Knockecroghery? and didn't I give fifteen guineas for him, barring the luckpenny, at the fair of Knockecroghery, and he rising four year old at the same time?

"Then seizing his whip and reins in one hand, he clawed up his stockings with the other; so with one easy step he got into his place, and seated himself, coachman-like, upon a well-worn bar of wood, that served as a coach-box. 'Throw me the loan of a trusty, Bartly, for a cushion,' said he. A frieze coat was thrown up over the horse's heads. Paddy caught it. 'Where are you, Hosey?' cried he to a lad in charge of the leaders. 'Sure I'm only rowling a wisp of straw on my leg,' replied Hosey. 'Throw me up,' added this paragon of postilions, turning to one of the crowd of idle bystanders. 'Arrah, push me up, can't ye?' — A man took hold of his knee and threw him upon the horse. He was in his seat in a trice. Then clinging by the mane of his horse, he scrambled for the bridle, which was under the other horse's feet, reached it, and, well satisfied with himself, looked round at Paddy, who looked back to the chaise-door at my angry servants, 'secure in the last event of things.' In vain the Englishman in monotonous anger, and the Frenchman in every note of the gamut, abused Paddy. Necessity and wit were on Paddy's side. He parried all that was said against his chaise, his horses, himself, and his country, with invincible comic dexterity; till at last, both his adversaries, dumb-founded, clambered into the vehicle, where they were instantly shut up in straw and darkness. Paddy, in a triumphant tone, called to *my* postilions, bidding them 'get on, and not be stopping the way any longer.'" — Vol. i. pp. 64, 65.

By and by the wheel horse stopped short, and began to kick furiously.

"'Never fear,' reiterated Paddy. 'I'll engage I'll be up wid him. Now for it, Knockecroghery! Oh the rogue, he thinks he has me at a *nonplush*; but I'll show him the *differ*.'

"After this brag of war, Paddy whipped, Knockecroghery kicked, and Paddy, seemingly unconscious of danger, sat within reach of the kicking horse, twitching up first one of his legs, then the other, and shifting as the animal aimed his hoofs, escaping every time as it were by miracle. With a mixture of temerity and presence of mind, which made us alternately look upon him as a madman and a hero, he gloried in the danger, secure of success, and of the sympathy of the spectators.

"'Ah! didn't I *compass* him cleverly then? Oh the villain, to be browbating me! I'm too cute for him yet. See, there, now, he's come to; and I'll be his bail he'll go *asy* enough wid me. Ogh! he has a fine spirit of his own; but it's I that can match him. 'Twould be a poor case if a man like me couldn't match a horse any way, let alone a mare, which this is, or it never would be so vicious.'" — Vol. i. pp. 68, 69.

The most delectable personage, however, in the whole tale, is the ancient Irish nurse Ellinor. The devoted affection, infantine simplicity, and strange pathetic eloquence of this half-savage, kind-hearted creature, afford Miss Edgeworth occasion for many most original and characteristic representations. We shall scarcely prepossess our English readers in her favour by giving the description of her cottage.

"It was a wretched-looking, low, mud-walled cabin. At one end it was propped by a buttress of loose stones, upon which stood a goat reared on his hind legs, to browse on the grass that grew on the housetop. A dunghill was before the only window, at the other end of the house, and close to the door was a puddle of the dirtiest of dirty water, in which ducks were dabbling. At my approach there came out of the cabin a pig, a calf, a lamb, a kid, and two geese, all with their legs tied; followed by cocks, hens, chickens, a dog, a cat, a kitten, a beggar-man, a beggar-woman, with a pipe in her mouth; children innumerable, and a stout girl with a pitchfork in her hand; altogether more than I, looking down upon the roof as I sat on horseback, and measuring the superficies with my eye, could have possibly supposed the mansion capable of containing. I asked if Ellinor O'Donoghoe was at home; but the dog barked, the geese cackled, the turkeys gobbled, and the beggars begged with one accord, so loudly, that there was no chance of my being heard. When the *girl* had at last succeeded in appeasing them all with her pitchfork, she answered, that Ellinor O'Donoghoe was at home, but that she was out with the potatoes; and she ran to fetch her, after calling to *the boys, who were within in the room smoking*, to come out to his honour. As soon as they had crouched under the door, and were able to stand upright, they welcomed me with a very good grace, and were proud to see me in *the kingdom.* I asked if they were all Ellinor's sons. 'All entirely,' was the first answer. 'Not one but one,' was the

second answer. The third made the other two intelligible. 'Plase your honour, we are all her sons-in-law, except myself, who am her lawful son.' 'Then you are my foster-brother?' 'No, plase your Honour, it's not me, but my brother, and he's *not in it.*' '*Not in it?*' 'No, plase your Honour; because he's in the forge up *above.* Sure he's the blacksmith, my lard.' 'And what are you?' 'I'm Ody, plase your honour;' the short for Owen," &c.—Vol. i. pp. 94—96.

It is impossible, however, for us to select any thing that could give our readers even a vague idea of the interest, both serious and comic, that is produced by this original character, without quoting more of the story than we can now make room for. We cannot leave it, however, without making our acknowledgments to Miss Edgeworth for the handsome way in which she has treated our country, and for the judgment as well as liberality she has shown in the character of Mr. Macleod, the proud, sagacious, friendly, and reserved agent of her hero. There is infinite merit and powers of observation, even in her short sketch of his exterior.

"He was a hard-featured, strong built, perpendicular man, with a remarkable quietness of deportment: he spoke with deliberate distinctness, in an accent slightly Scotch; and, in speaking, he made use of no gesticulation, but held himself surprisingly still. No part of him, but his eyes, moved; and they had an expression of slow, but determined good sense. He was sparing of his words; but the few that he used said much, and went directly to the point."—Vol. i. p. 82.

But we must now take an abrupt and reluctant leave of Miss Edgeworth. Thinking, as we do, that her writings are, beyond all comparison, the most useful of any that have come before us since the commencement of our critical career, it would be a point of conscience with us to give them all the notoriety that they can derive from our recommendation, even if their execution were in some measure liable to objection. In our opinion, however, they are as entertaining as they are instructive; and the genius, and wit, and imagination they display, are at least as remarkable as the justness of the sentiments they so powerfully inculcate. To some readers they may seem to want the fairy colouring of high fancy and romantic tenderness; and it is very true that they are not poetical love tales, any more than they are anecdotes of scandal. We have great respect for the admirers of Rousseau and Petrarca; and we have no doubt that Miss Edgeworth has great respect for them:—but *the world*, both high and low, which she is labouring to mend, have no sympathy with this respect. They laugh at these things, and do not understand them; and therefore, the solid sense which she presses perhaps rather too closely upon them, though it admits of relief from wit and direct pathos, really could not be combined with the more luxuriant ornaments of an ardent and tender imagination. We say this merely to obviate the only objection which we think can be made to the execution of these stories; and to justify our decided opinion, that they are actually as *perfect* as it was possible to make them with safety to the great object of the author.

MISS EDGEWORTH.

(July, 1812.)

Tales of Fashionable Life. By Miss Edgeworth, Author of "Practical Education," "Belinda," "Castle Rackrent," &c. &c. 3 vols. 12mo. Pp. 1450. Johnson. London: 1812.

The writings of Miss Edgeworth exhibit so singular an union of sober sense and inexhaustible invention—so minute a knowledge of all that distinguishes manners, or touches on happiness in every condition of human fortune—and so just an estimate both of the real sources of enjoyment, and of the illusions by which they are obstructed, that it cannot be thought wonderful that we should separate her from the ordinary manufacturers of novels, and speak of her Tales as works of more serious importance than much of the true history and solemn philosophy that come daily under our inspection. The great business of life, and the object of all arts and acquisitions, is undoubtedly to be happy; and though our success in this grand endeavour depends, in some degree, upon external circumstances, over which we have no control, and still more on temper and dispositions, which can only be controlled by gradual and systematic exertion, a very great deal depends also upon creeds and *opinions*, which may be effectually and even suddenly rectified, by a few hints from authority that cannot be questioned, or a few illustrations so fair and striking, as neither

to be misapplied nor neglected. We are all, no doubt, formed, in a great degree, by the circumstances in which we are placed, and the beings by whom we are surrounded; but still we have all theories of happiness — notions of ambition, and opinions as to the *summum bonum*, of our own — more or less developed, and more or less original, according to our situation and character — but influencing our conduct and feelings at every moment of our lives, and leading us on to disappointment, and away from real gratification, as powerfully as mere ignorance or passion. It is to the correction of those erroneous theories that Miss Edgeworth has applied herself in that series of moral fictions, the last portion of which has recently come to our hands; and in which, we think, she has combined more solid instruction with more universal entertainment, and given more practical lessons of wisdom, with less tediousness and less pretension, than any other writer with whom we are acquainted.

When we reviewed the first part of these Tales which are devoted to the delineation of fashionable life, we ventured to express a doubt, whether the author was justifiable for expending so large a quantity of her moral medicines on so small a body of patients — and upon patients to whom she had every reason to fear would turn out incurable. Upon reflection, however, we are now inclined to recall this sentiment. The vices and illusions of fashionable life are, for the most part, merely the vices and illusions of human nature — presented sometimes in the most conspicuous, and almost always in only their most seductive form; — and even where they are not merely fostered and embellished, but actually generated only in that exalted region, it is very well known that they " drop upon the place beneath," and are speedily propagated and diffused into the world below. To expose them, therefore, in this their original and proudest sphere, is not only to purify the stream at its source, but to counteract their pernicious influence precisely where it is most formidable and extensive. To point out the miseries of those infinite and laborious pursuits in which persons who *pretend* to be fashionable consume their days, would be but an unprofitable task; while nobody could be found who would admit that they belonged to the class of pretenders; and all that remained therefore was to show, that the pursuits themselves were preposterous; and inflicted the same miseries upon the unquestioned leaders of fashion, as upon the humblest of their followers. For this task, too, Miss Edgeworth possessed certain advantages of which it would have been equally unnatural and unfortunate for her readers, if she had not sought to avail herself.

We have said, that the hints by which we may be enabled to correct those errors of opinion which so frequently derange the whole scheme of life, must be given by one whose authority is not liable to dispute. Persons of fashion, therefore, and pretenders to fashion, will never derive any considerable benefit from all the edifying essays and apologies that superannuated governesses and preceptors may indite for their reformation; — nor from the volumes of sermons which learned divines may put forth for the amendment of the age; — nor the ingenious discourses which philosophers may publish, from the love of fame, money, or mankind. Their feeling as to all *such* monitors is, that they know nothing at all about the matter, and have nothing to do with personages so much above them; — and so they laugh at their prosing and presumption — and throw them aside, with a mingled sense of contempt and indignation. Now, Miss Edgeworth happens fortunately to be born in the condition of a lady — familiar from early life with the polite world, and liable to no suspicion of having become an author from any other motives than those she has been pleased to assign.

But it is by no means enough that we should be on a footing, in point of rank, with those to whom we are moved to address our instructions. It is necessary that we should also have some relish for the pleasures we accuse them of overrating, and some pretensions to the glory we ask them to despise. If a man, without stomach or palate, takes it into his head to lecture against the pleasures of the table — or an old maid against flirtation — or a miser against extravagance, they may say as many wise and just things as they please — but they may be sure that they will either be laughed at, or not listened to; and that all their dissuasives will be set down to the score of mere ignorance or envy. In the same way,

a man or woman who is obviously without talents to shine or please in fashionable life, may utter any quantity of striking truths as to its folly or unsatisfactoriness, without ever commanding the attention of one of its votaries. The inference is so ready, and so consolatory — that all those wise reflections are the fruit of disappointment and mortification — that they want to reduce all the world to their own dull level — and to deprive others of gratifications which they are themselves incapable of tasting. The judgment of Miss Edgeworth, however, we think, is not in any very imminent danger of being disabled by this ingenious imputation; since, if we were to select any one of the traits that are indicated by her writings as peculiarly characteristic, and peculiarly entitled to praise, we should specify the singular force of judgment and self-denial, which has enabled her to resist the temptation of being the most brilliant and fashionable writer of her day, in order to be the most useful and instructive.

The writer who conceived the characters, and reported the conversations of Lady Delacour — Lady Geraldine — and Lady Dashfort (to take but these three out of her copious *dramatis personæ*), certainly need not be afraid of being *excelled* by any of her contemporaries, in that faithful but flattering representation of the spoken language of persons of wit and politeness of the present day — in that light and graceful tone of raillery and argument — and in that gift of sportive but cutting *médisance*, which is sure of success in those circles, where success is supposed to be most difficult, and most desirable. With the consciousness of such rare qualifications, we do think it required no ordinary degree of fortitude to withstand the temptation of being the flattering delineator of fashionable manners, instead of their enlightened corrector; and to prefer the chance of amending the age in which she lived, to the certainty of enjoying its applauses. Miss Edgeworth, however, is entitled to the praise of this magnanimity: — for not only has she abstained from dressing any of her favourites in this glittering drapery, but she has uniformly exhibited it in such a way as to mark its subordination to the natural graces it is sometimes allowed to eclipse, and to point out the defects it still more frequently conceals. It is a very rare talent, certainly, to be able to delineate both solid virtues and captivating accomplishments with the same force and fidelity; — but it is a still rarer exercise of that talent, to render the former both more amiable and more attractive than the latter — and, without depriving wit and vivacity of any of their advantages, to win not only our affections, but our admiration away from them, to the less dazzling qualities of the heart and the understanding. By what resources Miss Edgeworth is enabled to perform this feat, we leave our readers to discover, from the perusal of her writings; — of which it is our present business to present them with a slender account, and a scanty sample.

These three new volumes contain but three stories; — the first filling exactly a volume, the second half a volume, and the last no less than a volume and a half. The first, which is entitled "Vivian," is intended to show not only into what absurdities, but into what guilt and wretchedness, a person, otherways estimable, may be brought by that "infirmity of purpose" which renders him incapable of resisting the solicitations of others, — of saying *No*, in short, on proper occasions. The moral, perhaps, is brought a little too constantly forward; and a little more exaggeration is admitted into the construction of the story, than Miss Edgeworth generally employs; — but it is full of characters and incidents and good sense, like all her other productions.*

But we pass at once to the last, the longest, and by far the most interesting of these tales. It is entitled "The Absentee;" and is intended to expose the folly and misery of renouncing the respectable character of country ladies and gentlemen, to push, through intolerable expense, and more intolerable scorn, into the outer circles of fashion in London. That the case may be sufficiently striking, Miss Edgeworth has taken her example in an *Irish* family, of large fortune, and considerable rank in the peerage; and has enriched her main story with a greater variety of collateral incidents and characters, than in any of her other productions.

* I now omit the original account of the first two tales; and give only what relates to the last, — and most interesting and characteristic.

Lord and Lady Clonbrony are the absentees; — and they are so, because Lady Clonbrony is smitten with the ambition of making a figure in the fashionable circles of London; — where her very eagerness obstructs her success; and her inward shame, and affected contempt for her native country, only make her national accent, and all her other nationalities, more remarkable. She has a niece, however, a Miss Grace Nugent, who is full of gentleness, and talent, and love for Ireland — and a son, Lord Colambre, who, though educated in England, has very much of his cousin's propensities. The first part of the story represents the various mortifications and repulses which Lady Clonbrony encounters, in her grand attempt to be very fashionable in London — the embarrassments, and gradual declension into low company, of Lord Clonbrony — their plots to marry Lord Colambre to an heiress — and the growth of his attachment to Miss Nugent, who cordially shares both in his regret for the ridicule which his mother is at so much expense to excite, and his wish to snatch her from a career at once so inglorious and so full of peril. Partly to avoid his mother's importunities about the heiress, and partly to escape from the fascinations of Miss Nugent, whose want of fortune and high sense of duty seem to forbid all hopes of their union, he sets out on a visit to Ireland; where the chief interest of the story begins. There are here many admirable delineations of Irish character, in both extremes of life; and a very natural development of all its most remarkable features. At first, his Lordship is very nearly entangled in the spells of Lady Dashfort and her daughter; and is led by their arts to form rather an unfavourable opinion of his countrymen. An accidental circumstance, however, disclosing the artful and unprincipled character of these fair ladies, he breaks from his bondage, and travels *incog.* to his father's two estates of Colambre and Clonbrony; — the one flourishing under the management of a conscientious and active agent; the other going to ruin under the dominion of an unprincipled oppressor. In both places he sees a great deal of the native politeness, native wit, and kind-heartedness of the lower Irish; and makes an acquaintance at the latter with one group of Catholic cottagers, more interesting, and more beautifully painted, in the simple colouring of nature, than all the Arcadians of pastoral or romance. After detecting the frauds and villany of the tyrannical agent, he hurries back to London, to tell his story to his father; and arrives just in time to hinder him from being irretrievably entangled in his snares. He and Miss Nugent now make joint suit to Lady Clonbrony to retire for a while to Ireland, — an application in which they are powerfully seconded by the terrors of an execution in the house; and at last enabled to succeed, by a solemn promise that the yellow damask furniture of the great drawing-room shall be burnt on the very day of their arrival. In the mean time, Lord Colambre, whose wider survey of the female world had finally determined him to seek happiness with Grace Nugent, even with an humble fortune, suffers great agony, from a discovery maliciously made by Lady Dashfort, of a stain on her mother's reputation; which he is enabled at length to remove, and at the same time to recover a splendid inheritance, which had been long withheld, by its prevalence, from the woman of his choice. This last event, of course, reconciles all parties to the match; and they all set out, in bliss and harmony, to the paradise regained, of Clonbrony; — their arrival and reception at which is inimitably described in a letter from one of their postilions, with which the tale is concluded.

In this very brief abstract, we have left out an infinite multitude of the characters and occurrences, from the variety and profusion of which the story derives its principal attraction; and have only attempted indeed to give such a general notice of the relations and proceedings of the chief agents, as to render the few extracts we propose to make intelligible. The contrivance of the story indeed is so good, and the different parts of it so concisely represented, that we could not give an adequate epitome of it in much less compass than the original. We can venture on nothing, therefore, but a few detached specimens: and we take the first from a class of society, which we should scarcely have thought characteristic of the country in question: we mean the Fine ladies of the Plebeian order, who dash more extravagantly, it seems, in Dublin, than any other place in this free and commercial empire.

Lord Colambre had the good fortune to form an acquaintance with one of these, the spouse of a rich grocer, who invited him to dine with her at her villa, on his way back from the county of Wicklow. The description, though of a different character from most of Miss Edgeworth's delineations, is so picturesque and lively, that we cannot help thinking it must have been taken from the life. We are tempted, therefore, to give it at full length.

"After a charming tour in the county of Wicklow, where the beauty of the natural scenery, and the taste with which those natural beauties have been cultivated, far surpassed the sanguine expectations Lord Colambre had formed, his Lordship and his companions arrived at Tusculum; where he found Mrs. Raffarty, and Miss Juliana O'Leary,—very elegant,—with a large party of the ladies and gentlemen of Bray assembled in a drawing-room, fine with bad pictures and gaudy gilding; the windows were all shut, and the company were playing cards, with all their might. This was the fashion of the neighbourhood. In compliment to Lord Colambre and the officers, the ladies left the card-tables: and Mrs. Raffarty, observing that his Lordship seemed *partial* to walking, took him out, as she said, 'to do the honours of nature and art.'"

"The dinner had two great faults—profusion and pretension. There was, in fact, ten times more on the table than was necessary; and the entertainment was far above the circumstances of the person by whom it was given: for instance, the dish of fish at the head of the table had been brought across the island from Sligo, and had cost five guineas; as the lady of the house failed not to make known. But, after all, things were not of a piece: there was a disparity between the entertainment and the attendants: there was no proportion or fitness of things. A painful endeavour at what could not be attained, and a toiling in vain to conceal and repair deficiencies and blunders. Had the mistress of the house been quiet; had she, as Mrs. Broadhurst would say, but let things alone, let things take their course, all would have passed off with well-bred people; but she was incessantly apologising, and fussing and fretting inwardly and outwardly, and directing and calling to her servants—striving to make a butler who was deaf, and a boy who was hair-brained, do the business of five accomplished footmen of *parts and figure.* Mrs. Raffarty called 'Larry! Larry! My lord's plate, there!—James! bread, to Captain Bowles!—James! port wine, to the Major. —James! James Kenny! James!' And panting James toiled after her in vain. At length one course was fairly got through; and after a torturing half-hour, the second course appeared, and James Kenny was intent upon one thing, and Larry upon another, so that the wine sauce for the hare was spilt by their collision; but what was worse, there seemed little chance that the whole of this second course should ever be placed altogether rightly upon the table. Mrs. Raffarty cleared her throat and nodded, and pointed, and sighed, and set Larry after Kenny, and Kenny after Larry; for what one did, the other undid; but at last, the lady's anger kindled, and she spoke!—'Kenny! James Kenny, set the sea-cale at this corner, and put down the grass, cross-corners; and match your maccaroni yonder with *them* puddens, set—Ogh! James! the pyramid in the middle can't ye.' The pyramid in changing places was overturned. Then it was, that the mistress of the feast, falling back in her seat, and lifting up her hands and eyes in despair, ejaculated: 'Oh, James! James!'—The pyramid was raised by the assistance of the military engineers, and stood trembling again on its base; but the lady's temper could not be so easily restored to its equilibrium."—Pp. 25—28.

We hurry forward now to the cottage scene at Clonbrony; which has made us almost equally in love with the Irish, and with the writer who has painted them with such truth, pathos, and simplicity. An ingenious and good-natured postboy overturns his Lordship in the night, a few miles from Clonbrony; and then says,—

"'If your honour will lend me your hand till I pull you up the back of the ditch, the horses will stand while we go. I'll find you as pretty a lodging for the night, with a widow of a brother of my shister's husband that was, as ever you slept in your life; and your honour will be, no compare, snugger than in the inn at Clonbrony, which has no roof, the devil a stick. But where will I get your honour's hand? for it's coming on so dark, I can't see rightly. There! you're up now, safe. Yonder candle's the house.' 'Well, go and ask whether they can give us a night's lodging.' 'Is it *ask?* When I see the light! Sure they'd be proud to give the traveller all the beds in the house, let alone one. Take care of the potato furrows, that's all, and follow me straight. I'll go on to meet the dog, who knows me, and might be strange to your honour.'

"'Kindly welcome!' were the first words Lord Colambre heard when he approached the cottage; and 'kindly welcome' was in the sound of the voice, and in the countenance of the old woman, who came out shading her rush candle from the wind, and holding it so as to light the path. When he entered the cottage, he saw a cheerful fire and a neat pretty young woman making it blaze: she curtsied, put her spinning wheel out of the way, set a stool by the fire for the stranger; and repeating in a very low tone of voice, 'Kindly welcome, sir,' retired. 'Put down some eggs, dear: there's plenty in the bowl,' said the old woman, calling to her; 'I'll do the bacon. Was not we lucky to be up? The boy's gone to bed, but waken him,' said she, turning to the postilion; 'and he'll help you with the chay, and put your horses in the bier for the night.'

"No: Larry chose to go on to Clonbrony with the horses, that he might get the chaise mended betimes for his honour. The table was set; clean trenchers, hot potatoes, milk, eggs, bacon, and 'kindly welcome to all.' 'Set the salt, dear; and the butter, love; where's your head, Grace, dear?' 'Grace!' repeated Lord Colambre, looking up; and to apologise for his involuntary exclamation, he added, 'Is Grace a common name in Ireland?' 'I can't say, plase your honour, but it was give her by Lady Clonbrony, from a niece of her own that was her foster-sister, God bless her; and a very kind lady she was to us and to all when she was living in it; but those times are gone past,' said the old woman, with a sigh. The young woman sighed too; and sitting down by the fire, began to count the notches in a little bit of stick, which she held in her hand; and after she had counted them, sighed again. 'But don't be sighing, Grace, now,' said the old woman; 'sighs is bad sauce for the traveller's supper; and we won't be troubling him with more,' added she, turning to Lord Colambre, with a smile—'Is your egg done to your liking?' 'Perfectly, thank you.' 'Then I wish it was a chicken for your sake, which it should have been, and roast too, had we time. I wish I could see you eat another egg.' 'No more, thank you, my good lady; I never ate a better supper, nor received a more hospitable welcome.' 'O, the welcome is all we have to offer.'

"'May I ask what that is?' said Lord Colambre, looking at the notched stick, which the young woman held in her hand, and on which her eyes were still fixed. 'It's a *tally*, plase your honour.—O you're a foreigner—It's the way the labourer keeps the account of the day's work with the overseer. And there's been a mistake, and is a dispute here between our boy and the overseer; and she was counting the boy's tally, that's in bed, tired, for in troth he's overworked.' 'Would you want any thing more from me, mother?' said the girl, rising and turning her head away. 'No, child: get away, for your heart's full.' She went instantly. 'Is the boy her brother?' said Lord Colambre. 'No: he's her bachelor,' said the old woman, lowering her voice. 'Her bachelor?' 'That is, her sweetheart: for she is not my daughter, though you heard her call me mother. The boy's my son; but I am *afeard* they must give it up; for they're too poor, and the times is hard—and the agents harder than the times! There's two of them, the under and the upper; and they grind the substance of one between them, and then blow one away like chaff: but we'll not be talking of that, to spoil your honour's night's rest. The room's ready, and here's the rush-light.' She showed him into a very small, but neat room. 'What a comfortable looking bed,' said Lord Colambre. 'Ah, these red check curtains,' said she, letting them down; 'these have lasted well; they were given me by a good friend now far away, over the seas, my Lady Clonbrony; and made by the prettiest hands ever you see, her niece's, Miss Grace Nugent's, and she a little child that time; sweet love! all gone!' The old woman wiped a tear from her eye, and Lord Colambre did what he could to appear indifferent. She set down the candle and left the room; Lord Colambre went to bed, but he lay awake, 'revolving sweet and bitter thoughts.'

"The kettle was on the fire, tea things set, every thing prepared for her guest, by the hospitable hostess, who, thinking the gentleman would take tea to his breakfast, had sent off a *gossoon* by the *first light* to Clonbrony, for an ounce of tea, a *quarter of sugar*, and a loaf of white bread; and there was on the little table good cream, milk, butter, eggs—all the promise of an excellent breakfast. It was a *fresh* morning, and there was a pleasant fire on the hearth neatly swept up. The old woman was sitting in her chimney corner, behind a little skreen of white-washed wall, built out into the room, for the purpose of keeping those who sat at the fire from the *blast of the door*. There was a loop-hole in this wall, to let the light in just at the height of a person's head, who was sitting near the chimney. The rays of the morning sun now came through it, shining across the face of the old woman, as she sat knitting; Lord Colambre thought he had seldom seen a more agreeable countenance; intelligent eyes, benevolent smile, a natural expression of cheerfulness, subdued by age and misfortune. 'A good morrow to you kindly, sir, and I hope you got the night well?—A fine day for us this Sunday morning; my Grace is gone to early prayers, so your honour will be content with an old woman to make your breakfast.—O, let me put in plenty, or it will never be good; and if your honour takes stirabout, an old hand will engage to make that to your liking any way, for by great happiness we have what will just answer for you, of the nicest meal the miller made my Grace a compliment of, last time she went to the mill.'"—Pp. 171—179.

In the course of conversation, she informs her guest of the precarious tenure on which she held the little possession that formed her only means of subsistence.

"'The good Lord himself granted us the *lase;* the life's dropped, and the years is out: but we had a promise of renewal in writing from the landlord.—God bless him! if he was not away, he'd be a good gentleman, and we'd be happy and safe.'—'But if you have a promise in writing of a renewal, surely, you are safe, whether your landlord is absent or present.'—'Ah, no! that makes a great *differ*, when there's no eye or hand over the agent.—Yet, indeed, there,' added she, after a pause, 'as you say, I think we are safe; for we have that memorandum in writing, with a pencil, under his own hand, on the back of the *lase*, to me, by the same token, when my good lord had his foot on the step of the coach, going away; and I'll never forget the smile of her that got that good turn done for me, Miss Grace. And just when she was going to England and London, and young as she was, to have the thought to stop and

turn to the likes of me! O, then, if you could see her, and know her as I did! *That* was the comforting angel upon earth — look and voice, and heart and all! O, that she was here present, this minute! — But did you scald yourself?' said the widow to Lord Colambre. — 'Sure, you must have scalded yourself: for you poured the kettle straight over your hand, and it boiling! O *deear!* to think of so young a gentleman's hand shaking so like my own.' — Luckily, to prevent her pursuing her observations from the hand to the face, which might have betrayed more than Lord Colambre wished she should know, her own Grace came in at this instant — 'There it's for you safe, mother dear — the *lase!*' said Grace, throwing a packet into her lap. The old woman lifted up her hands to heaven with the lease between them — 'Thanks be to Heaven!' Grace passed on, and sunk down on the first seat she could reach. Her face flushed, and, looking much fatigued, she loosened the strings of her bonnet and cloak. — 'Then, I'm tired!' but, recollecting herself, she rose, and curtsied to the gentleman. — 'What tired ye, dear?' — 'Why, after prayers, we had to go — for the agent was not at prayers, nor at home for us, when we called — we had to go all the way up to the castle; and there, by great good luck, we found Mr. Nick Garraghty himself, come from Dublin, and the *lase* in his hands; and he sealed it up that way, and handed it to me very civil. I never saw him so good — though he offered me a glass of spirits, which was not manners to a decent young woman, in a morning — as Brian noticed after.' — 'But why didn't Brian come home all the way with you, Grace?' — 'He would have seen me home,' said Grace, 'only that he went up a piece of the mountain for some stones or ore for the gentleman, — for he had the manners to think of him this morning, though shame for me, I had not, when I came in, or I would not have told you all this, and he himself by. See, there he is, mother.' — Brian came in very hot, out of breath, with his hat full of stones. 'Good morrow to your honour. I was in bed last night; and sorry they did not call me up to be of *sarvice.* Larry was telling us, this morning, your honour's from Wales, and looking for mines in Ireland, and I heard talk that there was one on our mountain — may be, you'd be *curous* to see; and so, I brought the best I could, but I'm no judge.'" — Vol. vi. pp. 182—188.

A scene of villany now begins to disclose itself, as the experienced reader must have anticipated. The pencil writing is rubbed out: but the agent promises, that if they pay up their arrears, and be handsome with their sealing money and glove money, &c., he will grant a renewal. To obtain the rent, the widow is obliged to sell her cow. — But she shall tell her story in her own words.

"'Well, still it was but paper we got for the cow; then that must be gold before the agent would take, or touch it — so I was laying out to sell the dresser, and had taken the plates and cups, and little things off it, and my boy was lifting it out with Andy, the carpenter that was agreeing for it, when in comes Grace, all rosy, and out of breath — it's a wonder I minded her run out, and not missed her — 'Mother, says she, here's the gold for you, don't be stirring your dresser.' — 'And where's your own gown and cloak, Grace?' says I. But I beg your pardon, sir; may be I'm tiring you?' — Lord Colambre encouraged her to go on. — 'Where's your gown and cloak, Grace?' says I. — 'Gone,' says she. 'The cloak was too warm and heavy, and I don't doubt, mother, but it was that helped to make me faint this morning. And as to the gown, sure I've a very nice one here that you spun for me yourself, mother; and that I prize above all the gowns that ever came out of a loom; and that Brian said became me to his fancy above any gown ever he see me wear, and what could I wish for more?' — Now, I'd a mind to scold her for going to sell the gown unknown'st to me; but I don't know how it was, I couldn't scold her just then, — so kissed her, and Brian the same; and that was what no man ever did before. — And she had a mind to be angry with him, but could not, nor ought not, says I; for he's as good as your husband now, Grace; and no man can part *yees* now, says I, putting their hands together. — Well, I never saw her look so pretty; nor there was not a happier boy that minute on God's earth than my son, nor a happier mother than myself; and I thanked God that had given them to me; and down they both fell on their knees for my blessing, little worth as it was; and my heart's blessing they had, and I laid my hands upon them. 'It's the priest you must get to do this for you to-morrow, says I.'" — Vol. vi. pp. 205—207.

Next morning they go up in high spirits to the castle, where the villanous agent denies his promise; and is laughing at their despair, when Lord Colambre is fortunately identified by Mrs. Raffarty, who turns out to be a sister of the said agent, and, like a god in epic poetry, turns agony into triumph!

We can make room for no more now, but the epistle of Larry Brady, the good-natured postboy, to his brother, giving an account of the return of the family to Clonbrony. If Miss Edgeworth had never written any other thing, this one letter must have placed her at the very top of our scale, as an observer of character, and a mistress in the simple pathetic. We give the greater part of this extraordinary production.

"My dear brother, — Yours of the 16th, enclosing the five-pound note for my father, came safe to hand Monday last; and, with his thanks and blessing to you, he commends it to you herewith enclosed back

again, on account of his being in no immediate necessity, nor likelihood to want in future, as you shall hear forthwith; but wants you over, with all speed, and the note will answer for travelling charges; for we can't enjoy the luck it has pleased God to give us, without *yees:* put the rest in your pocket, and read it when you've time.

"Now, cock up your ears, Pat! for the great news is coming, and the good. The master's come home—long life to him!—and family come home yesterday, all entirely! The *ould* lord and the young lord, (ay, there's the man, Paddy!) and my lady, and Miss Nugent. And I driv Miss Nugent's maid, that maid that was, and another; so I had the luck to be in it alone *wid 'em*, and see all, from first to last. And first, I must tell you, my young Lord Colambre remembered and noticed me the minute he lit at our inn, and condescended to beckon at me out of the yard to him, and axed me—'Friend Larry,' says he, 'did you keep your promise?'—'My oath again the whiskey is it?' says I. 'My Lord, I surely did,' said I; which was true, as all the country knows I never tasted a drop since. 'And I'm proud to see your honour, my lord, as good as your word too, and back again among us.' So then there was a call for the horses; and no more at that time passed betwix' my young lord and me, but that he pointed me out to the *ould* one, as I went off. I noticed and thanked him for it in my heart, though I did not know all the good was to come of it. Well no more of myself, for the present.

"Ogh, it's I driv 'em well; and we all got to the great gate of the park before sunset, and as fine an evening as ever you see; with the sun shining on the tops of the trees, as the ladies noticed the leaves changed, but not dropped, though so late in the season. I believe the leaves knew what they were about, and kept on, on purpose to welcome them; and the birds were singing; and I stopped whistling, that they might hear them: but sorrow bit could they hear when they got to the park gate, for there was such a crowd, and such a shout, as you never see—and they had the horses off every carriage entirely, and drew 'em home, with blessings, through the park. And, God bless 'em, when they got out, they didn't go shut themselves up in the great drawing-room, but went straight out to the *tir*rass, to satisfy the eyes and hearts that followed them. My lady *laning* on my young lord, and Miss Grace Nugent that was, the beautifullest angel that ever you set eyes on, with the finest complexion and sweetest of smiles, *laning* upon the ould lord's arm, who had his hat off, bowing to all, and noticing the old tenants as he passed by name. O, there was great gladness, and tears in the midst; for joy I could scarcely keep from myself.

"After a turn or two upon the *tir*rass, my Lord Colambre *quit* his mother's arm for a minute, and he come to the edge of the slope, and looked down and through all the crowd for some one. 'Is it the widow O'Neill, my lord?' says I; 'she's yonder, with the spectacles on her nose, betwixt her son and daughter, as usual.' Then my lord beckoned, and they did not know which of the *tree* would stir; and then he gave *tree* beckons with his own finger, and they all *tree* came fast enough to the bottom of the slope, forenent my lord; and he went down and helped the widow up, (O, he's the true jantleman,) and brought 'em all *tree* up on the *tir*rass, to my lady and Miss Nugent; and I was up close after, that I might hear, which wasn't manners; but I couldn't help it; so what he said I don't well know, for I could not get near enough after all. But I saw my lady smile very kind, and take the widow O'Neill by the hand, and then my Lord Colambre *'troduced* Grace to Miss Nugent, and there was the word *namesake*, and something about a check curtains; but whatever it was, they was all greatly pleased: then my Lord Colambre turned and looked for Brian, who had fell back, and took him with some commendation to my lord his father. And my lord the master said, which I didn't know till after, that they should have their house and farm at the *ould* rent; and at the surprise, the widow dropped down dead; and there was a cry as for ten *berrings*. 'Be quite,' says I, 'she's only kilt for joy;' and I went and lift her up, for her son had no more strength that minute than the child new born; and Grace trembled like a leaf, as white as the sheet, but not long, for the mother came to, and was as well as ever when I brought some water, which Miss Nugent handed to her with her own hand.

"'That was always pretty and good,' said the widow, laying her hand upon Miss Nugent, 'and kind and good to me and mine.' That minute there was music from below. The blind harper, O'Neill, with his harp, that struck up 'Gracey Nugent!' And that finished, and my Lord Colambre smiling, with the tears standing in his eyes too, and the *ould* lord quite wiping his, I ran to the *tir*rass brink to bid O'Neill play it again; but as I run, I thought I heard a voice call Larry.

"'Who calls Larry?' says I. 'My Lord Colambre calls you, Larry,' says all at once; and four takes me by the shoulders, and spins me round. 'There's my young lord calling you, Larry—run for your life.' So I run back for my life, and walked respectful, with my hat in my hand, when I got near. 'Put on your hat, my father desires it,' says my Lord Colambre. The ould lord made a sign to that purpose, but was too full too speak. 'Where's your father!' continues my young lord. 'He's very ould, my lord,' says I. 'I didn't *ax* you how old he was,' says he; 'but where is he?' 'He's behind the crowd below; on account of his infirmities he couldn't walk so fast as the rest, my lord,' says I; 'but his heart is with you, if not his body.' 'I must have his body too: so bring him bodily before us; and this shall be your warrant for so doing,' said my lord, joking. For he knows the *natur* of us, Paddy, and how we love a joke in our hearts, as well as if he had lived all his life in Ireland; and by the same token will, for that *rason*, do what he pleases with us, and more may-be than a man twice as good, that never would smile on us.

"But I'm telling you of my father. 'I've a warrant for you, father,' says I; 'and must have you bodily before the justice, and my lord chief justice.' So he changed colour a bit at first; but he saw me smile. 'And I've done no sin,' said he; 'and, Larry, you may lead me now, as you led me all my life.' And up the slope he went with me, as light as fifteen; and when we got up, my Lord Clonbrony said, 'I am sorry an old tenant, and a good old tenant, as I hear you were, should have been turned out of your farm.' 'Don't fret, it's no great matter, my lord,' said my father. 'I shall be soon out of the way; but if you would be so kind to speak a word for my boy here, and that I could afford, while the life is in me, to bring my other boy back out of banishment——'

"'Then,' says my Lord Clonbrony, 'I'll give you and your sons three lives, or thirty-one years, from this day, of your former farm. Return to it when you please.' 'And,' added my Lord Colambre, 'the flaggers, I hope, will be soon banished.' O, how could I thank him — not a word could I proffer — but I know I clasped my two hands and prayed for him inwardly. And my father was dropping down on his knees, but the master would not let him; and *obsarved*, that posture should only be for his God! And, sure enough, in that posture, when he was out of sight, we did pray for him that night, and will all our days.

"But before we quit his presence, he call me back, and bid me write to my brother, and bring you back, if you've no objections to your own country.—So come, my dear Pat, and make no delay, for joy's not joy complate till you're in it — my father sends his blessing, and Peggy her love. The family entirely is to settle for good in Ireland; and there was in the castle yard last night a bonfire made by my lord's orders of the ould yellow damask furniture, to plase my lady, my lord says. And the drawing-rooms, the butler was telling me, is new hung; and the chairs, with velvet, as white as snow, and shaded over with natural flowers, by Miss Nugent. — Oh! how I hope what I guess will come true, and I've *rason* to believe it will, for I dream't in my bed last night, it did. But keep yourself to yourself—that Miss Nugent, (who is no more Miss Nugent, they say, but Miss Reynolds, and has a new-found grandfather, and is a big heiress, which she did not want in my eyes, nor in my young lord's), I've a notion, will be sometime, and may be sooner than is expected, my Lady Viscountess Colambre — so haste to the wedding! And there's another thing: they say the rich ould grandfather's coming over; — and another thing, Pat, you would not be out of the fashion. And you see it's growing the fashion, not to be an Absentee!"

If there be any of our readers who is not moved with delight and admiration in the perusal of this letter, we must say, that we have but a poor opinion either of his taste or his moral sensibility; and shall think all the better of ourselves, in future, for appearing tedious in his eyes. For our own parts, we do not know whether we envy the author most, for the rare talent she has shown in this description, or for the *experience* by which its materials have been supplied. She not only makes us know and love the Irish nation far better than any other writer, but seems to us more qualified than most others to promote the knowledge and the love of mankind.

WAVERLEY.

(NOVEMBER, 1814.)

Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since. In three volumes 12mo. Pp. 1112. Third Edition. Edinburgh, 1814.*

It is wonderful what genius and adherence to nature will do, in spite of all disadvantages.

* I have been a good deal at a loss what to do with these famous novels of Sir Walter. On the one hand, I could not bring myself to let this collection go forth, without *some* notice of works which, for many years together, had occupied and delighted me more than any thing else that ever came under my critical survey: while, on the other, I could not but feel that it would be absurd, and in some sense almost dishonest, to fill these pages with long citations from books which, for the last twenty-five years, have been in the hands of at least fifty times as many readers as are ever likely to look into this publication — and are still as familiar to the generation which has last come into existence, as to those who can yet remember the sensation produced by their first appearance. In point of fact I was informed, but the other day, by Mr. Cadell, that he had actually sold not less than *sixty thousand volumes* of these extraordinary productions, in the course of the preceding year! and that the demand for them, instead of slackening — had been for some time sensibly on the increase. In these circumstances I think I may safely assume that their contents are still so perfectly known as not to require any citations to introduce such of the remarks originally made on them as I may now wish to repeat. And I have therefore come to the determination of omitting almost all the quotations, and most of the detailed abstracts which appeared in the original reviews; and to retain only the general criticism, and character, or estimate of each performance — together with such incidental observations as may have been suggested by the tenor or success of these wonderful productions. By this course, no doubt, a sad shrinking will be effected in the primitive dimensions of the articles which are here reproduced; and may probably give to what is retained something of a naked and jejune appearance. If it should be so, I can only say that I do not see how I could have helped it: and after all it may

Here is a thing obviously very hastily, and, in many places, somewhat unskilfully written — composed, one half of it, in a dialect unintelligible to four-fifths of the reading population of the country—relating to a period too recent to be romantic, and too far gone by to be familiar — and published, moreover, in a quarter of the island where materials and talents for novel-writing have been supposed to be equally wanting: and yet, by the mere force and truth and vivacity of its colouring, already casting the whole tribe of ordinary novels into the shade, and taking its place rather with the most popular of our modern poems, than with the rubbish of provincial romances.

The secret of this success, we take it, is merely that the author is a man of Genius; and that he has, notwithstanding, had virtue enough to be true to Nature throughout; and to content himself, even in the marvellous parts of his story, with copying from actual existences, rather than from the phantasms of his own imagination. The charm which this communicates to all works that deal in the representation of human actions and character, is more readily felt than understood; and operates with unfailing efficacy even upon those who have no acquaintance with the originals from which the picture has been borrowed. It requires no ordinary talent, indeed, to choose such realities as may outshine the bright imaginations of the inventive, and so to combine them as to produce the most advantageous effect; but when this is once accomplished, the result is sure to be something more firm, impressive, and engaging, than can ever be produced by mere fiction.

The object of the work before us, was evidently to present a faithful and animated picture of the manners and state of society that prevailed in this northern part of the island, in the earlier part of last century; and the author has judiciously fixed upon the era of the Rebellion in 1745, not only as enriching his pages with the interest inseparably attached to the narration of such occurrences, but as affording a fair opportunity for bringing out all the contrasted principles and habits which distinguished the different classes of persons who then divided the country, and formed among them the basis of almost all that was peculiar in the national character. That unfortunate contention brought conspicuously to light, and for the last time, the fading image of feudal chivalry in the mountains, and vulgar fanaticism in the plains; and startled the more polished parts of the land with the wild but brilliant picture of the devoted valour, incorruptible fidelity, patriarchal brotherhood, and savage habits, of the Celtic clans, on the one hand,—and the dark, intractable, and domineering bigotry of the Covenanters on the other. Both aspects of society had indeed been formerly prevalent in other parts of the country, — but had there been so long superseded by more peaceful habits, and milder manners, that their vestiges were almost effaced, and their very memory nearly extinguished. The feudal principalities had been destroyed in the South, for near 300 years, — and the dominion of the Puritans from the time of the Restoration. When the glens and banded clans, of the central Highlands, therefore, were opened up to the gaze of the English, in the course of that insurrection, it seemed as if they were carried back to the days of the Heptarchy; — and when they saw the array of the West country Whigs, they might imagine themselves transported to the age of Cromwell. The effect, indeed, is almost as startling at the present moment; and one great source of the interest which the volumes before us undoubtedly possess, is to be sought in the surprise that is excited by discovering, that in our own country, and almost in our own age, manners and characters existed, and were conspicuous, which

not be altogether without interest to see, from a contemporary record, what were the first impressions produced by the appearance of this new luminary on our horizon; while the secret of the authorship was yet undivulged, and before the rapid accumulation of its glories had forced on the dullest spectator a sense of its magnitude and power. I may venture perhaps also to add, that some of the general speculations of which these reviews suggested the occasion, may probably be found as well worth preserving as most of those which have been elsewhere embodied in this experimental, and somewhat hazardous, publication.

Though living in familiar intercourse with Sir Walter, I need scarcely say that I was not in the secret of his authorship; and in truth had no assurance of the fact, till the time of its public promulgation.

we had been accustomed to consider as belonging to remote antiquity, or extravagant romance.

The way in which they are here represented must satisfy every reader, we think, by an inward *tact* and conviction, that the delineation has been made from actual experience and observation; — experience and observation employed perhaps only on a few surviving relics and specimens of what was familiar a little earlier, — but generalized from instances sufficiently numerous and complete, to warrant all that may have been added to the portrait. — And, indeed, the existing records and vestiges of the more extraordinary parts of the representation are still sufficiently abundant, to satisfy all who have the means of consulting them, as to the perfect accuracy of the picture. The great traits of Clannish dependence, pride and fidelity, may still be detected in many districts of the Highlands, though they do not now adhere to the chieftains when they mingle in general society; and the existing contentions of Burghers, and Antiburghers, and Cameronians, though shrunk into comparative insignificance, and left, indeed, without protection to the ridicule of the profane, may still be referred to, as complete verifications of all that is here stated about Gifted Gilfillan, or Ebenezer Cruikshank. The traits of Scottish national character in the lower ranks, can still less be regarded as antiquated or traditional; nor is there any thing in the whole compass of the work which gives us a stronger impression of the nice observation and graphical talent of the author, than the extraordinary fidelity and felicity with which all the inferior agents in the story are represented. No one who has not lived extensively among the lower orders of all descriptions, and made himself familiar with their various tempers and dialects, can perceive the full merit of those rapid and characteristic sketches; but it requires only a general knowledge of human nature, to feel that they must be faithful copies from known originals; and to be aware of the extraordinary facility and flexibility of hand which has touched, for instance, with such discriminating shades, the various gradations of the Celtic character, from the savage imperturbability of Dugald Mahony, who stalks grimly about with his battle-axe on his shoulder, without speaking a word to any one, — to the lively unprincipled activity of Callum Beg, — the coarse unreflecting hardihood and heroism of Evan Maccombich, — and the pride, gallantry, elegance, and ambition of Fergus himself. In the lower class of the Lowland characters, again, the vulgarity of Mrs. Flockhart and of Lieutenant Jinker is perfectly distinct and original; — as well as the puritanism of Gilfillan and Cruikshank — the atrocity of Mrs. Mucklewrath — and the slow solemnity of Alexander Saunderson. The Baron of Bradwardine, and Baillie Macwheeble, are caricatures no doubt, after the fashion of the caricatures in the novels of Smollett, — or pictures, at the best, of individuals who must always have been unique and extraordinary: but almost all the other personages in the history are fair representatives of classes that are still existing, or may be remembered at least to have existed, by many whose recollections do not extend quite so far back as to the year 1745.

Waverley is the representative of an old and opulent Jacobite family in the centre of England — educated at home in an irregular manner, and living, till the age of majority, mostly in the retirement of his paternal mansion — where he reads poetry, feeds his fancy with romantic musings, and acquires amiable dispositions, and something of a contemplative, passive, and undecided character. All the English adherents of the abdicated family having renounced any serious hopes of their cause long before the year 1745, the guardians of young Waverley were induced, in that celebrated year, to allow him to enter into the army, as the nation was then engaged in foreign war — and a passion for military glory had always been characteristic of his line. He obtains a commission, accordingly, in a regiment of horse, then stationed in Scotland, and proceeds forthwith to head-quarters. Cosmo Comyne Bradwardine, Esq., of Tulley-Veolan in Perthshire, had been an antient friend of the house of Waverley, and had been enabled, by their good offices, to get over a very awkward rencontre with the King's Attorney-General soon after the year 1715. The young heir was accordingly furnished with credentials to this faithful ally; and took an early opportunity of paying his respects at the

ancient mansion of Tully-Veolan. The house and its inhabitants, and their way of life, are admirably described. The Baron himself had been bred a lawyer; and was, by choice, a diligent reader of the Latin classics. His profession, however, was that of arms; and having served several campaigns on the Continent, he had superadded, to the pedantry and jargon of his forensic and academical studies, the technical slang of a German martinet — and a sprinkling of the coxcombry of a French mousquetaire. He was, moreover, prodigiously proud of his ancestry; and, with all his peculiarities, which, to say the truth, are rather more than can be decently accumulated in one character, was a most honourable, valiant, and friendly person. He had one fair daughter, and no more — who was gentle, feminine, and affectionate. Waverley, though struck at first with the strange manners of this northern baron, is at length domesticated in the family; and is led, by curiosity, to pay a visit to the cave of a famous Highland robber or freebooter, from which he is conducted to the castle of a neighbouring chieftain, and sees the Highland life in all its barbarous but captivating characters. This chief is Fergus Vich Ian Vohr — a gallant and ambitious youth, zealously attached to the cause of the exiled family, and busy, at the moment, in fomenting the insurrection, by which his sanguine spirit never doubted that their restoration was to be effected. He has a sister still more enthusiastically devoted to the same cause — recently returned from a residence at the Court of France, and dazzling the romantic imagination of Waverley not less by the exaltation of her sentiments, than his eyes by her elegance and beauty. While he lingers in this perilous retreat, he is suddenly deprived of his commission, in consequence of some misunderstandings and misrepresentations which it is unnecessary to detail; and in the first heat of his indignation, is almost tempted to throw himself into the array of the Children of Ivor, and join the insurgents, whose designs are no longer seriously disguised from him. He takes, however, the more prudent resolution of returning, in the first place, to his family; but is stopped, on the borders of the Highlands, by the magistracy, whom rumours of coming events had made more than usually suspicious, and forwarded as a prisoner to Stirling. On the march he is rescued by a band of unknown Highlanders, who ultimately convey him in safety to Edinburgh, and deposit him in the hands of his friend Fergus Mac-Ivor, who was mounting guard with his Highlanders at the ancient palace of Holyrood, where the Royal Adventurer was then actually holding his court. A combination of temptations, far too powerful for such a temper, now beset Waverley; and, inflamed at once by the ill-usage he thought he had received from the government — the recollections of his hereditary predilections — his friendship and admiration of Fergus — his love for his sister — and the graceful condescension and personal solicitations of the unfortunate Prince — he rashly vows to unite his fortunes with theirs, and enters as a volunteer in the ranks of the Children of Ivor.

During his attendance at the court of Holyrood, his passion for the magnanimous Flora is gradually abated by her continued indifference, and too entire devotion to the public cause; and his affections gradually decline upon Miss Bradwardine, who has leisure for less important concernments. He accompanies the Adventurer's army, and signalizes himself in the battle of Preston, — where he has the good fortune to save the life of an English officer, who turns out to be an intimate friend of his family, and remonstrates with him with considerable effect on the rash step he has taken. It is now impossible, however, he thinks, to recede with honour; and he pursues the disastrous career of the invaders into England — during which he quarrels with, and is again reconciled to Fergus — till he is finally separated from his corps in the confusion and darkness of the night-skirmish at Clifton — and, after lurking for some time in concealment, finds his way to London, where he is protected by the grateful friend whose life he had saved at Preston, and sent back to Scotland till some arrangements could be made about his pardon. Here he learns the final discomfiture of his former associates — is fortunate enough to obtain both his own pardon and that of old Bradwardine—and, after making sure of his interest in the heart of the young lady, at last bethinks him of going to give an account of himself to his family at Waverley-Honour. — In his way, he attends

the assizes at Carlisle, where all his efforts are ineffectual to avert the fate of his gallant friend Fergus — whose heroic demeanour in that last extremity is depicted with great feeling; — has a last interview with the desolated Flora — obtains the consent of his friends to his marriage with Miss Bradwardine — puts the old Baron in possession of his forfeited manor, and, in due time, carries his blooming bride to the peaceful shades of his own paternal abode.

Such is the outline of the story; — although it is broken and diversified with so many subordinate incidents, that what we have now given will afford but a very inadequate idea even of the narrative part of the performance. Though that narrative is always lively and easy, the great charm of the work consists, undoubtedly, in the characters and descriptions — though we can scarcely venture to present our readers with more than a single specimen; and we select, as one of the most characteristic, the account of Waverley's night visit to the cave of the Highland freebooter.

" In a short time, he found himself on the banks of a large river or lake, where his conductor gave him to understand they must sit down for a little while. The moon, which now began to rise, showed obscurely the expanse of water which spread before them, and the shapeless and indistinct forms of mountains, with which it seemed to be surrounded. The cool, and yet mild air of the summer night, refreshed Waverley after his rapid and toilsome walk; and the perfume which it wafted from the birch trees, bathed in the evening dew, was exquisitely fragrant.

" He had now time to give himself up to the full romance of his situation. Here he sate on the banks of an unknown lake, under the guidance of a wild native, whose language was unknown to him, on a visit to the den of some renowned outlaw, a second Robin Hood perhaps, or Adam o' Gordon, and that at deep midnight, through scenes of difficulty and toil, separated from his attendant, and left by his guide.

" While wrapt in these dreams of imagination, his companion gently touched him, and pointing in a direction nearly straight across the lake, said, 'Yon's ta cove.' A small point of light was seen to twinkle in the direction in which he pointed, and, gradually increasing in size and lustre, seemed to flicker like a meteor upon the verge of the horizon. While Edward watched this phenomenon, the distant dash of oars was heard. The measur'd splash arrived near and more near; and presently a loud whistle was heard in the same direction. His friend with the battle-axe immediately whistled clear and shrill, in reply to the signal; and a boat, manned with four or five Highlanders, pushed for a little inlet, near which Edward was seated. He advanced to meet them with his attendant; was immediately assisted into the boat by the officious attention of two stout mountaineers; and had no sooner seated himself, than they resumed their oars, and began to row across the lake with great rapidity.

" The party preserved silence, interrupted only by the monotonous and murmured chant of a Gaelic song, sung in a kind of low recitative by the steersman, and by the dash of the oars, which the notes seemed to regulate, as they dipped to them in cadence. The light, which they now approached more nearly, assumed a broader, redder, and more irregular splendour. It appeared plainly to be a large fire, but whether kindled upon an island or the mainland, Edward could not determine. As he saw it, the red glaring orb seemed to rest on the very surface of the lake itself, and resembled the fiery vehicle in which the Evil Genius of an oriental tale traverses land and sea. They approached nearer; and the light of the fire sufficed to show that it was kindled at the bottom of a huge dark crag or rock, rising abruptly from the very edge of the water; its front, changed by the reflection to dusky red, formed a strange and even awful contrast to the banks around, which were from time to time faintly and partially enlightened by pallid moonlight.

" The boat now neared the shore, and Edward could discover that this large fire was kindled in the jaws of a lofty cavern, into which an inlet from the lake seemed to advance; and he conjectured, which was indeed true, that the fire had been kindled as a beacon to the boatmen on their return. They rowed right for the mouth of the cave; and then shipping their oars, permitted the boat to enter with the impulse which it had received. The skiff passed the little point, or platform of rock on which the fire was blazing, and running about two boats' length farther, stopped where the cavern, for it was already arched overhead, ascended from the water by five or six broad ledges of rock, so easy and regular that they might be termed natural steps. At this moment, a quantity of water was suddenly flung upon the fire, which sunk with a hissing noise, and with it disappeared the light it had hitherto afforded. Four or five active arms lifted Waverley out of the boat, placed him on his feet, and almost carried him into the recesses of the cave. He made a few paces in darkness, guided in this manner; and advancing towards a hum of voices, which seemed to sound from the centre of the rock, at an acute turn Donald Bean Lean and his whole establishment were before his eyes.

" The interior of the cave, which here rose very high, was illuminated by torches made of pine-tree, which emitted a bright and bickering light, attended by a strong, though not unpleasant odour. Their light was assisted by the red glare of a large charcoal fire, round which were seated five or six armed Highlanders, while others were indistinctly seen couched on their plaids, in the more remote recesses of the cavern. In one large aperture, which the robber

facetiously called his *spence* (or pantry); there hung by the heels the carcases of a sheep or ewe, and two cows, lately slaughtered.

"Being placed at a convenient distance from the charcoal fire, the heat of which the season rendered oppressive, a strapping Highland damsel placed before Waverley, Evan, and Donald Bean, three cogues, or wooden vessels, composed of staves and hoops, containing *imrigh*, a sort of strong soup made out of a particular part of the inside of the beeves. After this refreshment, which, though coarse, fatigue and hunger rendered palatable, steaks, roasted on the coals, were supplied in liberal abundance, and disappeared before Evan Dhu and their host with a promptitude that seemed like magic, and astonished Waverley, who was much puzzled to reconcile their voracity with what he had heard of the abstemiousness of the Highlanders. — A heath pallet, with the flowers stuck uppermost, had been prepared for him in a recess of the cave; and here, covered with such spare plaids as could be mustered, he lay for some time watching the motions of the other inhabitants of the cavern. Small parties of two or three entered or left the place without any other ceremony than a few words in Gaelic to the principal outlaw, and when he fell asleep, to a tall Highlander who acted as his Lieutenant, and seemed to keep watch during his repose. Those who entered seemed to have returned from some excursion, of which they reported the success, and went without farther ceremony to the larder, where cutting with their dirks their rations from the carcases which were there suspended, they proceeded to broil and eat them at their own time and leisure.

"At length the fluctuating groups began to swim before the eyes of our hero as they gradually closed; nor did he re-open them till the morning sun was high on the lake without, though there was but a faint and glimmering twilight in the recesses of Uaimh an Ri, or the King's cavern, as the abode of Donald Bean Lean was proudly denominated.

"When Edward had collected his scattered recollection, he was surprised to observe the cavern totally deserted. Having arisen and put his dress in some order, he looked more accurately around him, but all was still solitary. If it had not been for the decayed brands of the fire, now sunk into grey ashes, and the remnants of the festival, consisting of bones half burned and half gnawed, and an empty keg or two, there remained no traces of Donald and his band.

"Near to the mouth of the cave he heard the notes of a lively Gaelic song, guided by which, in a sunny recess, shaded by a glittering birch tree, and carpetted with a bank of firm white sand, he found the damsel of the cavern, whose lay had already reached him, busy to the best of her power, in arranging to advantage a morning repast of milk, eggs, barley bread, fresh butter, and honeycomb. The poor girl had made a circuit of four miles that morning in search of the eggs, of the meal which baked her cakes and of the other materials of the breakfast, being all delicacies which she had to beg or borrow from distant cottagers. The followers of Donald Bean Lean used little food except the flesh of the animals which they drove away from the Lowlands; bread itself was a delicacy seldom thought of, because hard to be obtained; and all the domestic accommodations of milk, poultry, butter, &c. were out of the question in this Scythian camp. Yet it must not be omitted, that although Alice had occupied a part of the morning in providing those accommodations for her guest which the cavern did not afford, she had secured time also to arrange her own person in her best trim. Her finery was very simple. A short russet-coloured jacket, and a petticoat of scanty longitude, was her whole dress; but these were clean, and neatly arranged. A piece of scarlet embroidered cloth, called the *snood*, confined her hair, which fell over it in a profusion of rich dark curls. The scarlet plaid, which formed part of her dress, was laid aside, that it might not impede her activity in attending the stranger. I should forget Alice's proudest ornament were I to omit mentioning a pair of gold ear-rings, and a golden rosary which her father (for she was the daughter of Donald Bean Lean) had brought from France — the plunder probably of some battle or storm.

"Her form, though rather large for her years, was very well proportioned, and her demeanour had a natural and rustic grace, with nothing of the sheepishness of an ordinary peasant. The smiles, displaying a row of teeth of exquisite whiteness, and the laughing eyes, with which, in dumb-show, she gave Waverley that morning greeting which she wanted English words to express, might have been interpreted by a coxcomb, or perhaps a young soldier, who, without being such, was conscious of a handsome person, as meant to convey more than the courtesy of a hostess. Nor do I take it upon me to say, that the little wild mountaineer would have welcomed any staid old gentleman advanced in life, the Baron of Bradwardine, for example, with the cheerful pains which she bestowed upon Edward's accommodation. She seemed eager to place him by the meal which she had so sedulously arranged, and to which she now added a few bunches of cranberries, gathered in an adjacent morass. Having had the satisfaction of seeing him seated at his breakfast, she placed herself demurely upon a stone at a few yards' distance, and appeared to watch with great complacency for some opportunity of serving him.

"Meanwhile Alice had made up in a small basket what she thought worth removing, and flinging her plaid around her, she advanced up to Edward, and, with the utmost simplicity, taking hold of his hand, offered her cheek to his salute, dropping, at the same time, her little courtesy. Evan, who was esteemed a wag among the mountain fair, advanced, as if to secure a similar favour; but Alice, snatching up her basket, escaped up the rocky bank as fleetly as a deer, and, turning round and laughing, called something out to him in Gaelic, which he answered in the same tone and language; then waving her hand to Edward, she resumed her road, and was soon lost among the

thickets, though they continued for some time to hear her lively carol, as she proceeded gaily on her solitary journey." — Vol. i. pp. 240—270.

The gay scenes of the Adventurer's court — the breaking up of his army from Edinburgh — the battle of Preston — and the whole process of his disastrous advance and retreat from the English provinces, are given with the greatest brilliancy and effect — as well as the scenes of internal disorder and rising disunion that prevailed in his scanty army — the quarrel with Fergus — and the mystical visions by which that devoted chieftain foresees his disastrous fate. The lower scenes again with Mrs. Flockhart, Mrs. Nosebag, Callum-Beg, and the Cumberland peasants, though to some fastidious readers they may appear coarse and disgusting, are painted with a force and a truth to nature, which equally bespeak the powers of the artist, and are incomparably superior to any thing of the sort which has been offered to the public for the last "sixty years." There are also various copies of verses scattered through the work, which indicate poetical talents of no ordinary description — though bearing, perhaps still more distinctly than the prose, the traces of considerable carelessness and haste.

The worst part of the book by far is that portion of the first volume which contains the history of the hero's residence in England — and next to it is the laborious, tardy, and obscure explanation of some puzzling occurrences in the story, which the reader would, in general, be much better pleased to be permitted to forget — and which are neither well explained after all, nor at all worth explaining.

There has been much speculation, at least in this quarter of the island, about the authorship of this singular performance — and certainly it is not easy to conjecture why it is still anonymous. — Judging by internal evidence, to which alone we pretend to have access, we should not scruple to ascribe it to the highest of those authors to whom it has been assigned by the sagacious conjectures of the public; — and this at least we will venture to say, that if it be indeed the work of an author hitherto unknown, Mr. Scott would do well to look to his laurels, and to rouse himself for a sturdier competition than any he has yet had to encounter!

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

(March, 1817.)

Tales of my Landlord, collected and arranged by Jedediah Cleishbotham, Schoolmaster and Parish Clerk of the Parish of Gandercleugh. 4 vols. 12mo. Edinburgh, 1816.

This, we think, is beyond all question a new coinage from the mint which produced Waverley, Guy Mannering, and the Antiquary; — for though it does not bear the legend and superscription of the Master on the face of the pieces, there is no mistaking either the quality of the metal or the execution of the die — and even the private mark, we doubt not, may be seen plain enough, by those who know how to look for it. It is quite impossible to read ten pages of this work, in short, without feeling that it belongs to the same school with those very remarkable productions; and no one who has any knowledge of nature, or of art, will ever doubt that it is an original. The very identity of the leading characters in the whole set of stories, is a stronger proof, perhaps, that those of the last series are *not* copied from the former, than even the freshness and freedom of the draperies with which they are now invested — or the ease and spirit of the new groups into which they are here combined. No imitator would have ventured so near his originals, and yet come off so entirely clear of them: and we are only the more assured that the old acquaintances we continually recognize in these volumes, are really the persons they pretend to be, and no false mimics, that we recollect so perfectly to have seen them before, — or at least to have been familiar with some of their near relations!

We have often been astonished at the quantity of talent — of invention, observation, and knowledge of character, as well as of spirited and graceful composition, that may be found in those works of fiction in our language, which are generally regarded as among the lower productions of our literature, — upon which no great pains is understood to be bestowed, and which are seldom regarded as titles to a permanent reputation. If Novels, however, are not fated to last as long as Epic poems, they are at least a great deal more

popular in their season; and, slight as their structure, and imperfect as their finishing may often be thought in comparison, we have no hesitation in saying, that the better specimens of the art are incomparably more entertaining, and considerably more instructive. The great objection to them, indeed, is, that they are too entertaining — and are so pleasant in the reading, as to be apt to produce a disrelish for other kinds of reading, which may be more necessary, and can in no way be made so agreeable. Neither science nor authentic history, nor political nor professional instruction, can be rightly conveyed, we fear, in a pleasant tale; and, therefore, all those things are in danger of appearing dull and uninteresting to the votaries of these more seductive studies. Among the most popular of these popular productions that have appeared in our times, we must rank the works to which we have just alluded; and we do not hesitate to say, that they are well entitled to that distinction. They are, indeed, in many respects, very extraordinary performances — though in nothing more extraordinary than in having remained so long unclaimed. There is no name, we think, in our literature, to which they would not add lustre — and lustre, too, of a very enviable kind; for they not only show great talent, but infinite good sense and good nature, — a more vigorous and wide-reaching intellect than is often displayed in novels, and a more powerful fancy, and a deeper sympathy with various passion, than is often combined with such strength of understanding.

The author, whoever he is, has a truly graphic and creative power in the invention and delineation of characters — which he sketches with an ease, and colours with a brilliancy, and scatters about with a profusion, which reminds us of Shakspeare himself. Yet with all this force and felicity in the representation of living agents, he has the eye of a poet for all the striking aspects of external nature; and usually contrives, both in his scenery and in the groups with which it is enlivened, to combine the picturesque with the natural, with a grace that has rarely been attained by artists so copious and rapid. His narrative, in this way, is kept constantly full of life, variety, and colour; and is so interspersed with glowing descriptions, and lively allusions, and flying traits of sagacity and pathos, as not only to keep our attention continually awake, but to afford a pleasing exercise to most of our other faculties. The prevailing tone is very gay and pleasant; but the author's most remarkable, and, perhaps, his most delightful talent, is that of representing kindness of heart in union with lightness of spirits and great simplicity of character, and of blending the expression of warm and generous and exalted affections with scenes and persons that are in themselves both lowly and ludicrous. This gift he shares with his illustrious countryman Burns — as he does many of the other qualities we have mentioned with another living poet, — who is only inferior, perhaps, in that to which we have last alluded. It is very honourable, indeed, we think, both to the author, and to the readers among whom he is so extremely popular, that the great interest of his pieces is for the most part a Moral interest — that the concern we take in his favourite characters is less on account of their adventures than of their amiableness — and that the great charm of his works is derived from the kindness of heart, the capacity of generous emotions, and the lights of native taste which he ascribes, so lavishly, and at the same time with such an air of truth and familiarity, even to the humblest of these favourites. With all his relish for the ridiculous, accordingly, there is no tone of misanthropy, or even of sarcasm, in his representations; but, on the contrary, a great indulgence and relenting even towards those who are to be the objects of our disapprobation. There is no keen or cold-blooded satire — no bitterness of heart, or fierceness of resentment, in any part of his writings. His love of ridicule is little else than a love of mirth; and savours throughout of the joyous temperament in which it appears to have its origin; while the buoyancy of a raised and poetical imagination lifts him continually above the region of mere jollity and good humour, to which a taste, by no means nice or fastidious, might otherwise be in danger of sinking him. He is evidently a person of a very sociable and liberal spirit — with great habits of observation — who has ranged pretty extensively through the varieties of human life and character, and mingled with them all, not only with intelligent familiarity, but with a

free and natural sympathy for all the diversities of their tastes, pleasures, and pursuits — one who has kept his heart as well as his eyes open to all that has offered itself to engage them; and learned indulgence for human faults and follies, not only from finding kindred faults in their most intolerant censors, but also for the sake of the virtues by which they are often redeemed, and the sufferings by which they have still oftener been chastised. The temper of his writings, in short, is precisely the reverse of those of our Laureates and Lakers, who, being themselves the most whimsical of mortals, make it a conscience to loathe and abhor all with whom they happen to disagree; and labour to promote mutual animosity and all manner of uncharitableness among mankind; by referring every supposed error of taste, or peculiarity of opinion, to some hateful corruption of the heart and understanding.

With all the indulgence, however, which we so justly ascribe to him, we are far from complaining of the writer before us for being too neutral and undecided on the great subjects which are most apt to engender excessive zeal and intolerance — and we are almost as far from agreeing with him as to most of those subjects. In politics it is sufficiently manifest that he is a decided Tory — and, we are afraid, something of a latitudinarian both in morals and religion. He is very apt at least to make a mock of all enthusiasm for liberty or faith — and not only gives a decided preference to the social over the austerer virtues — but seldom expresses any warm or hearty admiration, except for those graceful and gentleman-like principles, which can generally be acted upon with a gay countenance — and do not imply any great effort of self-denial, or any deep sense of the rights of others, or the helplessness and humility of our common nature. Unless we misconstrue very grossly the indications in these volumes, the author thinks no time so happy as those in which an indulgent monarch awards a reasonable portion of liberty to grateful subjects, who do not call in question his right either to give or to withhold it — in which a dignified and decent hierarchy receives the homage of their submissive and uninquiring flocks — and a gallant nobility redeems the venial immoralities of their gayer hours, by brave and honourable conduct towards each other, and spontaneous kindness to vassals, in whom they recognize no independent rights, and not many features of a common nature.

It is very remarkable, however, that, with propensities thus decidedly aristocratical, the ingenious author has succeeded by far the best in the representation of rustic and homely characters; — and not in the ludicrous or contemptuous representation of them — but by making them at once more natural and more interesting than they had ever been made before in any work of fiction; by showing them, not as clowns to be laughed at — or wretches to be pitied and despised — but as human creatures, with as many pleasures and fewer cares than their superiors — with affections not only as strong, but often as delicate as those whose language is smoother — and with a vein of humour, a force of sagacity, and very frequently an elevation of fancy, as high and as natural as can be met with among more cultivated beings. The great merit of all these delineations, is their admirable truth and fidelity — the whole manner and cast of the characters being accurately moulded on their condition — and the finer attributes that are ascribed to them so blended and harmonized with the native rudeness and simplicity of their life and occupations, that they are made interesting and even noble beings, without the least particle of foppery or exaggeration, and delight and amuse us, without trespassing at all on the province of pastoral or romance.

Next to these, we think, he has found his happiest subjects, or at least displayed his greatest powers, in the delineation of the grand and gloomy aspects of nature, and of the dark and fierce passions of the heart. The natural gaiety of his temper does not indeed allow him to dwell long on such themes; — but the sketches he occasionally introduces, are executed with admirable force and spirit, — and give a strong impression both of the vigour of his imagination, and the variety of his talent. It is only in the third rank that we would place his pictures of chivalry and chivalrous character — his traits of gallantry, nobleness, and honour,—and that bewitching combination of gay and gentle manners, with generosity, candour, and courage, which has long been

familiar enough to readers and writers of novels, but had never before been represented with such an air of truth, and so much ease and happiness of execution.

Among his faults and failures, we must give the first place to his descriptions of virtuous young ladies — and his representations of the ordinary business of courtship and conversation in polished life. We admit that those things, as they are commonly conducted in real life, are apt to be a little insipid to a mere critical spectator; — and that while they consequently require more heightening than strange adventures or grotesque persons, they admit less of exaggeration or ambitious ornament: — yet we cannot think it necessary that they should be altogether so tame and mawkish as we generally find them in the hands of this spirited writer, — whose powers really seem to require some stronger stimulus to bring them into action, than can be supplied by the flat realities of a peaceful and ordinary existence. His love of the ludicrous, it must also be observed, often betrays him into forced and vulgar exaggerations, and into the repetition of common and paltry stories, — though it is but fair to add, that he does not detain us long with them, and makes amends by the copiousness of his assortment for the indifferent quality of some of the specimens. It is another consequence of this extreme abundance in which he revels and riots, and of the fertility of the imagination from which it is supplied, that he is at all times a little apt to overdo even those things which he does best. His most striking and highly coloured characters appear rather too often, and go on rather too long. It is astonishing, indeed, with what spirit they are supported, and how fresh and animated they are to the very last; — but still there is something too much of them, — and they would be more waited for and welcomed, if they were not quite so lavish of their presence. — It was reserved for Shakspeare alone, to leave all his characters as new and unworn as he found them, — and to carry Falstaff through the business of three several plays, and leave us as greedy of his sayings as at the moment of his first introduction. It is no light praise to the author before us, that he has sometimes reminded us of this, as well as other inimitable excellences in that most gifted of all inventors.

To complete this hasty and unpremeditated sketch of his general characteristics, we must add, that he is above all things national and Scottish — and never seems to feel the powers of a giant, except when he touches his native soil. His countrymen alone, therefore, can have a full sense of his merits, or a perfect relish of his excellences; — and those only, indeed, of them, who have mingled, as he has done, pretty freely with the lower orders, and made themselves familiar not only with their language, but with the habits and traits of character, of which it then only becomes expressive. It is one thing to understand the meaning of words, as they are explained by other words in a glossary, and another to know their value, as expressive of certain feelings and humours in the speakers to whom they are native, and as signs both of temper and condition among those who are familiar with their import.

We must content ourselves, we fear, with this hasty and superficial sketch of the general character of this author's performances, in the place of a more detailed examination of those which he has given to the public since we first announced him as the author of Waverley. The time for noticing his two intermediate works has been permitted to go by so far, that it would probably be difficult to recall the public attention to them with any effect; and, at all events, impossible to affect, by any observations of ours, the judgment which has been passed upon them, with very little assistance, we must say, from professed critics, by the mass of their intelligent readers, — by whom, indeed, we have no doubt that they are, by this time, as well known, and as correctly estimated, as if they had been indebted to us for their first impressions on the subject. For our own parts we must confess, that *Waverley* still has to us all the fascination of a first love! and that we cannot help thinking, that the greatness of the public transactions in which that story was involved, as well as the wildness and picturesque graces of its Highland scenery and characters, have invested it with a charm, to which the more familiar attractions of the other pieces have not quite come up. In this, perhaps, our opinion differs from that of better judges; but we cannot help suspecting, that the latter publications are most

admired by many, at least in the southern part of the island, only because they are more easily and perfectly understood, in consequence of the training which had been gone through in the perusal of the former. But, however that be, we are far enough from denying that the two succeeding works are performances of extraordinary merit, — and are willing even to admit, that they show quite as much power and genius in the author — though, to our taste at least, the subjects are less happily selected.

Dandie Dinmont is, beyond all question, we think, the best rustic portrait that has ever yet been exhibited to the public—the most honourable to rustics, and the most creditable to the heart, as well as the genius of the artist—the truest to nature—the most interesting and the most complete in all its lineaments.—Meg Merrilees belongs more to the department of poetry. She is most akin to the witches of Macbeth, with some traits of the ancient Sybil engrafted on the coarser stock of a Gipsy of the last century. Though not absolutely in nature, however, she must be allowed to be a very imposing and emphatic personage; and to be mingled, both with the business and the scenery of the piece, with the greatest possible skill and effect.—Pleydell is a harsh caricature; and Dirk Hatterick a vulgar bandit of the German school. The lovers, too, are rather more faultless and more insipid than usual,—and all the genteel persons, indeed, not a little fatiguing. Yet there are many passages of great merit of a gentler and less obtrusive character. The grief of old Ellengowan for the loss of his child, and the picture of his own dotage and death, are very touching and natural; while the many descriptions of the coast scenery, and of the various localities of the story, are given with a freedom, force, and effect, that bring every feature before our eyes, and impress us with an irresistible conviction of their reality.

The Antiquary is, perhaps, on the whole, less interesting, — though there are touches in it equal, if not superior, to any thing that occurs in either of the other works. The adventure of the tide and night storm under the cliffs, we do not hesitate to pronounce the very best description we ever met with, — in verse or in prose, in ancient or in modern writing. Old Edie is of the family of Meg Merrilees, — a younger brother, we confess, with less terror and energy, and more taste and gaiety, but equally a poetical embellishment of a familiar character; and yet resting enough on the great points of nature, to be blended without extravagance in the transactions of beings so perfectly natural and thoroughly alive that no suspicion can be entertained of *their* reality. The Antiquary himself is the great blemish of the work, — at least in so far as he is an Antiquary: — though we must say for him, that, unlike most oddities, he wearies us most at first; and is so managed, as to turn out both more interesting and more amusing than we had any reason to expect. The low characters in this book are not always worth drawing; but they are exquisitely finished; and prove the extent and accuracy of the author's acquaintance with human life and human nature. — The family of the fisherman is an exquisite group throughout; and, at the scene of the funeral, in the highest degree striking and pathetic. Dousterswivel is as wearisome as the genuine Spurzheim himself: and the tragic story of the Lord is, on the whole, a miscarriage; though interspersed with passages of great force and energy. The *dénouement*, which connects it with the active hero of the piece, is altogether forced and unnatural.—We come now, at once, to the work immediately before us.

The Tales of My Landlord, though they fill four volumes, are, as yet, but two in number; the one being three times as long, and ten times as interesting as the other. The introduction, from which the general title is derived, is as foolish and clumsy as may be; and is another instance of that occasional imbecility, or self-willed caprice, which every now and then leads this author, before he gets afloat on the full stream of his narration, into absurdities which excite the astonishment of the least gifted of his readers. This whole prologue of My Landlord, which is vulgar in the conception, trite and lame in the execution, and utterly out of harmony with the stories to which it is prefixed, should be entirely retrenched in the future editions; and the two novels, which have as little connection with each other as with this ill-fancied prelude, given separately to the world, each under its own denomination.

The first, which is comprised in one volume, is called "The Black Dwarf"—and is, in every respect, the least considerable of the family—though very plainly of the legitimate race—and possessing merits, which, in any other company, would have entitled it to no slight distinction. The Dwarf himself is a little too much like the hero of a fairy tale; and the structure and contrivance of the story, in general, would bear no small affinity to that meritorious and edifying class of compositions, was it not for the nature of the details, and the quality of the other persons to whom they relate—who are as real, intelligible, and tangible beings as those with whom we are made familiar in the course of the author's former productions. Indeed they are very apparently the same sort of people, and come here before us again with all the recommendations of old acquaintance. The outline of the story is soon told. The scene is laid among the Elliots and Johnstons of the Scottish border, and in the latter part of Queen Anne's reign; when the union then newly effected between the two kingdoms had revived the old feelings of rivalry, and held out, in the general discontent, fresh encouragement to the partizans of the banished family. In this turbulent period, two brave, but very peaceful and loyal persons, are represented as plodding their way homewards from deer-stalking, in the gloom of an autumn evening, when they are encountered, on a lonely moor, by a strange mis-shapen Dwarf, who rejects their proffered courtesy, in a tone of insane misanthropy, and leaves Hobbie Elliot, who is the successor of Dandie Dinmont in this tale, perfectly persuaded that he is not of mortal lineage, but a goblin of no amiable dispositions. He, and his friend Mr. Earnscliff, who is a gentleman of less credulity, revisit him again, however, in daylight; when they find him laying the foundations of a small cottage in that dreary spot. With some casual assistance the fabric is completed; and the Solitary, who still maintains the same repulsive demeanour, fairly settled in it. Though he shuns all society and conversation, he occasionally administers to the diseases of men and cattle: and acquires a certain awful reputation in the country, half between that of a wizard and a heaven-taught cow-doctor. In the mean time poor Hobbie's house is burned, and his cattle and his bride carried off by the band of one of the last Border foragers, instigated chiefly by Mr. Vere, the profligate Laird of Ellieshaw, who wishes to raise a party in favour of the Jacobites; and between whose daughter and young Earnscliff there is an attachment, which her father disapproves. The mysterious Dwarf gives Hobbie an oracular hint to seek for his lost bride in the fortress of this plunderer, which he and his friends, under the command of young Earnscliff, speedily invest; and when they are ready to smoke him out of his inexpugnable tower, he capitulates, and leads forth, to the astonishment of all the besiegers, not Grace Armstrong, but Miss Vere, who, by some unintelligible refinement of iniquity, had been sequestered by her worthy father in that appropriate custody. The Dwarf, who, with all his misanthropy, is the most benevolent of human beings, gives Hobbie a fur bag full of gold, and contrives to have his bride restored to him. He is likewise consulted in secret by Miss Vere, who is sadly distressed, like all other fictitious damsels, by her father's threats to solemnize a forced marriage between her and a detestable baronet,—and promises to appear and deliver her, however imminent the hazard may appear. Accordingly, when they are all ranged for the sacrifice before the altar in the castle chapel, his portentous figure pops out from behind a monument,—when he is instantly recognized by the guilty Ellieslaw, for a certain Sir Edward Mauley, who was the cousin and destined husband of the lady *he* had afterwards married, and who had been plunged into temporary insanity by the shock of that fair one's inconstancy, on his recovery from which he had allowed Mr. Vere to retain the greatest part of the property to which he succeeded by her death; and had been supposed to be sequestered in some convent abroad, when he thus appears to protect the daughter of his early love. The desperate Ellieslaw at first thinks of having recourse to force, and calls in an armed band which he had that day assembled, in order to favour a rising of the Catholics—when he is suddenly surrounded by Hobbie Elliot and Earnscliff, at the head of a more loyal party, who have just overpowered the insurgents, and taken possession of the castle. Ellieslaw and the Baronet of course take horse

and shipping forth of the realm; while his fair daughter is given away to Earnscliff by the benevolent Dwarf; who immediately afterwards disappears, and seeks a more profound retreat, beyond the reach of their gratitude and gaiety.

The other and more considerable story, which fills the three remaining volumes of this publication, is entitled, though with no great regard even to its fictitious origin, "Old Mortality;" — for, at most, it should only have been called the tale or story of Old Mortality — being supposed to be collected from the information of a singular person who is said at one time to have been known by that strange appellation. The *redacteur* of his interesting traditions is here supposed to be a village school-master; and though his introduction brings us again in contact with My Landlord and his parish clerk, we could have almost forgiven that unlucky fiction, if it had often presented us in company with sketches, as graceful as we find in the following passage, of the haunts and habits of this singular personage. After mentioning that there was, on the steep and heathy banks of a lonely rivulet, a deserted burying ground to which he used frequently to turn his walks in the evening, the gentle pedagogue proceeds —

"One summer evening as, in a stroll such as I have described, I approached this deserted mansion of the dead, I was somewhat surprised to hear sounds distinct from those which usually soothe its solitude, the gentle chiding, namely, of the brook, and the sighing of the wind in the boughs of three gigantic ash trees, which mark the cemetery. The clink of a hammer was, upon this occasion, distinctly heard; and I entertained some alarm that a march-dike, long meditated by the two proprietors whose estates were divided by my favourite brook, was about to be drawn up the glen, in order to substitute its rectilinear deformity for the graceful winding of the natural boundary. As I approached I was agreeably undeceived. An old man was seated upon the monument of the slaughtered Presbyterians; and busily employed in deepening, with his chisel, the letters of the inscription, which announcing, in scriptural language, the promised blessings of futurity to be the lot of the slain, anathematized the murderers with corresponding violence. A blue bonnet of unusual dimensions covered the grey hairs of the pious workman. His dress was a large old-fashioned coat, of the coarse cloth called *hoddin-grey*, usually worn by the elder peasants, with waiscoat and breeches of the same; and the whole suit, though still in decent repair, had obviously seen a train of long service. Strong clouted shoes, studded with hob-nails, and *gramoches* or *leggins*, made of thick black cloth, completed his equipment. Beside him, fed among the graves, a pony, the companion of his journey, whose extreme whiteness, as well as its projecting bones and hollow eyes, indicated its antiquity. It was harnessed in the most simple manner, with a pair of branks, and hair tether, or halter, and a *sunk*, or cushion of straw, instead of bridle and saddle. A canvass pouch hung round the neck of the animal, for the purpose, probably, of containing the rider's tools, and any thing else he might have occasion to carry with him. Although I had never seen the old man before, yet, from the singularity of his employment, and the style of his equipage, I had no difficulty in recognizing a religious itinerant whom I had often heard talked of, and who was known in various parts of Scotland by the name of Old Mortality.

"Where this man was born, or what was his real name, I have never been able to learn, nor are the motives which made him desert his home, and adopt the erratic mode of life which he pursued, known to me, except very generally. He is said to have held, at one period of his life, a small moorland farm; but, whether from pecuniary losses, or domestic misfortune, he had long renounced that and every other gainful calling. In the language of Scripture, he left his house, his home, and his kindred, and wandered about until the day of his death — a period, it is said, of nearly thirty years.

"During this long pilgrimage, the pious enthusiast regulated his circuit so as annually to visit the graves of the unfortunate Covenanters, who suffered by the sword, or by the executioner during the reigns of the two last monarchs of the Stuart line. These tombs are often apart from all human habitation, in the remote moors and wilds to which the wanderers had fled for concealment. But wherever they existed, Old Mortality was sure to visit them, when his annual round brought them within his reach. In the most lonely recesses of the mountains, the moorfowl shooter has been often surprised to find him busied in cleaning the moss from the grey-stones, renewing with his chisel the half-defaced inscriptions, and repairing the emblems of death with which these simple monuments are usually adorned.

"As the wanderer was usually to be seen bent on this pious task within the precincts of some country churchyard, or reclined on the solitary tombstone among the heath, disturbing the plover and the black-cock with the clink of his chisel and mallet, with his old white pony grazing by his side, he acquired, from his converse among the dead, the popular appellation of Old Mortality."—Vol. ii. pp. 7—18.

The scene of the story thus strikingly introduced is laid — in Scotland of course — in those disastrous times which immediately preceded the Revolution of 1688; and exhibits a lively picture, both of the general state of

manners at that period, and of the conduct and temper and principles of the two great parties in politics and religion that were then engaged in unequal and rancorous hostility. There are no times certainly, within the reach of authentic history, on which it is more painful to look back — which show a government more base and tyrannical, or a people more helpless and miserable: and though all pictures of the greater passions are full of interest, and a lively representation of strong and enthusiastic emotions never fails to be deeply attractive, the piece would have been too full of distress and humiliation, if it had been chiefly engaged with the course of public events, or the record of public feelings. So sad a subject would not have suited many readers — and the author, we suspect, less than any of them. Accordingly, in this, as in his other works, he has made use of the historical events which came in his way, rather to develope the characters, and bring out the peculiarities of the individuals whose adventures he relates, than for any purpose of political information; and makes us present to the times in which he has placed them, less by his direct notices of the great transactions by which they were distinguished, than by his casual intimations of their effects on private persons, and by the very contrast which their temper and occupations often appear to furnish to the colour of the national story. Nothing, indeed, in this respect is more delusive, or at least more woefully imperfect, than the suggestions of authentic history, as it is generally — or rather universally written — and nothing more exaggerated than the impressions it conveys of the actual state and condition of those who live in its most agitated periods. The great public events of which alone it takes cognizance, have but little direct influence upon the body of the people; and do not, in general, form the principal business, or happiness or misery even of those who are in some measure concerned in them. Even in the worst and most disastrous times — in periods of civil war and revolution, and public discord and oppression, a great part of the time of a great part of the people is still spent in making love and money — in social amusement or professional industry — in schemes for worldly advancement or personal distinction, just as in periods of general peace and prosperity. Men court and marry very nearly as much in the one season as in the other; and are as merry at weddings and christenings — as gallant at balls and races — as busy in their studies and counting houses — eat as heartily, in short, and sleep as sound — prattle with their children as pleasantly — and thin their plantations and scold their servants as zealously, as if their contemporaries were not furnishing materials thus abundantly for the Tragic muse of history. The quiet under-current of life, in short, keeps its deep and steady course in its eternal channels, unaffected, or but slightly disturbed, by the storms that agitate its surface; and while long tracts of time, in the history of every country, seem, to the distant student of its annals, to be darkened over with one thick and oppressive cloud of unbroken misery, the greater part of those who have lived through the whole acts of the tragedy will be found to have enjoyed a fair average share of felicity, and to have been much less impressed by the shocking events of their day, than those who know nothing else of it than that such events took place in its course. Few men, in short, are historical characters — and scarcely any man is always, or most usually, performing a public part. The actual happiness of every life depends far more on things that regard it exclusively, than on those political occurrences which are the common concern of society; and though nothing lends such an air, both of reality and importance, to a fictitious narrative, as to connect its persons with events in real history, still it is the imaginary individual himself that excites our chief interest throughout, and we care for the national affairs only in so far as they affect him. In one sense, indeed, this is the true end and the best use of history; for as all public events are important only as they ultimately concern individuals, if the individual selected belong to a large and comprehensive class, and the events, and their natural operations on him, be justly represented, we shall be enabled, in following out his adventures, to form no bad estimate of their true character and value for all the rest of the community.

The author before us has done all this, we think; and with admirable talent and effect: and if he has not been quite impartial in the

management of his historical persons, has contrived, at any rate, to make them contribute largely to the interest of his acknowledged inventions. His view of the effects of great political contentions on private happiness is, however, we have no doubt, substantially true; and that chiefly because it is not exaggerated —because he does not confine himself to show how gentle natures may be roused into heroism, or rougher tempers exasperated into rancour, by public oppression, — but turns still more willingly to show with what ludicrous absurdity genuine enthusiasm may be debased, how little the gaiety of the light-hearted and thoughtless may be impaired by the spectacle of public calamity, and how in the midst of national distraction, selfishness will pursue its little game of quiet and cunning speculation—and gentler affections find time to multiply and to meet!

It is this, we think, that constitutes the great and peculiar merit of the work before us. It contains an admirable picture of manners and of characters; and exhibits, we think, with great truth and discrimination, the extent and the variety of the shades which the stormy aspect of the political horizon would be likely to throw on such objects. And yet, though exhibiting beyond all doubt the greatest possible talent and originality, we cannot help fancying that we can trace the rudiments of almost all its characters in the very first of the author's publications. — Morton is but another edition of Waverley; — taking a bloody part in political contention, without caring much about the cause, and interchanging high offices of generosity with his political opponents, —Claverhouse has many of the features of the gallant Fergus. — Cuddie Headrigg, of whose merits, by the way, we have given no fair specimen in our extracts, is a Dandie Dinmont of a considerably lower species; — and even the Covenanters and their leaders were shadowed out, though afar off, in the gifted Gilfillan, and mine host of the Candlestick. It is in the picture of these hapless enthusiasts, undoubtedly, that the great merit and the great interest of the work consists. That interest, indeed, is so great, that we perceive it has even given rise to a sort of controversy among the admirers and contemners of those antient worthies. It is a singular honour, no doubt, to a work of fiction and amusement, to be thus made the theme of serious attack and defence upon points of historical and theological discussion; and to have grave dissertations written by learned contemporaries upon the accuracy of its representations of public events and characters, or the moral effects of the style of ridicule in which it indulges. It is difficult for us, we confess, to view the matter in so serious a light; nor do we feel much disposed, even if we had leisure for the task, to venture ourselves into the array of the disputants. One word or two, however, we shall say, before concluding, upon the two great points of difference. First, as to the author's profanity, in making scriptural expressions ridiculous by the misuse of them he has ascribed to the fanatics; and, secondly, as to the fairness of his general representation of the conduct and character of the insurgent party and their opponents.

As to the first, we do not know very well what to say. Undoubtedly, all light or jocular use of Scripture phraseology is in some measure indecent and profane: yet we do not know in what other way those hypocritical pretences to extraordinary sanctity which generally disguise themselves in such a garb can be so effectually exposed. And even where the ludicrous misapplication of holy writ arises from mere ignorance, or the foolish mimicry of more learned discoursers, as it is impossible to avoid smiling at the folly when it actually occurs, it is difficult for witty and humorous writers, in whose way it lies, to resist fabricating it for the purpose of exciting smiles. In so far as practice can afford any justification of such a proceeding, we conceive that its justification would be easy. In all our jest-books, and plays and works of humour for two centuries back, the characters of Quakers and Puritans and Methodists have been constantly introduced as fit objects of ridicule, on this very account. The Reverend Jonathan Swift is full of jokes of this description; and the pious and correct Addison himself is not a little fond of a sly and witty application of a text from the sacred writings. When an author, therefore, whose aim was amusement, had to do with a set of people, all of whom dealt in familiar applications of Bible phrases and Old Testament adventures, and who, undoubtedly,

very often made absurd and ridiculous applications of them, it would be rather hard, we think, to interdict him entirely from the representation of these absurdities; or to put in force, for him alone, those statutes against profaneness which so many other people have been allowed to transgress, in their hours of gaiety, without censure or punishment.

On the other point, also, we rather lean to the side of the author. He is a Tory, we think, pretty plainly in principle, and scarcely disguises his preference for a Cavalier over a Puritan: but, with these propensities, we think he has dealt pretty fairly with both sides — especially when it is considered that, though he lays his scene in a known crisis of his national history, his work is professedly a work of fiction, and cannot well be accused of misleading any one as to matters of fact. He might have made Claverhouse victorious at Drumclog, if he had thought fit — and nobody could have found fault with him. The insurgent Presbyterians of 1666 and the subsequent years, were, beyond all question, a pious, brave, and conscientious race of men — to whom, and to whose efforts and sufferings, their descendants are deeply indebted for the liberty both civil and religious which they still enjoy, as well as for the spirit of resistance to tyranny, which, we trust, they have inherited along with it. Considered generally as a party, it is impossible that they should ever be remembered, at least in Scotland, but with gratitude and veneration — that their sufferings should ever be mentioned but with deep resentment and horror — or their heroism, both active and passive, but with pride and exultation. At the same time, it is impossible to deny, that there were among them many absurd and ridiculous persons — and some of a savage and ferocious character — old women, in short, like Mause Headrigg — preachers like Kettledrummle — or desperadoes like Balfour of Burley. That a Tory novelist should bring such characters prominently forward, in a tale of the times, appears to us not only to be quite natural, but really to be less blameable than almost any other way in which party feelings could be shown. But even he has not represented the bulk of the party as falling under this description, or as fairly represented by such personages. He has made his hero — who, of course, possesses all possible virtues — of that persuasion; and has allowed them, in general, the courage of martyrs, the self-denial of hermits, and the zeal and sincerity of apostles. His representation is almost avowedly that of one who is not of their communion; and yet we think it impossible to peruse it, without feeling the greatest respect and pity for those to whom it is applied. A zealous Presbyterian might, no doubt, have said more in their favour, without violating, or even concealing the truth; — but while zealous Presbyterians will not write entertaining novels themselves, they cannot expect to be treated in them with exactly the same favour as if that had been the character of their authors.

With regard to the author's picture of their opponents, we must say that, with the exception of Claverhouse himself, whom he has invested gratuitously with many graces and liberalities to which we are persuaded he has no title, and for whom, indeed, he has a foolish fondness, with which it would be absurd to deal seriously — he has shown no signs of a partiality that can be blamed, nor exhibited many traits in them with which their enemies have reason to quarrel. If any person can read his strong and lively pictures of military insolence and oppression, without feeling his blood boil within him, we must conclude the fault to be in his own apathy, and not in any softenings of the partial author; — nor do we know any Whig writer who has exhibited the baseness and cruelty of that wretched government, in more naked and revolting deformity, than in his scene of the torture at the Privy Council. The military executions of Claverhouse himself are admitted without palliation; and the blood-thirstiness of Dalzell, and the brutality of Lauderdale, are represented in their true colours. In short, if this author has been somewhat severe upon the Covenanters, neither has he spared their oppressors; and the truth probably is, that never dreaming of being made responsible for historical accuracy or fairness in a composition of this description, he has exaggerated a little on both sides, for the sake of effect — and been carried, by the bent of his humour, most frequently to exaggerate on that which afforded the greatest scope for ridicule.

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

(February, 1818.)

Rob Roy. By the Author of Waverley, Guy Mannering, and the Antiquary. 12mo. 3 vols. pp. 930. Edinburgh, 1818.

This is not so good, perhaps, as some others of the family; — but it is better than any thing else; and has a charm and a spirit about it that draws us irresistibly away from our graver works of politics and science, to expatiate upon that which every body understands and agrees in; and after setting us diligently to read over again what we had scarce finished reading, leaves us no choice but to tell our readers what they all know already, and to persuade them of that of which they are most intimately convinced.

Such, we are perfectly aware, is the task which we must seem to perform to the greater part of those who may take the trouble of accompanying us through this article. But there may still be some of our readers to whom the work of which we treat is unknown; — and we know there are many who are far from being duly sensible of its merits. The public, indeed, is apt now and then to behave rather unhandsomely to its greatest benefactors; and to deserve the malison which Milton has so emphatically bestowed on those impious persons who,

> —— "with senseless base ingratitude,
> Cram, and blaspheme their feeder,"

— nothing, we fear, being more common, than to see the bounty of its too lavish providers repaid by increased captiousness at the quality of the banquet, and complaints of imaginary fallings off — which should be imputed entirely to the distempered state of their own pampered appetites. We suspect, indeed, that we were ourselves under the influence of this illaudible feeling when we wrote the first line of this paper: for, except that the subject seems to us somewhat less happily chosen, and the variety of characters rather less than in some of the author's former publications, we do not know what right we had to say that it was in any respect inferior to them. Sure we are, at all events, that it has the same brilliancy and truth of colouring — the same gaiety of tone, rising every now and then into feelings both kindly and exalted — the same dramatic vivacity — the same deep and large insight into human nature — and the same charming facility which distinguish all the other works of this great master; and make the time in which he flourished an era never to be forgotten in the literary history of our country.

One novelty in the present work is, that it is thrown into the form of a continued and unbroken narrative, by one of the persons principally concerned in the story — and who is represented in his declining age, as detailing to an intimate friend the most interesting particulars of his early life, and all the recollections with which they were associated. We prefer, upon the whole, the communications of an avowed author; who, of course, has no character to sustain but that of a pleasing writer — and can praise and blame, and wonder and moralize, in all tones and directions, without subjecting himself to any charge of vanity, ingratitude, or inconsistency.—The thing, however, is very tolerably managed on the present occasion; and the hero contrives to let us into all his exploits and perplexities, without much violation either of heroic modesty or general probability; — to which ends, indeed, it conduces not a little, that, like most of the other heroes of this ingenious author, his own character does not rise very notably above the plain level of mediocrity — being, like the rest of his brethren, a well-conditioned, reasonable, agreeable young gentleman — not particularly likely to do any thing which it would be very boastful to speak of, and much better fitted to be a spectator and historian of strange doings, than a partaker in them.

This discreet hero, then, our readers will probably have anticipated, is not Rob Roy — though *his* name stands alone in the title — but a Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, the only son of a great London Merchant or Banker, and nephew of a Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone, a worthy Catholic Baronet, who spent his time in hunting, and drinking Jacobite toasts in Northumberland, some time about the year 1714. The young gentleman having been educated among the muses abroad, testifies a decided aversion to the gainful vocations in which his father had determined that he should assist and succeed him; — and, as a punish-

ment for this contumacy, he banishes him for a season to the Siberia of Osbaldistone Hall, from which he himself had been estranged ever since his infancy. The young exile jogs down on horseback rather merrily, riding part of the way with a stout man, who was scandalously afraid of being robbed, and meeting once with a sturdy Scotchman, whose resolute air and energetic discourses make a deep impression on him.—As he approaches the home of his fathers, he is surrounded by a party of fox hunters, and at the same moment electrified by the sudden apparition of a beautiful young woman, galloping lightly at the head of the field, and managing her sable palfrey with all the grace of an Angelica.

Making up to this ethereal personage, he soon discovers that he is in the heart of his kinsfolks — that the tall youths about him are the five sons of Sir Hildebrand; and the virgin huntress herself, a cousin and inmate of the family, by the name of Diana Vernon. She is a very remarkable person this same Diana. Though only eighteen years of age, and exquisitely lovely, she knows all arts and sciences, elegant and inelegant — and has, moreover, a more than masculine resolution, and more than feminine kindness and generosity of character — wearing over all this a playful, free, and reckless manner, more characteristic of her age than her various and inconsistent accomplishments. The rest of the household are comely savages; who hunt all day, and drink all night, without one idea beyond those heroic occupations — all, at least, except Rashleigh, the youngest son of this hopeful family — who having been designed for the church, and educated among the Jesuits beyond seas, had there acquired all the knowledge and the knavery which that pious brotherhood was so long supposed to impart to their disciples. Although very plain in his person, and very depraved in his character, he has great talents and accomplishments, and a very insinuating address. He had been, in a good degree, the instructor of Diana, who, we should have mentioned, was also a Catholic, and having lost her parents, was destined to take the veil in a foreign land, if she did not consent to marry one of the sons of Sir Hildebrand, for all of whom she cherished the greatest aversion and contempt.

Mr. Osbaldistone, of course, can do nothing but fall in love with this wonderful infant; for which, and some other transgressions, he incurs the deadly, though concealed, hate of Rashleigh, and meets with several unpleasant adventures through his means. But we will not be tempted even to abridge the details of a story with which we cannot allow ourselves to doubt that all our readers have long been familiar: and indeed it is not in his story that this author's strength ever lies; and here he has lost sight of probability even in the conception of some of his characters; and displayed the extraordinary talent of being true to nature, even in the representation of impossible persons.

The serious interest of the work rests on Diana Vernon and on Rob Roy; the comic effect is left chiefly to the ministrations of Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Andrew Fairservice, with the occasional assistance of less regular performers. Diana is, in our apprehension, a very bright and felicitous creation — though it is certain that there never could have been any such person. A girl of eighteen, not only with more wit and learning than any man of forty, but with more sound sense, and firmness of character, than any man whatever — and with perfect frankness and elegance of manners, though bred among boors and bigots — is rather a more violent fiction, we think, than a king with marble legs, or a youth with an ivory shoulder. In spite of all this, however, this particular fiction is extremely elegant and impressive; and so many features of truth are blended with it, that we soon forget the impossibility, and are at least as much interested as by a more conceivable personage. The combination of fearlessness with perfect purity and delicacy, as well as that of the inextinguishable gaiety of youth with sad anticipations and present suffering, are all strictly natural: and are among the traits that are wrought out in this portrait with the greatest talent and effect. In the deep tone of feeling, and the capacity of heroic purposes, this heroine bears a family likeness to the Flora of Waverley; but her greater youth, and her unprotected situation, add prodigiously to the interest of these qualities. Andrew Fairservice is a new, and a less interesting incarnation of Cuddie Headrigg; with a double allowance of selfishness, and a

top-dressing of pedantry and conceit — constituting a very admirable and just representation of the least amiable of our Scottish vulgar. The Bailie, we think, is an original. It once occurred to us, that he might be described as a mercantile and townish Dandie Dinmont: but the points of resemblance are really fewer than those of contrast. He is an inimitable picture of an acute, sagacious, upright, and kind man, thoroughly low bred, and beset with all sorts of vulgarities. Both he and Andrew are rich mines of the true Scottish language; and afford, in the hands of this singular writer, not only an additional proof of his perfect familiarity with all its dialects, but also of its extraordinary copiousness, and capacity of adaptation to all tones and subjects. The reader may take a brief specimen of Andrew's elocution in the following characteristic account of the purgation of the Cathedral Church of Glasgow, and its consequent preservation from the hands of our Gothic reformers.

"'Ah! it's a brave kirk — nane o' yere whig-maleeries and curliewurlies and open-steek hems about it — a' solid, weel-jointed masonwark, that will stand as long as the warld, keep hands and gunpowther aff it. It had amaist a doun-come lang syne at the Reformation, when they pu'd down the kirks of St. Andrews and Perth, and thereawa, to cleanse them o' Papery, and idolatry, and image worship, and surplices, and sic like rags o' the muckle hoor that sitteth on seven hills, as if ane was na braid aneugh for her auld hinder end. Sae the commons o' Renfrew, and o' the Barony, and the Gorbals, and a' about, they behoved to come into Glasgow ae fair morning to try their hand on purging the High Kirk o' Popish nicknackets. But the townsmen o' Glasgow, they were feared their auld edifice might slip the girths in gaun through siccan rough physic, sae they rang the common bell, and assembled the train bands wi' took o' drum — By good luck, the worthy James Rabat was Dean o' Guild that year — (and a gude mason he was himsell, made him the keener to keep up the auld bigging), and the trades assembled, and offered downright battle to the commons, rather than their kirk should coup the crans, as they had done elsewhere. It was na for luve o' Paperie — na, na! — nane could ever say that o' the trades o' Glasgow — Sae they sune cam to an agreement to take a' the idolatrous statues of sants (sorrow be on them!) out o' their neuks — And sae the bits o' stane idols were broken in pieces by Scripture warrant, and flung into the Molendinar Burn, and the auld kirk stood as crouse as a cat when the fleas are caimed aff her, and a'body was alike pleased. And I hae heard wise folk say, that if the same had been done in ilka kirk in Scotland, the Reform wad just hae been as pure as it is e'en now, and we wad had mair Christian-like kirks; for I hae been sae lang in England, that naething will drive it out o' my head, that the dog-kennel at Osbaldistone-Hall is better than mony a house o' God in Scotland.'"

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

(January, 1820.)

1. *Ivanhoe.* A Romance. By the Author of Waverley, &c. 3 vols. Edinburgh, Constable and Co.
2. *The Novels and Tales of the Author of Waverley; comprising Waverley, Guy Mannering, Antiquary, Rob Roy, Tales of My Landlord,* First, Second, and Third Series; New Edition, with a copious Glossary. Edinburgh, Constable and Co. 1820.

Since the time when Shakspeare wrote his thirty-eight plays in the brief space of his early manhood — besides acting in them, and drinking and living idly with the other actors — and then went carelessly to the country, and lived out his days, a little more idly, and apparently unconscious of having done any thing at all extraordinary — there has been no such prodigy of fertility as the anonymous author before us. In the period of little more than five years, he has founded a new school of invention; and established and endowed it with nearly thirty volumes of the most animated and original compositions that have enriched English literature for a century—volumes that have cast sensibly into the shade all contemporary prose, and even all recent poetry — (except perhaps that inspired by the Genius — or the Demon, of Byron) — and, by their force of colouring and depth of feeling — by their variety, vivacity, magical facility, and living presentment of character, have rendered conceivable to this later age the miracles of the Mighty Dramatist.

Shakspeare, to be sure, is more purely original; but it should not be forgotten, that, in his time, there was much less to borrow — and that he too has drawn freely and largely from the sources that were open to him, at least for his fable and graver sentiment; — for his wit and humour, as well as his poetry, are always his own. In our times, all the higher walks of literature have been so long and so often trodden, that it is scarcely possible to keep

out of the footsteps of some of our precursors; and the ancients, it is well known, have stolen most of our bright thoughts — and not only visibly beset all the patent approaches to glory—but swarm in such ambushed multitudes behind, that when we think we have gone fairly beyond their plagiarisms, and honestly worked out an original excellence of our own, up starts some deep-read antiquary, and makes it out, much to his own satisfaction, that heaven knows how many of these busy bodies have been beforehand with us, both in the *genus* and the *species* of our invention!

The author before us is certainly in less danger from such detections, than any other we have ever met with; but, even in him, the traces of imitation are obvious and abundant; and it is impossible, therefore, to give him the same credit for absolute originality as those earlier writers, who, having no successful author to imitate, were obliged to copy directly from nature. In naming him along with Shakspeare, we meant still less to say that he was to be put on a level with Him, as to the richness and sweetness of his fancy, or that living vein of pure and lofty poetry which flows with such abundance through every part of his compositions. On that level no other writer has ever stood — or will ever stand — though we do think that there is fancy and poetry enough in these contemporary pages, if not to justify the comparison we have ventured to suggest, at least to save it, for the first time for two hundred years, from being altogether ridiculous. In saying even this, however, we wish to observe, that we have in view the prodigious variety and facility of the modern writer — at least as much as the quality of his several productions. The variety stands out on the face of each of them; and the facility is attested, as in the case of Shakspeare himself, both by the inimitable freedom and happy carelessness of the style in which they are executed, and by the matchless rapidity with which they have been lavished on the public.

Such an author would really require a review to himself — and one too of swifter than quarterly recurrence; and accordingly we have long since acknowledged our inability to keep up with him, and fairly renounced the task of keeping a regular account of his successive publications; contenting ourselves with greeting him now and then in the pauses of his brilliant career, and casting, when we do meet, a hurried glance over the wide field he has traversed since we met before.

We gave it formerly, we think, as our reason for thus passing over, without special notice, some of the most remarkable productions of the age, that they were in fact too remarkable to need any notice of ours — that they were as soon, and as extensively read, as we could hope our account of them to be — and that in reality, all the world thought just what we were inclined to say of them. These reasons certainly remain in full force; and we may now venture to mention another, which had in secret, perhaps, as much weight with us as all the rest put together. We mean simply, that when we began with one of those works, we were conscious that we never knew how to leave off; but, finding the author's words so much more agreeable than our own, went on in the most unreasonable manner copying out description after description, and dialogue after dialogue, till we were abused, not altogether without reason, for selling our readers in small letter what they had already in large, — and for the abominable nationality of filling up our pages with praises of a Scottish author, and specimens of Scottish pleasantry and pathos. While we contritely admit the justice of these imputations, we humbly trust that our Southern readers will now be of opinion that the offence has been in some degree expiated, both by our late forbearance, and our present proceeding: for while we have done violence to our strongest propensities, in passing over in silence two very tempting publications of this author, on Scottish subjects and in the Scottish dialect, we have at last recurred to him for the purpose of noticing the only work he has produced on a subject entirely English; and one which is nowhere graced either with a trait of our national character, or a (voluntary) sample of our national speech.

Before entering upon this task, however, we must be permitted, just for the sake of keeping our chronology in order, to say a word or two on those neglected works, of which we constrained ourselves to say nothing, at the time when they formed the subject of all other disceptation.

"The Heart of Mid-Lothian" is remarkable for containing fewer characters, and less variety of incident, than any of the author's former productions: — and it is, accordingly, in some places, comparatively languid. The Porteous mob is rather heavily described; and the whole part of George Robertson, or Stanton, is extravagant and unpleasing. The final catastrophe, too, is needlessly improbable and startling; and both Saddletrees and Davie Deans become at last somewhat tedious and unreasonable; while we miss, throughout, the character of the generous and kind-hearted rustic, which, in one form or another, gives such spirit and interest to most of the other stories. But with all these defects, the work has both beauty and power enough to vindicate its title to a legitimate descent from its mighty father — and even to a place in "the valued file" of his productions. The trial and condemnation of Effie Deans are pathetic and beautiful in the very highest degree; and the scenes with the Duke of Argyle are equally full of spirit, and strangely compounded of perfect knowledge of life and of strong and deep feeling. But the great boast of the piece, and the great exploit of the author — perhaps the greatest of all his exploits — is the character and history of Jeanie Deans, from the time she first reproves her sister's flirtations at St. Leonard's, till she settles in the manse in Argyleshire. The singular talent with which he has engrafted on the humble and somewhat coarse stock of a quiet unassuming peasant girl, the heroic affection, the strong sense, and lofty purposes, which distinguish this heroine — or rather, the art with which he has so tampered and modified those great qualities, as to make them appear noways unsuitable to the station or ordinary bearing of such a person, and so ordered and disposed the incidents by which they are called out, that they seem throughout adapted, and native as it were, to her condition — is superior to any thing we can recollect in the history of invention; and must appear, to any one who attentively considers it, as a remarkable triumph over the greatest of all difficulties in the conduct of a fictitious narrative. Jeanie Deans, in the course of her adventurous undertaking, excites our admiration and sympathy a great deal more powerfully than most heroines, and is in the highest degree both pathetic and sublime; — and yet she never says or does any one thing that the daughter of a Scotch cow-feeder might not be supposed to say — and scarcely any thing indeed that is not characteristic of her rank and habitual occupations. She is never sentimental, nor refined, nor elegant; and though acting always, and in very difficult situations, with the greatest judgment and propriety, never seems to exert more than that downright and obvious good sense which is so often found to rule the conduct of persons of her condition. This is the great ornament and charm of the work. Dumbiedykes, however, is an admirable sketch in the grotesque way; — and the Captain of Knockdunder is a very spirited, and, though our Saxon readers will scarcely believe it, a very accurate representation of a Celtic deputy. There is less description of scenery, and less sympathy with external nature, in this, than in any of the other tales.

"The Bride of Lammermoor" is more sketchy and romantic than the usual vein of the author — and loses, perhaps, in the exaggeration that is incident to that style, some of the deep and heartfelt interest that belongs to more familiar situations. The humours of Caleb Balderstone, too, are to our taste the least successful of this author's attempts at pleasantry — and belong rather to the school of French or Italian buffoonery, than to that of English humour; — and yet, to give scope to these farcical exhibitions, the poverty of the Master of Ravenswood is exaggerated beyond all credibility, and to the injury even of his personal dignity. Sir W. Ashton is tedious; and Bucklaw, and his Captain, though excellently drawn, take up rather too much room for subordinate agents. — There are splendid things, however, in this work also. — The picture of old Ailie is exquisite — and beyond the reach of any other living writer. — The hags that convene in the churchyard have all the terror and sublimity, and more than the nature of Macbeth's witches; and the courtship at the Mermaiden's well, as well as some of the immediately preceding scenes, are full of dignity and beauty. There is a deep pathos indeed, and a genuine tragic interest in the whole story of the ill-omened loves of the two victims. The final catastrophe of the Bride, however,

though it may be founded on fact, is too horrible for fiction. — But that of Ravenswood is magnificent — and, taken along with the prediction which it was doomed to fulfil, and the mourning and death of Balderstone, is one of the finest combinations of superstition and sadness which the gloomy genius of our fiction has ever put together.

"The Legend of Montrose" is also of the nature of a sketch or fragment, and is still more vigorous than its companion. — There is too much, perhaps, of Dalgetty — or, rather, he engrosses too great a proportion of the work — for, in himself, we think he is uniformly entertaining; — and the author has nowhere shown more affinity to that matchless spirit who could bring out his Falstaffs and his Pistols, in act after act, and play after play, and exercise them every time in scenes of unbounded loquacity, without either exhausting their humour, or varying a note from its characteristic tone, than in his large and reiterated specimens of the eloquence of the redoubted Rittmaster. The general idea of the character is familiar to our comic dramatists after the Restoration — and may be said in some measure to be compounded of Captain Fluellen and Bobadil; — but the ludicrous combination of the *soldado* with the Divinity student of Marischal College, is entirely original; and the mixture of talent, selfishness, courage, coarseness, and conceit, was never so happily exemplified. Numerous as his speeches are, there is not one that is not characteristic — and, to our taste, divertingly ludicrous. Annot Lyle, and the Children of the Mist, are in a very different manner — and, though extravagant, are full of genius and poetry. The whole scenes at Argyle's Castle, and in the escape from it — though trespassing too far beyond the bounds of probability — are given with great spirit and effect; and the mixture of romantic incident and situation, with the tone of actual business and the real transactions of a camp, give a life and interest to the warlike part of the story, which belong to the fictions of no other hand. There is but little made of Montrose himself; and the wager about the Candlesticks — though said to be founded in fact, and borrowed from a very well known and entertaining book — is one of the few things in the writings of this author, to which we are constrained to apply the epithets of stupid and silly.

Having thus hastily set our mark on those productions of which we have been prevented from speaking in detail, we proceed, without further preface, to give an account of the work before us.

The story, as we have already stated, is entirely English; and consequently no longer possesses the charm of that sweet Doric dialect, of which even strangers have been made of late to feel the force and the beauty. But our Southern neighbours will be no great gainers, after all, in point of familiarity with the personages, by this transference of the scene of action: — for the time is laid as far back as the reign of Richard I. — and we suspect that the Saxons and Normans of that age are rather less known to them than even the Highlanders and Cameronians of the present. This was the great difficulty the author had to contend with, and the great disadvantage of the subject with which he had to deal. Nobody now alive can have a very clear or complete conception of the actual way of life and *manière d'être* of our ancestors in the year 1194. Some of the more prominent outlines of their chivalry, their priesthood, and their villenage, may be known to antiquaries, or even to general readers; but all the filling up, and details, which alone could give body and life to the picture, have been long since effaced by time. We have scarcely any notion, in short, of the private life and conversation of any class of persons in that remote period; and, in fact, know less how the men and women occupied or amused themselves — what they talked about — how they looked — or what they habitually thought or felt, at that time in England, than we know of what they did or thought at Rome in the time of Augustus, or at Athens in the time of Pericles. The memorials and relics of those earlier ages and remoter nations are greatly more abundant and more familiar to us, than those of our ancestors at the distance of seven centuries. Besides ample histories and copious orations, we have plays, poems, and familiar letters of the former periods; while of the latter we have only some vague chronicles, some superstitious legends, and a few fragments of foreign romance. We scarcely know, indeed, what language was

then either spoken or written. Yet, with all these helps, how cold and conjectural a thing would a novel be, of which the scene was laid in ancient Rome! The author might talk with perfect propriety of the business of the Forum, and the amusements of the Circus — of the baths and the suppers, and the canvass for office — and the sacrifices, and musters, and assemblies. He might be quite correct as to the dress, furniture, and utensils he had occasion to mention; and might even engross in his work various anecdotes and sayings preserved in contemporary authors. But when he came to represent the details of individual character and feeling, and to delineate the daily conduct, and report the ordinary conversation of his persons, he would find himself either frozen in among naked and barren generalities, or engaged with modern Englishmen in the masquerade habits of antiquity.

In stating these difficulties, however, we really mean less to account for the defects, than to enhance the merits of the work before us. For though the author has not worked impossibilities, he has done wonders with his subject; and though we do sometimes miss those fresh and living pictures of the characters which we know, and the nature with which we are familiar — and that high and deep interest which the home scenes of our own times and our own people could alone generate or sustain, it is impossible to deny that he has made marvellous good use of the scanty materials at his disposal — and eked them out both by the greatest skill and dexterity in their arrangement, and by all the resources that original genius could render subservient to such a design. For this purpose he has laid his scene in a period when the rivalry of the victorious Norman and the conquered Saxon had not been finally composed; and when the courtly petulance, and chivalrous and military pride of the one race, might yet be set in splendid opposition to the manly steadiness, and honest but homely simplicity of the other: and has, at the same time, given an air both of dignity and of reality to his story, by bringing in the personal prowess of Cœur de Lion himself, and other personages of historical fame, to assist in its development. —Though reduced, in a great measure, to the vulgar staple of armed knights, and jolly friars or woodsmen, imprisoned damsels, lawless barons, collared serfs, and household fools—he has made such admirable use of his great talents for description, and invested those traditional and theatrical persons with so much of the feelings and humours that are of all ages and all countries, that we frequently cease to regard them—as it is generally right to regard them—as parts of a fantastical pageant; and are often brought to consider the knights who joust in panoply in the lists, and the foresters who shoot deer with arrows, and plunder travellers in the woods, as real individuals, with hearts of flesh and blood beating in their bosoms like our own—actual existences, in short, into whose views we may still reasonably enter, and with whose emotions we are bound to sympathize. To all this he has added, out of the prodigality of his high and inventive genius, the grace and the interest of some lofty and sweet, and superhuman characters—for which, though evidently fictitious, and unnatural in any stage of society, the remoteness of the scene on which they are introduced, may serve as an apology—if they could need any other than what they bring along with them in their own sublimity and beauty.

In comparing this work, then, with the former productions of the same master-hand, it is impossible not to feel that we are passing in a good degree from the reign of nature and reality, to that of fancy and romance; and exchanging for scenes of wonder and curiosity, those more homefelt sympathies and deeper touches of delight that can only be excited by the people among whom we live, and the objects that are constantly around us. A far greater proportion of the work is accordingly made up of splendid descriptions of arms and dresses—moated and massive castles—tournaments of mailed champions—solemn feasts—formal courtesies, and other matters of external and visible presentment, that are only entitled to such distinction as connected with the olden time, and new only by virtue of their antiquity—while the interest of the story is maintained, far more by surprising adventures and extraordinary situations, the startling effect of exaggerated sentiments, and the strong contrast of exaggerated characters, than by the sober charms of truth and reality—the exquisite representation of scenes with

which we are familiar, or the skilful development of affections which we have often experienced.

These bright lights and deep shadows — this succession of brilliant pictures, addressed as often to the eye as to the imagination, and oftener to the imagination than the heart — this preference of striking generalities to homely details, all belong more properly to the province of Poetry than of prose; and Ivanhoe, accordingly, seems to us much more akin to the most splendid of modern poems, than the most interesting of modern novels; and savours more of Marmion, or the Lady of the Lake, than of Waverley, or Old Mortality. For our part we prefer, and we care not who knows it, the prose to the poetry — whether in metre or out of it; and would willingly exchange, if the proud alternative were in our choice, even the great fame of Mr. Scott, for that which awaits the mighty unknown who has here raised his standard of rivalry, within the ancient limits of his reign. We cannot now, however, give even an abstract of the story; and shall venture but on a brief citation, from the most striking of its concluding scenes. The majestic Rebecca, our readers will recollect, had been convicted before the grand master of the Templars, and sentenced to die, unless a champion appeared to do battle with her accuser before an appointed day. The appointed day at last arrives. Rebecca is led out to the scaffold — faggots are prepared by the side of the lists — and in the lists appears the relentless Templar, mounted and armed for the encounter. No champion appears for Rebecca; and the heralds ask her if she yields herself as justly condemned.

"'Say to the Grand Master,' replied Rebecca, 'that I maintain my innocence, and do not yield me as justly condemned, lest I become guilty of mine own blood. Say to him, that I challenge such delay as his forms will permit, to see if God, whose opportunity is in man's extremity, will raise me up a deliverer; and when such uttermost space is passed, may his Holy will be done!' The herald retired to carry this answer to the Grand Master. — 'God forbid,' said Lucas Beaumanoir, 'that Jew or Pagan should impeach us of injustice. — Until the shadows be cast from the west to the eastward, will we wait to see if a champion will appear for this unfortunate woman."

The hours pass away — and the shadows begin to pass to the eastward. The assembled multitudes murmur with impatience, and compassion — and the Judges whisper to each other, that it is time to proceed to doom.

"At this instant a knight, urging his horse to speed, appeared on the plain advancing towards the lists. An hundred voices exclaimed, 'A champion! a champion!' And, despite the prepossession and prejudices of the multitude, they shouted unanimously as the knight rode rapidly into the tilt-yard. To the summons of the herald, who demanded his rank, his name, and purpose, the stranger knight answered readily and boldly, 'I am a good knight and noble, come hither to sustain with lance and sword the just and lawful quarrel of this damsel, Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York; to uphold the doom pronounced against her to be false and truthless; and to defy Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, as a traitor, murtherer, and liar.' 'The stranger must first show,' said Malvoisin, 'that he is a good Knight, and of honourable lineage. The Temple sendeth not forth her champions against nameless men.' — 'My name,' said the Knight, raising his helmet, 'is better known, my lineage more pure, Malvoisin, than thine own. I am Wilfrid of Ivanhoe.' — 'I will not fight with thee,' said the Templar, in a changed and hollow voice. 'Get thy wounds healed, purvey thee a better horse, and it may be I will hold it worth my while to scourge out of thee this boyish spirit of bravade.' — 'Ha! proud Templar,' said Ivanhoe, 'hast thou forgotten that twice didst thou fall before this lance? Remember the lists at Acre — remember the Passage of Arms at Ashby — remember thy proud vaunt in the halls of Rotherwood, and the gage of your gold chain against my reliquary, that thou wouldst do battle with Wilfrid of Ivanhoe, and recover the honour thou hadst lost! By that reliquary, and the holy relique it contains, I will proclaim thee, Templar, a coward in every court in Europe — in every Preceptory of thine Order — unless thou do battle without farther delay.' — Bois-Guilbert turned his countenance irresolutely towards Rebecca, and then exclaimed, looking fiercely at Ivanhoe, 'Dog of a Saxon, take thy lance, and prepare for the death thou hast drawn upon thee!' — 'Does the Grand Master allow me the combat?' said Ivanhoe. — 'I may not deny what you have challenged,' said the Grand Master, 'yet I would thou wert in better plight to do battle. An enemy of our Order hast thou ever been, yet would I have thee honourably met with.' — 'Thus — thus as I am, and not otherwise,' said Ivanhoe; 'it is the judgment of God! — to his keeping I commend myself.'"

We cannot make room for the whole of this catastrophe. The overtired horse of Ivanhoe falls in the shock; but the Templar, though scarcely touched by the lance of his adversary, reels, and falls also; — and when they seek to raise him, is found to be utterly dead! a victim to his own contending passions.

We will give but one scene more — and it is in honour of the Divine Rebecca — for the fate of all the rest may easily be divined. Richard forgives his brother; and Wilfrid weds Rowena.

"It was upon the second morning after this happy bridal, that the Lady Rowena was made acquainted by her handmaid Elgitha, that a damsel desired admission to her presence, and solicited that their parley might be without witness. Rowena wondered, hesitated, became curious, and ended by commanding the damsel to be admitted, and her attendants to withdraw.—She entered—a noble and commanding figure; the long white veil in which she was shrouded, overshadowing rather than concealing the elegance and majesty of her shape. Her demeanour was that of respect, unmingled by the least shade either of fear, or of a wish to propitiate favour. Rowena was ever ready to acknowledge the claims, and attend to the feelings of others. She arose, and would have conducted the lovely stranger to a seat; but she looked at Elgitha, and again intimated a wish to discourse with the Lady Rowena alone. Elgitha had no sooner retired with unwilling steps, than, to the surprise of the Lady of Ivanhoe, her fair visitant kneeled suddenly on one knee, pressed her hands to her forehead, and bending her head to the ground, in spite of Rowena's resistance, kissed the embroidered hem of her tunic. — 'What means this?' said the surprised bride; 'or why do you offer to me a deference so unusual?' — 'Because to you, Lady of Ivanhoe,' said Rebecca, rising up and resuming the usual quiet dignity of her manner, 'I may lawfully, and without rebuke, pay the debt of gratitude which I owe to Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I am — forgive the boldness which has offered to you the homage of my country — I am the unhappy Jewess, for whom your husband hazarded his life against such fearful odds in the tilt-yard of Templestowe.' — 'Damsel,' said Rowena, 'Wilfred of Ivanhoe on that day rendered back but in a slight measure your unceasing charity towards him in his wounds and misfortunes. Speak, is there aught remains in which he and I can serve thee?' 'Nothing,' said Rebecca, calmly, 'unless you will transmit to him my grateful farewell.' 'You leave England, then,' said Rowena, scarce recovering the surprise of this extraordinary visit. 'I leave it, lady, ere this moon again changes. My father hath a brother high in favour with Mohammed Boabdil, King of Grenada — thither we go, secure of peace and protection, for the payment of such ransom as the Moslem exact from our people.' — 'And are you not then as well protected in England?' said Rowena. 'My husband has favour with the King — the King himself is just and generous.' — 'Lady,' said Rebecca, 'I doubt it not — but England is no safe abode for the children of my people. Ephraim is an heartless dove — Issachar an over-laboured drudge, which stoops between two burthens. Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbours, and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during her wanderings.' — 'But you, maiden,' said Rowena — 'you surely can have nothing to fear. She who nursed the sick-bed of Ivanhoe,' she continued, rising with enthusiasm — 'she can have nothing to fear in England, where Saxon and Norman will contend who shall most do her honour.' — 'Thy speech is fair, lady,' said Rebecca, 'and thy purpose fairer; but it may not be — there is a gulph betwixt us. Our breeding, our faith, alike forbid either to pass over it. Farewell! — yet, ere I go, indulge me one request. The bridal veil hangs over thy face; raise it, and let me see the features of which fame speaks so highly.' — 'They are scarcely worthy of being looked upon,' said Rowena; 'but, expecting the same from my visitant, I remove the veil.' — She took it off accordingly, and, partly from the consciousness of beauty, partly from bashfulness, she blushed so intensely, that cheek, brow, neck, and bosom, were suffused with crimson. Rebecca blushed also, but it was a momentary feeling; and, mastered by higher emotions, past slowly from her features like the crimson cloud, which changes colour when the sun sinks below the horizon.

"'Lady,' she said, 'the countenance you have deigned to show me will long dwell in my remembrance. There reigns in it gentleness and goodness; and if a tinge of the world's pride or vanities may mix with an expression so lovely, how may we chide that which is of earth for bearing some colour of its original? Long, long shall I remember your features, and bless God that I leave my noble deliverer united with——' She stopped short — her eyes filled with tears. She hastily wiped them, and answered to the anxious inquiries of Rowena — 'I am well, lady — well. But my heart swells when I think of Torquilstone and the lists of Templestowe! — Farewell! One, the most trifling part of my duty, remains undischarged. Accept this casket — startle not at its contents.'—Rowena opened the small silver-chased casket, and perceived a carcanet, or necklace, with ear-jewels, of diamonds, which were visibly of immense value. — 'It is impossible,' she said, tendering back the casket. 'I dare not accept a gift of such consequence.' — 'Yet keep it, lady,' returned Rebecca. 'Let me not think you deem so wretchedly ill of my nation as your commons believe. Think ye that I prize these sparkling fragments of stone above my liberty? or that my father values them in comparison to the honour of his only child? Accept them, lady — to me they are valueless. I will never wear jewels more.' — 'You are then unhappy,' said Rowena, struck with the manner in which Rebecca uttered the last words. 'O, remain with us — the counsel of holy men will wean you from your unhappy law, and I will be a sister to you.' — 'No, lady,' answered Rebecca, the same calm melancholy reigning in her soft voice and beautiful features — 'that may not be. I may not change the faith of my fathers, like a garment unsuited to the climate in which I seek to dwell; and unhappy, lady,

I will not be. He to whom I dedicate my future life will be my comforter, if I do His will.'—'Have you then convents, to one of which you mean to retire?' asked Rowena.—'No, lady,' said the Jewess; 'but among our people, since the time of Abraham downward, have been women who have devoted their thoughts to Heaven, and their actions to works of kindness to men, tending the sick, feeding the hungry, and relieving the distressed. Among these will Rebecca be numbered. Say this to thy lord, should he inquire after the fate of her whose life he saved!'—There was an involuntary tremor in Rebecca's voice, and a tenderness of accent, which perhaps betrayed more than she would willingly have expressed. She hastened to bid Rowena adieu.—'Farewell,' she said, 'may He, who made both Jew and Christian, shower down on you his choicest blessings!'

"She glided from the apartment, leaving Rowena surprised as if a vision had passed before her. The fair Saxon related the singular conference to her husband, on whose mind it made a deep impression. He lived long and happily with Rowena; for they were attached to each other by the bonds of early affection, and they loved each other the more, from recollection of the obstacles which had impeded their union. Yet it would be inquiring too curiously to ask, whether the recollection of Rebecca's beauty and magnanimity did not recur to his mind more frequently than the fair descendant of Alfred might altogether have approved."

The work before us shows at least as much genius as any of those with which it must now be numbered—and excites, perhaps, at least on the first perusal, as strong an interest: but it does not delight so deeply—and we rather think it will not please so long. Rebecca is almost the only lovely being in the story—and she is evidently a creature of the fancy—a mere poetical personification. Next to her—for Isaac is but a milder Shylock, and by no means more natural than his original—the heartiest interest is excited by the outlaws and their merry chief—because the tone and manners ascribed to them are more akin to those that prevailed among the yeomanry of later days, than those of the Knights, Priors, and Princes are to any thing with which a more recent age has been acquainted.—Cedric the Saxon with his thralls, and Bois-Guilbert the Templar with his Moors, are to us but theoretical or mythological persons. We know nothing about them—and never feel assured that we fully comprehend their drift, or enter rightly into their feelings. The same genius which now busies us with their concerns, might have excited an equal interest for the adventures of Oberon and Pigwiggin—or for any imaginary community of Giants, Amazons, or Cynocephali. The interest we do take is in the situations—and the extremes of peril, heroism, and atrocity in which the great latitude of the fiction enables the author to indulge. Even with this advantage, we soon feel, not only that the characters he brings before us are contrary to our experience, but that they are actually impossible. There could in fact have been no such state of society as that of which the story before us professes to give us but samples and ordinary results. In a country beset with such worthies as Front-de-Bœuf, Malvoisin, and the rest, Isaac the Jew could neither have grown rich, nor lived to old age; and no Rebecca could either have acquired her delicacy, or preserved her honour. Neither could a plump Prior Aymer have followed venery in woods swarming with the merry men of Robin Hood.—Rotherwood must have been burned to the ground two or three times in every year—and all the knights and thanes of the land been killed off nearly as often. The thing, in short, when calmly considered, cannot be received as a reality; and, after gazing for a while on the splendid pageant which it presents, and admiring the exaggerated beings who counterfeit, in their grand style, the passions and feelings of our poor human nature, we soon find that we must turn again to our Waverleys, and Antiquaries, and Old Mortalities, and become acquainted with our neighbours and ourselves, and our duties, and dangers, and true felicities, in the exquisite pictures which our author *there* exhibits of the follies we daily witness or display, and of the prejudices, habits, and affections, by which we are still hourly obstructed, governed, or cheered.

We end, therefore, as we began—by preferring the home scenes, and the copies of originals which we know—but admiring, in the highest degree, the fancy and judgment and feeling by which this more distant and ideal prospect is enriched. It is a splendid Poem—and contains matter enough for six good Tragedies. As it is, it will make a glorious melodrame for the end of the season. Perhaps the author does better—for us and for himself—by writing more novels: but we have an earnest wish that he would try his hand in

the actual bow of Shakspeare — venture fairly within his enchanted circle — and reassert the Dramatic Sovereignty of England, by putting forth a genuine Tragedy of passion, fancy, and incident. He has all the qualifications to ensure success * — except perhaps the art of compression; — for we suspect it would cost him no little effort to confine his story, and the development of his characters, to some fifty or sixty small pages. But the attempt is worth making; and he may be certain that he cannot fail without glory.

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

(June, 1822.)

The Fortunes of Nigel. By the Author of "Waverley," "Kenilworth," &c. In 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 950. Edinburgh: Constable and Co. 1822.

It was a happy thought in us to review this author's works in groups, rather than in single pieces; for we should never otherwise have been able to keep up both with him and with our other business. Even as it is, we find we have let him run so far ahead, that we have now rather more of him on hand than we can well get through at a sitting; and are in danger of forgetting the early part of the long series of stories to which we are thus obliged to look back, or of finding it forgotten by the public—or at least of having the vast assemblage of events and characters that now lie before us something jumbled and confounded, both in our own recollections and that of our admiring readers.

Our last particular notice, we think, was of Ivanhoe, in the end of 1819: and in the two years that have since elapsed, we have had the Monastery, the Abbot, Kenilworth, the Pirates, and Nigel, — one, two, three, four, five, — large original works from the same fertile and inexhaustible pen. It is a strange manufacture! and though depending entirely on invention and original fancy, really seems to proceed with all the steadiness and regularity of a thing that was kept in operation by industry and application alone. *Our* whole fraternity, for example, with all the works of all other writers to supply them with materials, are not half so sure of bringing out their two volumes in the year, as this one author, with nothing but his own genius to depend on, is of bringing out his six or seven. There is no instance of any such experiment being so long continued with success; and, according to all appearances, it is just as far from a termination now, as it was at the beginning. If it were only for the singularity of the thing, it would be worth while to chronicle the actual course and progress of this extraordinary adventure.

Of the two first works we have mentioned, the Monastery and the Abbot, we have the least to say; and we believe the public have the least curiosity to know our opinion. They are certainly the least meritorious of the whole series, either subsequent or preceding; and while they are decidedly worse than the other works of the same author, we are not sure that we can say, as we have done of some of his other failures, that they are better than those of any other recent writer of fiction. So conspicuous, indeed, was their inferiority, that we at one time apprehended that we should have been called upon to interfere before our time, and to admonish the author of the hazard to which he was exposing his fame. But as he has since redeemed that slip, we shall now pass it over lightly, and merely notice one or two things that still live in our remembrance.

We do not think the White Lady and the other supernatural agencies, the worst blemish of "The Monastery." On the contrary, the first apparition of the spirit by her lonely fountain (though borrowed from Lord Byron's Witch of the Alps in Manfred), as well as the effect of the interview on the mind of the young aspirant to whom she reveals herself, have always appeared to us to be very beautifully imagined. But we must confess, that their subsequent descent into an alabaster cavern, and the seizure of a stolen Bible from an altar blazing with cold flames, is a fiction of a more ignoble stock: and looks very like an

* We take it for granted, that the charming extracts from "Old Plays," that are occasionally given as mottoes to the chapters of this and some of his other works, are original compositions of the author whose prose they garnish: — and they show that he is not less a master of the most beautiful style of Dramatic versification, than of all the higher and more inward secrets of that forgotten art.

unlucky combination of a French fairy tale and a dull German romance. The Euphuist too, Sir Piercie Shafton, is a mere nuisance throughout. Nor can we remember any incident in an unsuccessful farce more utterly absurd and pitiable, than the remembrance of tailorship that is supposed to be conjured up in the mind of this chivalrous person, by the presentment of the fairy's bodkin to his eyes. There is something ineffably poor at once, and extravagant, in the idea of a solid silver implement being taken from the hair of a spiritual and shadowy being, for the sage purpose of making an earthly coxcomb angry to no end; — while our delight at this happy imagination is not a little heightened by reflecting that it is all the time utterly unintelligible, how the mere exhibition of a lady's bodkin should remind any man of a tailor in his pedigree — or be thought to import such a disclosure to the spectators.

But, notwithstanding these gross faults, and the general flatness of the monkish parts — including that of the Sub-prior, which is a failure in spite of considerable labour — it would be absurd to rank this with common novels, or even to exclude it from the file of the author's characteristic productions. It has both humour, and fancy, and pathos enough, to maintain its title to such a distinction. The aspiring temper of Halbert Glendinning, the rustic establishment at Glendearg, the picture of Christie of Clinthill, and, above all, the scenes at the castle of Avenel, are all touched with the hand of a master. Julian's dialogue, or soliloquy rather, to his hawk, in presence of his paramour, with its accompaniments and sequel, is as powerful as any thing the author has produced; and the tragic and historical scenes that lead to the conclusion are also, for the most part, excellent. It is a work, in short, which pleases more upon a second reading than at first — as we not only pass over the Euphuism and other dull passages, but, being aware of its defects, no longer feel the disappointment and provocation which are apt, on their first excitement, to make us unjust to its real merits.

In point of real merit, "The Abbot" is not much better, we think, than the Monastery — but it is fuller of historical painting, and, in the higher scenes, has perhaps a deeper and more exalted interest. The Popish zealots, whether in the shape of prophetic crones, or heroic monks, are very tiresome personages. Catherine Seyton is a wilful deterioration of Diana Vernon, and is far too pert and confident; while her paramour Roland Græme is, for a good part of the work, little better than a blackguard boy, who should have had his head broken twice a day, and been put nightly in the stocks, for his impertinence. Some of the scenes at Lochleven are of a different pitch; — though the formal and measured sarcasms which the Queen and Lady Douglas interchange with such solemn verbosity, have a very heavy and unnatural effect. These faults, however, are amply redeemed by the beauties with which they are mingled. There are some grand passages, of enthusiasm and devoted courage, in Catherine Seyton. The escape from Lochleven is given with great effect and spirit — and the subsequent mustering of the Queen's adherents, and their march to Langside, as well as the battle itself, are full of life and colouring. The noble bearing and sad and devoted love of George Douglas — the brawl on the streets of Edinburgh and the scenes at Holyrood, both serious and comic, as well as many of the minor characters, such as the Ex-abbot of St. Mary's metamorphosed into the humble gardener of Lochleven, are all in the genuine manner of the author, and could not have proceeded from any other hand. On the whole, however, the work is unsatisfactory, and too deficient in design and unity. We do not know why it should have been called "The Abbot," as that personage has scarcely any thing to do with it. As an historical sketch, it has neither beginning nor end; nor does the time which it embraces possess any peculiar interest: — and for a history of Roland Græme, which is the only denomination that can give it coherence, the narrative is not only far too slight and insignificant in itself, but is too much broken in upon by higher persons and weightier affairs, to retain any of the interest which it might otherwise have possessed.

"Kenilworth," however, is a flight of another wing — and rises almost, if not altogether, to the level of Ivanhoe; displaying, perhaps, as much power in assembling together, and distributing in striking groups, the copious historical materials of that romantic age, as the

other does in eking out their scantiness by the riches of the author's imagination. Elizabeth herself, surrounded as she is with lively and imposing recollections, was a difficult personage to bring prominently forward in a work of fiction: but the task, we think, is here not only fearlessly, but admirably performed; and the character brought out, not merely with the most unsparing fulness, but with the most brilliant and seducing effect. Leicester is less happy; and we have certainly a great deal too much both of the blackguardism of Michael Lambourne, the atrocious villany of Varney and Foster, and the magical dealings of Alasco and Wayland Smith. Indeed, almost all the lower agents in the performance have a sort of demoniacal character; and the deep and disgusting guilt by which most of the main incidents are developed, make a splendid passage of English history read like the Newgate Calendar, and give a certain horror to the story, which is neither agreeable to historical truth, nor attractive in a work of imagination.

The great charm and glory of the piece, however, consists in the magnificence and vivacity of the descriptions with which it abounds; and which set before our eyes, with a freshness and force of colouring which can scarcely ever be gained except by actual observation, all the pomp and stateliness, the glitter and solemnity, of that heroic reign. The moving picture of Elizabeth's night entry to Kenilworth is given with such spirit, richness, and copiousness of detail, that we seem actually transported to the middle of the scene. We feel the press, and hear the music and the din — and descry, amidst the fading lights of a summer eve, the majestical pacings and waving banners that surround the march of the heroic Queen; while the mixture of ludicrous incidents, and the *ennui* that steals on the lengthened parade and fatiguing preparation, give a sense of truth and reality to the sketch, that seems to belong rather to recent recollection than mere ideal conception. We believe, in short, that we have at this moment as lively and distinct an impression of the whole scene, as we shall have in a few weeks of a similar Joyous Entry, for which preparations are now making * in this our loyal metropolis, — and of which we hope, before that time, to be spectators. The account of Leicester's princely hospitality, and of the royal divertisements that ensued, — the feastings and huntings, the flatteries and dissemblings, the pride, the jealousy, the ambition, the revenge, — are all portrayed with the same animating pencil, and leave every thing behind, but some rival works of the same unrivalled artist. The most surprising piece of mere description, however, that we have ever seen, is that of Amy's magnificent apartments at Cumnor Place, and of the dress and beauty of the lovely creature for whom they were adorned. We had no idea before that upholstery and millinery could be made so engaging; and though we are aware that it is the living Beauty that gives its enchantment to the scene, and breathes over the whole an air of voluptuousness, innocence, and pity, it is impossible not to feel that the vivid and clear presentment of the visible objects by which she is surrounded, and the antique splendour in which she is enshrined, not only strengthen our impressions of the reality, but actually fascinate and delight us in themselves, — just as the draperies and still-life in a grand historical picture often divide our admiration with the pathetic effect of the story told by the principal figures. The catastrophe of the unfortunate Amy herself is too sickening and full of pity to be endured; and we shrink from the recollection of it, as we would from that of a recent calamity of our own. The part of Tressilian is unfortunate on the whole, though it contains touches of interest and beauty. The sketch of young Raleigh is splendid, and in excellent keeping with every thing beside it. More, we think, might have been made of the desolate age and broken-hearted anguish of Sir Hugh Robsart; though there are one or two little traits of his paternal love and crushed affection, that are inimitably sweet and pathetic, and which might have lost their effect, perhaps, if the scene had been extended. We do not care much about the goblin dwarf, nor the host, nor the mercer, — nor any of the other characters. They are all too fantastical and affected. They seem copied rather from the quaintness of old plays, than the reality of past and present nature; and serve better to show what manner of personages were to be met with in the Masks and Pageants of the age,

* The visit of George IV. to Edinburgh in July, 1822.

than what were actually to be found in the living population of the land.

"The Pirates" is a bold attempt to furnish out a long and eventful story from a very narrow circle of society, and a scene so circumscribed as scarcely to admit of any great scope or variety of action; and its failure, in so far as it may be thought to have failed, should, in fairness, be ascribed chiefly to this scantiness and defect of the materials. The author, accordingly, has been obliged to borrow pretty largely from other regions. The character and story of Mertoun (which is at once common-place and extravagant),—that of the Pirate himself,—and that of Halcro the poet, have no connection with the localities of Shetland, or the peculiarities of an insular life. Mr. Yellowlees, though he gives occasion to some strong contrasts, is in the same situation. The great blemish, however, of the work, is the inconsistency in Cleveland's character, or rather the way in which he disappoints us, by turning out so much better than we had expected—and yet substantially so ill. So great, indeed, is this disappointment, and so strong the grounds of it, that we cannot help suspecting that the author himself must have altered his design in the course of the work; and, finding himself at a loss how to make either a demon or a hero of the personage whom he had introduced with a view to one or other of these characters, betook himself to the expedient of leaving him in that neutral or mixed state, which, after all, suits the least with his conduct and situation, or with the effects which he is supposed to produce. All that we see of him is a daring, underbred, forward, heartless fellow—very unlikely, we should suppose, to captivate the affections of the high-minded, romantic Minna, or even to supplant an old friend in the favour of the honest Udaller. The charm of the book is in the picture of his family. Nothing can be more beautiful than the description of the two sisters, and the gentle and innocent affection that continues to unite them, even after love has come to divide their interests and wishes. The visit paid them by Norna, and the tale she tells them at midnight, lead to a fine display of the perfect purity of their young hearts, and the native gentleness and dignity of their character. There is, perhaps, still more genius in the development and full exhibition of their father's character; who is first introduced to us as little else than a jovial, thoughtless, hospitable housekeeper; but gradually discloses the most captivating traits, not only of kindness and courage, but of substantial generosity and delicacy of feeling, without ever departing, for an instant, from the frank homeliness of his habitual demeanour. Norna is a new incarnation of Meg Merrilees, and palpably the same in the spirit. Less degraded in her habits and associates, and less lofty and pathetic in her denunciations, she reconciles fewer contradictions, and is, on the whole, inferior perhaps to her prototype; but is far above the rank of a mere imitated or borrowed character. The Udaller's visit to her dwelling on the Fitful-head is admirably managed, and highly characteristic of both parties. Of the humorous characters, Yellowlees is the best. Few things, indeed, are better than the description of his equestrian progression to the feast of the Udaller. Claud Halcro is too fantastical; and peculiarly out of place, we should think, in such a region. A man, who talks in quotations from common plays, and proses eternally about glorious John Dryden, luckily is not often to be met with anywhere, but least of all in the Orkney Islands. Bunce is liable to the same objection,—though there are parts of his character, as well as that of Fletcher and the rest of the crew, given with infinite spirit and effect. The *dénouement* of the story is strained and improbable, and the conclusion rather unsatisfactory: but the work, on the whole, opens up a new world to our curiosity, and affords another proof of the extraordinary pliability, as well as vigour, of the author's genius.

We come now to the work which has afforded us a pretext for this long retrospection, and which we have approached, as befitteth a royal presence, through this long vista of preparatory splendour. Considering that it has now been three months in the hands of the public—and must be about as well known to most of our readers as the older works to which we have just alluded—we do not very well see why we should not deal with it as summarily as we have done with them; and, sparing our dutiful readers the fatigue of toiling through a detail with which they are already

familiar, content ourselves with marking our opinion of it in the same general and comprehensive manner that we have ventured to adopt as to those earlier productions. This, accordingly, is the course which, in the main, we propose to follow; though, for the sake of our distant readers, as well as to give more force and direct application to our general remarks, we must somewhat enlarge the scale of our critical notice.

This work, though dealing abundantly in invention, is, in substance, like Old Mortality and Kenilworth, of an historical character, and may be correctly represented as an attempt to describe and illustrate, by examples, the manners of the court, and, generally speaking, of the age, of James I. of England. And this, on the whole, is the most favourable aspect under which it can be considered; for, while it certainly presents us with a very brilliant, and, we believe, a very faithful sketch of the manners and habits of the time, we cannot say that it either embodies them in a very interesting story, or supplies us with any rich variety of particular characters. Except King James himself, and Richie Moniplies, there is but little individuality in the personages represented. We should perhaps add Master George Heriot; except that he is too staid and prudent a person to engage very much of our interest. The story is of a very simple structure, and may soon be told.

Lord Glenvarloch, a young Scottish nobleman, whose fortunes had been ruined by his father's profusion, and chiefly by large loans to the Crown, comes to London about the middle of James's reign, to try what part of this debt may be recovered from the justice of his now opulent Sovereign. From want of patronage and experience, he is unsuccessful in his first application; and is about to withdraw in despair, when his serving man, Richard Moniplies, falling accidentally in the way of George Heriot, the favourite jeweller and occasional banker of the King, that benevolent person (to whom, it may not be known to our Southern readers, Edinburgh is indebted for the most flourishing and best conducted of her founded schools or charities) is pleased to take an interest in his affairs, and not only represents his case in a favourable way to the Sovereign, but is the means of introducing him to another nobleman, with whose son, Lord Dalgarno, he speedily forms a rather inauspicious intimacy. By this youth he is initiated into all the gaieties of the town; of which, as well as of the manners and bearing of the men of fashion of the time, a very lively picture is drawn. Among other things, he is encouraged to try his fortune at play; but, being poor and prudent, he plays but for small sums, and, rather unhandsomely we must own, makes it a practice to come away after a moderate winning. On this account he is slighted by Lord Dalgarno and his more adventurous associates; and, having learned that they talked contemptuously of him, and that Lord D. had prejudiced the King and the Prince against him, he challenges him for his perfidy in the Park, and actually draws on him, in the precincts of the royal abode. This was, in those days, a very serious offence: and, to avoid its immediate consequences, he is advised to take refuge in Whitefriars, then known by the cant name of *Alsatia*, and understood to possess the privileges of a sanctuary against ordinary arrests. *A propos* of this retirement, we have a very striking and animated picture of the bullies and bankrupts, and swindlers and petty felons by whom this city of refuge was chiefly inhabited — and among whom the young Lord has the good luck to witness a murder, committed on the person of his miserly host. He then bethinks himself of repairing to Greenwich, where the court was, throwing himself upon the clemency of the King, and insisting on being confronted with his accusers; but happening unfortunately to meet with his Majesty in a retired part of the Park to which he had pursued the stag, ahead of all his attendants, his sudden appearance so startles and alarms that pacific monarch, that he accuses him of a treasonable design on his life, and has him committed to the Tower, under that weighty accusation. In the mean time, however, a certain Margaret Ramsay, a daughter of the celebrated watchmaker of that name, who had privately fallen in love with him at the table of George Heriot, her godfather, and had, ever since, kept watch over his proceedings, and aided him in his difficulties by various stratagems and suggestions, had repaired to Greenwich in male attire, with the romantic design of interesting and un-

deceiving the King with regard to him. By a lucky accident, she does obtain an opportunity of making her statement to James; who, in order to put her veracity to the test, sends her, disguised as she was, to Glenvarloch's prison in the Tower, and also looses upon him in the same place, first his faithful Heriot, and afterwards a sarcastic courtier, while he himself plays the eavesdropper to their conversation, from an adjoining apartment constructed for that purpose. The result of this Dionysian experiment is, to satisfy the sagacious monarch both of the innocence of his young countryman, and the malignity of his accusers; who are speedily brought to shame by his acquittal and admittance to favour.

There is an underplot of a more extravagant and less happy structure, about a sad and mysterious lady who inhabits an inaccessible apartment in Heriot's house, and turns out to be the deserted wife of Lord Dalgarno, and a near relation of Lord Glenvarloch. The former is compelled to acknowledge her by the King, very much against his will; though he is considerably comforted when he finds that, by this alliance, he acquires right to an ancient mortgage over the lands of the latter, which nothing but immediate payment of a large sum can prevent him from foreclosing. This is accomplished by the new-raised credit and consequential agency of Richie Moniplies, though not without a scene of pettifogging difficulties. The conclusion is something tragical and sudden. Lord Dalgarno, travelling to Scotland with the redemption-money in a portmanteau, challenges Glenvarloch to meet and fight him, one stage from town; and, while he is waiting on the common, is himself shot dead by one of the Alsatian bullies, who had heard of the precious cargo with which he was making the journey. His antagonist comes up soon enough to revenge him; and, soon after, is married to Miss Ramsay, for whom the King finds a suitable pedigree, and at whose marriage-dinner he condescends to preside; while Richard Moniplies marries the heroic daughter of the Alsatian miser, and is knighted in a very characteristic manner by the good-natured monarch.

The best things in the book, as we have already intimated, are the pictures of King James and of Richard Moniplies—though my Lord Dalgarno is very lively and witty, and well represents the gallantry and profligacy of the time; while the worthy Earl, his father, is very successfully brought forward as the type of the ruder and more uncorrupted age that preceded. We are sorely tempted to produce a sample of Jin Vin the smart apprentice, and of the mixed childishness and heroism of Margaret Ramsay, and the native loftiness and austere candour of Martha Trapbois, and the humour of Dame Suddlechops, and divers other inferior persons. But the rule we have laid down to ourselves, of abstaining from citations from well-known books, must not be farther broken, in the very hour of its enactment;—and we shall therefore conclude, with a few such general remarks on the work before us as we have already bestowed on some other performances, probably no longer so familiar to most of our readers.

We do not think, then, that it is a work either of so much genius or so much interest as Kenilworth or Ivanhoe, or the earlier historical novels of the same author—and yet there be readers who will in all likelihood prefer it to those books, and that for the very reasons which induce us to place it beneath them. These reasons are—First, that the scene is all in London—and that the piece is consequently deprived of the interest and variety derived from the beautiful descriptions of natural scenery, and the still more beautiful combination of its features and expression, with the feelings of the living agents, which abound in those other works; and next, that the characters are more entirely borrowed from the written memorials of the age to which they refer, and less from that eternal and universal nature which is of all ages, than in any of his former works. The plays of that great dramatic era, and the letters and memoirs which have been preserved in such abundance, have made all diligent readers familiar with the peculiarities by which it was marked. But unluckily the taste of the writers of that age was quaint and fantastical; and though their representations necessarily give us a true enough picture of its fashions and follies, it is obviously a distorted and exaggerated picture—and their characters plainly both speak and act as no living men ever did speak or act. Now, this style of caricature is

too palpably copied in the work before us—and, though somewhat softened and relaxed by the good sense of the author, is still so prevalent, that most of his characters strike us rather as whimsical humourists or affected maskers, than as faithful copies of the actual society of *any* historical period; and though they may afford great delight to such slender wits as think the commentators on Shakspeare the greatest men in the world, and here find their little archæological persons made something less inconceivable than usual, they cannot fail to offend and disappoint all those who hold that nature alone must be the source of all natural interest.

Finally, we object to this work, as compared with those to which we have alluded, that the interest is more that of situation, and less of character or action, than in any of the former. The hero is not so much an actor or a sufferer, in most of the events represented, as a spectator. With comparatively little to do in the business of the scene, he is merely placed in the front of it, to look on with the reader as it passes. He has an ordinary and slow-moving suit at court—and, *à propos* of this—all the humours and oddities of the sovereign are exhibited in rich and splendid detail. He is obliged to take refuge for a day in Whitefriars—and all the horrors and atrocities of the Sanctuary are spread out before us through the greater part of a volume. Two or three murders are committed, in which he has no interest, and no other part than that of being accidentally present. His own scanty part, in short, is performed in the vicinity of a number of other separate transactions; and this mere juxtaposition is made an apology for stringing them all up together into one historical romance. We should not care very much if this only destroyed the unity of the piece—but it also sensibly weakens its interest—and reduces it from the rank of a comprehensive and engaging narrative, in which every event gives and receives importance from its connexion with the rest, to that of a mere collection of sketches, relating to the same period and state of society.

The character of the hero, we also think, is more than usually a failure. He is not only a reasonable and discreet person, for whose prosperity we need feel no great apprehension, but he is gratuitously debased by certain infirmities of a mean and somewhat sordid description, which suit remarkably ill with the heroic character. His prudent deportment at the gaming table, and his repeated borrowings of money, have been already hinted at; and we may add, that when interrogated by Heriot about the disguised damsel who is found with him in the Tower, he makes up a false story for the occasion, with a cool promptitude of invention, which reminds us more of Joseph Surface and his French milliner, than of the high-minded son of a stern puritanical Baron of Scotland.

These are the chief faults of the work; and they are not slight ones. Its merits do not require to be specified. They embrace all to which we have not specially objected. The general brilliancy and force of the colouring, the ease and spirit of the design, and the strong touches of character, are all such as we have long admired in the best works of the author. Besides the King and Richie Moniplies, at whose merits we have already hinted, it would be unjust to pass over the prodigious strength of writing that distinguishes the part of Mrs. Martha Trapbois, and the inimitable scenes, though of a coarse and revolting complexion, with Duke Hildebrod and the miser of Alsatia. The Templar Lowestoffe, and Jin Vin, the aspiring apprentice, are excellent sketches of their kind. So are John Christie and his frail dame. Lord Dalgarno is more questionable. There are passages of extraordinary spirit and ability in this part; but he turns out too atrocious. Sir Mungo Malagrowther wearies us from the beginning, and so does the horologist Ramsay—because they are both exaggerated and unnatural characters. We scarcely see enough of Margaret Ramsay to forgive her all her irregularities, and her high fortune; but a great deal certainly of what we do see is charmingly executed. Dame Ursula is something between the vulgar gossiping of Mrs. Quickly in the Merry Wives of Windsor, and the atrocities of Mrs. Turner and Lady Suffolk; and it is rather a contamination of Margaret's purity to have used such counsel.

We have named them all now, or nearly—and must at length conclude. Indeed, nothing but the fascination of this author's pen, and the difficulty of getting away from him, could have induced us to be so particular in

our notices of a story, the details of which will so soon be driven out of our heads by other details as interesting — and as little fated to be remembered. There are other two books coming, we hear, in the course of the winter; and by the time there are four or five, that is, in about eighteen months hence, we must hold ourselves prepared to give some account of them.

SECONDARY SCOTCH NOVELS.

(October, 1823.)

1. *Annals of the Parish, or the Chronicle of Dalmailing, during the Ministry of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder.* Written by Himself. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 400. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1819.
2. *The Ayrshire Legatees, or the Pringle Family.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 395. Blackwood. Edin. 1820.
3. *The Provost.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," "Ayrshire Legatees," &c. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 360. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1820.
4. *Sir Andrew Wyllie of that Ilk.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 3 vols. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1822.
5. *The Steam Boat.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 1 vol. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1822.
6. *The Entail, or the Lairds of Grippy.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," "Sir Andrew Wyllie," &c. 3 vols. 18mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1823.
7. *Ringan Gilhaize, or the Covenanters.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 3 vols. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1823.

---

8. *Valerius, a Roman Story.* 3 vols. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1820.
9. *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.* 1 vol. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1822.
10. *Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair, Minister of the Gospel at Cross-Meikle.* 1 vol. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1822.
11. *The Trials of Margaret Lindsay.* By the Author of "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life." 1 vol. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1823.
12. *Reginald Dalton.* By the Author of "Valerius," and "Adam Blair." 3 vols. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1823.*

We have been sometimes accused, we observe, of partiality to the writers of our own country, and reproached with helping middling Scotch works into notice, while far more meritorious publications in England and Ireland have been treated with neglect. We take leave to say, that there could not possibly be a more unjust accusation: and the list of books which we have prefixed to this article, affords of itself, we now conceive, the most triumphant refutation of it. Here is a set of lively and popular works, that have attracted, and very deservedly, a large share of attention in every part of the empire — issuing from the press, successively for four or five years, in this very city, and under our eyes, and not hitherto honoured by us with any indication of our being even conscious of their existence. The causes of this long neglect it can now be of no importance to explain. But sure we are, that our ingenious countrymen have far greater reason to complain of it, than any aliens can have to impute this tardy reparation to national partiality.

The works themselves are evidently too numerous to admit of our now giving more than a very general account of them: — and indeed, some of their authors emulate their great prototype so successfully in the rapid succession of their performances, that, even if they had not been so far ahead of us at the starting, we must soon have been reduced to deal with them as we have done with him, and only to have noticed their productions when they have grown up into groups and families — as they increased and multiplied in the land. In intimating that we regard them as imitations of the inimitable novels, — which *we*, who never presume to peep under masks, still hold to be by an author unknown, — we have already exhausted more than half their general character. They are inferior certainly (and what is not?) to their great originals. But they are the best copies which have yet been produced of them; and it is not a little creditable to the genius of

* I have retained most of the citations in this article; — the books from which they are taken not being so universally known as those of Sir Walter Scott — and yet deserving, I think, of being thus recalled to the attention of general readers. The whole seem to have been originally put out anonymously: — but the authorship has been long ago acknowledged; — so that it is scarcely necessary for me to mention that the first seven in the list are the works of the late Mr. Galt, Valerius and Adam Blair of Mr. Lockhart — and the Lights and Shadows, and Margaret Lindsay, of Professor Wilson.

our beloved country, that, even in those gay and airy walks of literature from which she had been so long estranged, an opening was no sooner made, by the splendid success of one gifted Scotsman, than many others were found ready to enter upon them, with a spirit of enterprise, and a force of invention, that promised still farther to extend their boundaries — and to make these new adventurers, if not formidable rivals, at least not unworthy followers of him by whose example they were roused.

There are three authors, it seems, to the works now before us; — so at least the title-pages announce; and it is a rule with us, to give implicit faith to those solemn intimations. We think, indeed, that without the help of that oracle, we should have been at no loss to ascribe all the works which are now claimed by the author of the Annals of the Parish, to one and the same hand; but we should certainly have been inclined to suppose, that there was only one author for all the rest, — with the exception, perhaps, of *Valerius*, which has little resemblance, either in substance or manner, to any of those with which it is now associated.

In the arduous task of imitating the great novelist, they have apparently found it necessary to resort to the great principle of division of labour; and yet they have not, among them, been able to equal the work of his single hand! The author of the Parish Annals seems to have sought chiefly to rival the humorous and less dignified parts of his original; by large representations of the character and manners of the middling and lower orders in Scotland, intermingled with traits of sly and sarcastic sagacity; and occasionally softened and relieved by touches of unexpected tenderness and simple pathos, all harmonized by the same truth to nature and fine sense of national peculiarity. In these delineations there is, no doubt, more vulgarity, both of style and conception, and less poetical invention, than in the corresponding passages of the works he aspires to imitate; but, on the other hand, there is more of that peculiar humour which depends on the combination of great *naïveté*, indolence, and occasional absurdity, with natural good sense, and taste, and kind feelings in the principal characters — such combinations as Sir Roger De Coverley, the Vicar of Wakefield, and My Uncle Toby, have made familiar to all English readers, but of which we have not hitherto had any good Scottish representative. There is also more systematic, though very good-humoured, sarcasm, and a more distinct moral, or unity of didactic purpose, in most of his writings, than it would be easy to discover in the playful, capricious, and fanciful sketches of his great master.

The other two authors have formed themselves more upon the poetical, reflective, and pathetic parts of their common model; and have aimed at emulating such beautiful pictures as that of Mr. Peter Pattison, the blind old woman in Old Mortality and the Bride of Lammermoor, the courtship at the Mermaiden's Well, and, generally, his innumerable and exquisite descriptions of the soft, simple, and sublime scenery of Scotland, as viewed in connexion with the character of its better rustic population. Though far better skilled than their associate, in the art of composition, and chargeable, perhaps, with less direct imitation, we cannot but regard them as much less original, and as having performed, upon the whole, a far easier task. They have no great variety of style, and but little of actual invention, — and are *mannerists* in the strongest sense of that term. Though unquestionably pathetic in a very powerful degree, they are pathetic, for the most part, by the common recipes, which enable any one almost, to draw tears, who will condescend to employ them. They are mighty religious too,—but apparently on the same principle; and, while their laboured attacks on our sympathies are felt, at last, to be somewhat importunate and puerile, their devotional orthodoxies seem to tend, every now and then, a little towards cant. This is perhaps too harshly said; and is more, we confess, the result of the second reading than the first; and suggested rather by a comparison with their great original, than an impression of their own independent merits. Compared with that high standard, it is impossible not to feel that they are somewhat wanting in manliness, freedom, and liberality; and, while they enlarge, in a sort of pastoral, emphatic, and melodious style, on the virtues of our cottagers, and the apostolical sanctity of our ministers and elders, the delights of pure

affection, and the comforts of the Bible, are lamentably deficient in that bold and free vein of invention, that thorough knowledge of the world, and rectifying spirit of good sense, which redeem all that great author's flights from the imputation either of extravagance or affectation, and give weight, as well as truth, to his most poetical delineations of nature and of passion. But, though they cannot pretend to this rare merit, which has scarcely fallen to the share of more than one since the days of Shakspeare, there is no doubt much beautiful writing, much admirable description, and much both of tender and of lofty feeling, in the volumes of which we are now speaking; and though their inferior and borrowed lights are dimmed in the broader blaze of the luminary, who now fills our Northern sky with his glory, they still hold their course distinctly within the orb of his attraction, and make a visible part of the splendour which draws to that quarter of the heavens the admiration of so many distant eyes.

We must now, however, say a word or two on the particular works we have enumerated; among which, and especially in the first series, there is a very great difference of design, as well as inequality of merit. The first with which we happened to become acquainted, and, after all, perhaps the best and most interesting of the whole, is that entitled "Annals of the Parish," comprising in one little volume of about 400 pages the domestic chronicle of a worthy minister, on the coast of Ayrshire, for a period of no less than fifty-one years, from 1760 to 1810. The primitive simplicity of the pastor's character, tinctured as it is by his professional habits and sequestered situation, form but a part of the attraction of this work. The brief and natural notices of the public events which signalized the long period through which it extends, and the slight and transient effects they produced on the tranquil lives and peaceful occupations of his remote parishioners, have not only a natural, we think, but a moral and monitory effect; and, while they revive in our own breasts the almost forgotten impressions of our childhood and early youth, as to the same transactions, make us feel the actual insignificance of those successive occurrences which, each in its turn, filled the minds of his contemporaries, — and the little real concern which the bulk of mankind have in the public history of their day. This quiet and detailed retrospect of fifty years, brings the true moment and value of the events it embraces to the test, as it were, of their actual operation on particular societies; and helps to dissipate the illusion, by which private persons are so frequently led to suppose that they have a personal interest in the wisdom of cabinets, or the madness of princes. The humble simplicity of the chronicler's character assists, no doubt, this sobering effect of his narrative. The natural and tranquil manner in which he puts down great things by the side of little — and considers as exactly on the same level, the bursting of the parish mill-dam and the commencement of the American troubles — the victory of Admiral Rodney and the donation of 50*l.* to his kirk-session, — are all equally edifying and agreeable; and illustrate, in a very pleasing way, that law of intellectual, as well as of physical optics, by which small things at hand uniformly appear greater than large ones at a distance.

The great charm of the work, however, is in the traits of character which it discloses, and the commendable brevity with which the whole chronicle is digested. We know scarcely any instance in which a modern writer has shown such forbearance and consideration for his readers. With very considerable powers of humour, the ludicrous incidents are never dwelt upon with any tediousness, nor pushed to the length of burlesque or caricature — and the more seducing touches of pathos with which the work abounds, are intermingled and cut short, with the same sparing and judicious hand;—so that the temperate and natural character of the pastor is thus, by a rare merit and felicity, made to preponderate over the tragic and comic genius of the author. That character is, as we have already hinted, as happily conceived as it is admirably executed — contented, humble, and perfectly innocent and sincere — very orthodox, and zealously Presbyterian, without learning or habits of speculation — soft-hearted and full of indulgence and ready sympathy, without any enthusiasm or capacity of devoted attachment — given to old-fashioned prejudices, with an instinctive sagacity in practical affairs—and unconsciously acute in detecting the characters of others,

and singularly awake to the beauties of nature, without a motion either of observation or of poetry — very patient and primitive in short, indolent and gossiping, and scarcely ever stirring, either in mind or in person, beyond the limits of his parish. The style of the book is curiously adapted to the character of the supposed author—very genuine homely Scotch in the idiom and many of the expressions—but tinctured with scriptural phrases, and some relics of college learning — and all digested in the grave and methodical order of an old-fashioned sermon.

After so much praise, we are rather afraid to make any extracts — for the truth is, that there is not a great deal of matter in the book, and a good deal of vulgarity — and that it is only good-natured people, with something of the annalist's own simplicity, that will be as much pleased with it as we have been. For the sake of such persons, however, we will venture on a few specimens. Here is the description of Mrs. Malcolm.

"Secondly. I have now to speak of the coming of Mrs. Malcolm. She was the widow of a Clyde shipmaster, that was lost at sea with his vessel. She was a genty body, calm and methodical. From morning to night she sat at her wheel, spinning the finest lint, which suited well with her pale hands. She never changed her widow's weeds, and she was aye as if she had just been ta'en out of a bandbox. The tear was aften in her e'e when the bairns were at the school; but when they came home, her spirit was lighted up with gladness, although, poor woman, she had many a time very little to give them. They were, however, wonderful well-bred things, and took with thankfulness whatever she set before them, for they knew that their father, the breadwinner, was away, and that she had to work sore for their bit and drap. I dare say, the only vexation that ever she had from any of them, on their own account, was when Charlie, the eldest laddie, had won fourpence at pitch and toss at the school, which he brought home with a proud heart to his mother. I happened to be daunrin' bye at the time, and just looked in at the door to say gude night. And there was she sitting with the silent tear on her cheek, and Charlie greeting as if he had done a great fault, and the other four looking on with sorrowful faces. Never, I am sure, did Charlie Malcolm gamble after that night.

"I often wondered what brought Mrs. Malcolm to our clachan, instead of going to a populous town, where she might have taken up a huxtry-shop, as she was but of a silly constitution, the which would have been better for her than spinning from morning to far in the night, as if she was in verity drawing the thread of life. But it was, no doubt, from an honest pride to hide her poverty; for when her daughter Effie was ill with the measles — the poor lassie was very ill — nobody thought she could come through, and when she did get the turn, she was for many a day a heavy handful; — our session being rich, and nobody on it but cripple Tammy Daidles, that was at that time known through all the country side for begging on a horse, I thought it my duty to call upon Mrs. Malcolm in a sympathizing way, and offer her some assistance — but she refused it. 'No, sir,' said she. 'I canna take help from the poor's box, although it's very true that I am in great need; for it might hereafter be cast up to my bairns, whom it may please God to restore to better circumstances when I am no to see't; but I would fain borrow five pounds, and if, sir, you will write to Mr. Maitland, that is now the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and tell him that Marion Shaw would be obliged to him for the lend of that soom, I think he will not fail to send it.

"I wrote the letter that night to Provost Maitland, and, by the retour of the post, I got an answer, with twenty pounds for Mrs. Malcolm, saying, 'that it was with sorrow he heard so small a trifle could be serviceable.' When I took the letter and the money, which was in a bank-bill, she said, 'This is just like himsel.' She then told me, that Mr. Maitland had been a gentleman's son of the east country, but driven out of his father's house, when a laddie, by his stepmother; and that he had served as a servant lad with her father, who was the Laird of Yillcogie, but ran through his estate and left her, his only daughter, in little better than beggary with her auntie, the mother of Captain Malcolm, her husband that was. Provost Maitland in his servitude had ta'en a notion of her; and when he recovered his patrimony, and had become a great Glasgow merchant, on hearing how she was left by her father, he offered to marry her, but she had promised herself to her cousin the Captain, whose widow she was. He then married a rich lady, and in time grew, as he was, Lord Provost of the City: but his letter with the twenty pounds to me shewed that he had not forgotten his first love. It was a short, but a well-written letter, in a fair hand of write, containing much of the true gentleman; and Mrs. Malcolm said, 'Who knows but out of the regard he once had for their mother, he may do something for my five helpless orphans.'" — *Annals of the Parish*, pp. 16—21.

Charles afterwards goes to sea, and comes home unexpectedly.

"One evening, towards the gloaming, as I was taking my walk of meditation, I saw a brisk sailor laddie coming towards me. He had a pretty green parrot, sitting on a bundle, tied in a Barcelona silk handkerchief, which he carried with a stick over his shoulder, and in this bundle was a wonderful big nut, such as no one in our parish had ever seen. It was called a cocker-nut. This blithe callant was Charlie

Malcolm, who had come all the way that day his leaful lane, on his own legs from Greenock, where the tobacco trader was then 'livering her cargo. I told him how his mother, and his brothers, and his sisters were all in good health, and went to convoy him home; and as we were going along, he told me many curious things; and he gave me six beautiful yellow limes, that he had brought in his pouch all the way across the seas, for me to make a bowl of punch with! and I thought more of them than if they had been golden guineas—it was so mindful of the laddie.

"When we got to the door of his mother's house, she was sitting at the fire-side, with her three other bairns at their bread and milk, Kate being then with Lady Skimmilk, at the Breadland, sewing. It was between the day and dark, when the shuttle stands still till the lamp is lighted. But such a shout of joy and thankfulness as rose from that hearth, when Charlie went in! The very parrot, ye would have thought, was a participator, for the beast gied a skraik that made my whole head dirl; and the neighbours came flying and flocking to see what was the matter, for it was the first parrot ever seen within the bounds of the parish, and some thought it was but a foreign hawk, with a yellow head and green feathers."—*Annals of the Parish*, pp. 44, 45.

The good youth gets into the navy, and distinguishes himself in various actions. This is the catastrophe.

"But, oh! the wicked wastry of life in war! In less than a month after, the news came of a victory over the French fleet, and by the same post I got a letter from Mr. Howard, that was the midshipman who came to see us with Charles, telling me that poor Charles had been mortally wounded in the action, and had afterwards died of his wounds. 'He was a hero in the engagement,' said Mr. Howard, 'and he died as a good and a brave man should.'—These tidings gave me one of the sorest hearts I ever suffered; and it was long before I could gather fortitude to disclose the tidings to poor Charles's mother. But the callants of the school had heard of the victory, and were going shouting about, and had set the steeple bell a-ringing, by which Mrs. Malcolm heard the news; and knowing that Charles's ship was with the fleet, she came over to the Manse in great anxiety, to hear the particulars, somebody telling her that there had been a foreign letter to me by the post-man.

"When I saw her I could not speak, but looked at her in pity! and the tear fleeing up into my eyes, she guessed what had happened. After giving a deep and sore sigh, she inquired, 'How did he behave? I hope well, for he was aye a gallant laddie!'—and then she wept very bitterly. However, growing calmer, I read to her the letter, and when I had done, she begged me to give it her to keep, saying, 'It's all that I have now left of my pretty boy; but it's mair precious to me than the wealth of the Indies;' and she begged me to return thanks to the Lord, for all the comforts and manifold mercies with which her lot had been blessed, since the hour she put her trust in Him alone, and that was when she was left a pennyless widow, with her five fatherless bairns. It was just an edification of the spirit, to see the Christian resignation of this worthy woman. Mrs. Balwhidder was confounded, and said, there was more sorrow in seeing the deep grief of her fortitude, than tongue could tell.

"Having taken a glass of wine with her, I walked out to conduct her to her own house, but in the way we met with a severe trial. All the weans were out parading with napkins and kail-blades on sticks, rejoicing and triumphing in the glad tidings of victory. But when they saw me and Mrs. Malcolm coming slowly along, they guessed what had happened, and threw away their banners of joy; and, standing all up in a row, with silence and sadness, along the kirkyard wall as we passed, showed an instinct of compassion that penetrated to my very soul. The poor mother burst into fresh affliction, and some of the bairns into an audible weeping; and, taking one another by the hand, they followed us to her door, like mourners at a funeral. Never was such a sight seen in any town before. The neighbours came to look at it, as we walked along; and the men turned aside to hide their faces, while the mothers pressed their babies fondlier to their bosoms, and watered their innocent faces with their tears.

"I prepared a suitable sermon, taking as the words of my text, 'Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for your strength is laid waste.' But when I saw around me so many of my people, clad in complimentary mourning for the gallant Charles Malcolm, and that even poor daft Jenny Gaffaw, and her daughter, had on an old black ribbon; and when I thought of him, the spirited laddie, coming home from Jamaica, with his parrot on his shoulder, and his limes for me, my heart filled full, and I was obliged to sit down in the pulpit and drop a tear."—*Ibid.* pp. 214—218.

We like these tender passages the best—but the reader should have a specimen of the humorous vein also. The following we think excellent.

"In the course of the summer, just as the roof was closing in of the school-house, my lord came to the castle with a great company, and was not there a day till he sent for me to come over on the next Sunday, to dine with him; but I sent him word that I could not do so, for it would be a transgression of the Sabbath; which made him send his own gentleman, to make his apology for having taken so great a liberty with me, and to beg me to come on the Monday, which I accordingly did, and nothing could be better than the discretion with which I was used. There was a vast company of English ladies and gentlemen, and his lordship, in a most jocose manner, told them all how he had fallen on the midden, and how I had clad him in my clothes, and there was a wonder of

laughing and diversion: but the most particular thing in the company, was a large, round-faced man, with a wig, that was a dignitary in some great Episcopalian church in London, who was extraordinary condescending towards me, drinking wine with me at the table, and saying weighty sentences in a fine style of language, about the becoming grace of simplicity and innocence of heart, in the clergy of all denominations of Christians, which I was pleased to hear; for really he had a proud red countenance, and I could not have thought he was so mortified to humility within, had I not heard with what sincerity he delivered himself, and seen how much reverence and attention was paid to him by all present, particularly by my lord's chaplain, who was a pious and pleasant young divine, though educated at Oxford for the Episcopalian persuasion.

"One day soon after, as I was sitting in my closet conning a sermon for the next Sunday, I was surprised by a visit from the dean, as the dignitary was called. He had come, he said, to wait on me as rector of the parish, for so it seems they call a pastor in England, and to say, that if it was agreeable, he would take a family dinner with us before he left the castle I could make no objection to his kindness, but said I hoped my lord would come with him, and that we would do our best to entertain them with all suitable hospitality. About an hour or so after he had returned to the castle, one of the flunkies brought a letter from his lordship to say, that not only he would come with the dean, but that they would bring the other guests with them, and that, as *they* could only drink London wine, the butler would send me a hamper in the morning, assured, as he was pleased to say, that Mrs. Balwhidder would otherwise provide good cheer.

"This notification, however, was a great trouble to my wife, who was only used to manufacture the produce of our glebe and yard to a profitable purpose, and not used to the treatment of deans and lords, and other persons of quality. However, she was determined to stretch a point on this occasion, and we had, as all present declared, a charming dinner; for fortunately one of the sows had a litter of pigs a few days before, and, in addition to a goose, that is but a boss bird, we had a roasted pig, with an apple in its mouth, which was just a curiosity to see; and my lord called it a tythe pig, but I told him it was one of Mrs. Balwhidder's own clecking, which saying of mine made no little sport when expounded to the dean."—*Annals of the Parish*, pp. 136—141.

We add the description of the first dancing-master that had been seen in these parts in the year 1762.

"Also a thing happened in this year, which deserves to be recorded as manifesting what effect the smuggling was beginning to take on the morals of the country side. One Mr. Macskipnish, of Highland parentage, who had been a valet-de-chambre with a Major in the campaigns, and taken a prisoner with him by the French, he having come home in a cartel, took up a dancing-school at Irville, the which art he had learned in the genteelest fashion, in the mode of Paris, at the French court. Such a thing as a dancing-school had never, in the memory of man, been known in our country side; and there was such a sound about the steps and cotillions of Mr. Macskipnish, that every lad and lass, that could spare time and siller, went to him, to the great neglect of their work. The very bairns on the loan, instead of their wonted play, gaed linking and louping in the steps of Mr. Macskipnish, who was, to be sure, a great curiosity, with long spindle legs, his breast shot out like a duck's, and his head powdered and frizzled up like a tappit-hen. He was, indeed, the proudest peacock that could be seen, and he had a ring on his finger, and when he came to drink his tea at the Breadland, he brought no hat on his head, but a droll cockit thing under his arm, which, he said, was after the manner of the courtiers at the petty suppers of one Madam Pompadour, who was at that time the concubine of the French king.

"I do not recollect any other remarkable thing that happened in this year. The harvest was very abundant, and the meal so cheap, that it caused a great defect in my stipend, so that I was obligated to postpone the purchase of a mahogany scrutoire for my study, as I had intended. But I had not the heart to complain of this; on the contrary, I rejoiced thereat, for what made me want my scrutoire till another year, had carried blitheness into the hearth of the cotter, and made the widow's heart sing with joy; and I would have been an unnatural creature had I not joined in the universal gladness, because plenty did abound."—*Ibid.* pp. 30—32.

We shall only try the patience of our readers farther with the death of Nanse Banks, the parish schoolmistress.

"She had been long in a weak and frail state, but, being a methodical creature, still kept on the school, laying the foundation for many a worthy wife and mother. However, about the decline of the year her complaints increased, and she sent for me to consult about her giving up the school; and I went to see her on a Saturday afternoon, when the bit lassies, her scholars, had put the house in order, and gone home till the Monday.

"She was sitting in the window-nook reading THE WORD to herself when I entered; but she closed the book, and put her spectacles in for a mark when she saw me: and as it was expected I would come, her easy chair, with a clean cover, had been set out for me by the scholars, by which I discerned that there was something more than common to happen, and so it appeared when I had taken my seat. 'Sir,' said she, 'I hae sent for you on a thing troubles me sairly. I have warsled with poortith in this shed,

which it has pleased the Lord to allow me to possess, but my strength is worn out, and I fear I maun yield in the strife;' and she wiped her eye with her apron. I told her, however, to be of good cheer; and then she said, 'that she could no longer thole the din of the school; and that she was weary, and ready to lay herself down to die whenever the Lord was pleased to permit. But,' continued she, 'what can I do without the school? and, alas! I can neither work nor want; and I am wae to go on the Session, for I am come of a decent family.' I comforted her, and told her, that I thought she had done so much good in the parish, that the Session was deep in her debt, and that what they might give her was but a just payment for her service. 'I would rather, however, Sir,' said she, 'try first what some of my auld scholars will do, and it was for that I wanted to speak with you. If some of them would but just, from time to time, look in upon me, that I may not die alane; and the little pick and drap that I require would not be hard upon them — I am more sure that in this way their gratitude would be no discredit, than I am of having any claim on the Session.'

"As I had always a great respect for an honest pride, I assured her that I would do what she wanted; and accordingly, the very morning after, being Sabbath, I preached a sermon on the helplessness of them that have no help of man; meaning aged single women, living in garret rooms, whose forlorn state, in the gloaming of life, I made manifest to the hearts and understandings of the congregation, in such a manner that many shed tears and went away sorrowful.

"Having thus roused the feelings of my people, I went round the houses on the Monday morning, and mentioned what I had to say more particularly about poor old Nanse Banks the schoolmistress, and truly I was rejoiced at the condition of the hearts of my people. There was a universal sympathy among them; and it was soon ordered, that what with one and another, her decay should be provided for. But it was not ordained that she should be long heavy on their good will. On the Monday the school was given up, and there was nothing but wailing among the bit lassies, the scholars, for getting the vacance, as the poor things said, because the mistress was going to lie down to dee. And, indeed, so it came to pass; for she took to her bed the same afternoon, and, in the course of the week, dwindled away, and slippet out of this howling wilderness into the kingdom of heaven, on the Sabbath following, as quietly as a blessed saint could do. And here I should mention, that the Lady Macadam, when I told her of Nanse Banks's case, inquired if she was a snuffer, and, being answered by me that she was, her ladyship sent her a pretty French enamel box full of Macabaw, a fine snuff that she had in a bottle; and, among the Macabaw, was found a guinea, at the bottom of the box, after Nanse Banks had departed this life, which was a kind thing of Lady Macadam to do." — Pp. 87—91.

The next of this author's publications, we believe, was "The Ayrshire Legatees," also in one volume, and a work of great, and similar, though inferior merit, to the former. It is the story of the proceedings of a worthy Scottish clergyman and his family, to whom a large property had been unexpectedly bequeathed by a relation in India, in the course of their visit to London to recover this property. The patriarch himself and his wife, and his son and daughter, who form the party, all write copious accounts of what they see to their friends in Ayrshire — and being all lowly and simply bred, and quite new to the scenes in which they are now introduced, make up among them a very entertaining miscellany, of original, *naïve*, and preposterous observations. The idea of thus making a family club, as it were, for a varied and often contradictory account of the same objects — each tinging the picture with his own peculiarities, and unconsciously drawing his own character in the course of the description, was first exemplified, we believe, in the Humphrey Clinker of Smollett, and has been since copied with success in the Bath Guide, Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, the Fudge Family, and other ingenious pieces, both in prose and verse. Though the conception of the Ayrshire Legatees, however, is not new, the execution and details must be allowed to be original; and, along with a good deal of *twaddle*, and too much vulgarity, certainly display very considerable powers both of humour, invention, and acute observation.

The author's next work is "The Provost," which is decidedly better than the Legatees, and on a level nearly with the Annals of the Parish. There is no inconsiderable resemblance, indeed, it appears to us, in the character of the two Biographies: for if we substitute the love of jobbing and little management, which is inseparable from the situation of a magistrate in one of our petty Burghs, for the zeal for Presbyterian discipline which used to attach to our orthodox clergy, and make a proper allowance for the opposite effects of their respective occupations, we shall find a good deal of their remaining peculiarities common to both those personages, — the same kindness of nature with the same tranquillity of temper — and the same practical sagacity,

with a similar deficiency of large views or ingenious speculations. The Provost, to be sure, is a more worldly person than the Pastor, and makes no scruple about using indirect methods to obtain his ends, from which the simplicity of the other would have recoiled; — but his ends are not, on the whole, unjust or dishonest; and his good nature, and acute simplicity, with the Burghal authority of his tone, would almost incline us to conclude, that he was somehow related to the celebrated Bailie Nicol Jarvie of the Saltmarket! The style of his narrative is exceedingly meritorious; for while it is pitched on the self-same key of picturesque homeliness and deliberate method with that of the parish Annalist, it is curiously distinguished from it, by a sensible inferiority in literature, and an agreeable intermixture of *malaprops*, and other figures of rhetoric befitting the composition of a loyal chief magistrate. By far the most remarkable and edifying thing, however, in this volume, is the discovery, which the worthy Provost is represented as having gradually made, of the necessity of consulting public opinion in his later transactions, and the impossibility of managing public affairs, in the present times, with the same barefaced assertion, and brave abuse, of authority, which had been submitted to by a less instructed generation. As we cannot but suspect that this great truth is not yet sufficiently familiar with all in authority among us, and as there is something extremely engaging in the Provost's confession of his slow and reluctant conversion, and in the honest simplicity with which he avows his adherence to the principles of the old school of corruption, though convinced that the manner of advancing them must now be changed, we are tempted to extract a part of his lucubrations on this interesting subject. After noticing the death of old Bailie M'Lucre, he takes occasion to observe:

"And now that he is dead and gone, and also all those whom I found conjunct with him, when I first came into power and office, I may venture to say, that things in yon former times were not guided so thoroughly by the hand of a disinterested integrity as in these latter years. On the contrary, it seemed to be the use and wont of men in public trusts, to think they were free to indemnify themselves in a left-handed way, for the time and trouble they bestowed in the same. But the thing was not so far wrong in principle, as in the huggermuggering way in which it was done, and which gave to it a guilty colour. that, by the judicious stratagem of a right system, it would never have had. And, sooth to say, through the whole course of my public life, I met with no greater difficulties and trials, than in cleansing myself from the old habitudes of office. For I must, in verity, confess, that I myself partook, in a degree, at my beginning, of the caterpillar nature, &c. — While, therefore, I think it has been of a great advantage to the public to have survived that method of administration in which the like of Bailie M'Lucre was engendered, I would not have it understood that I think the men who held the public trusts in those days a whit less honest than the men of my own time. The spirit of their own age was upon them, as that of ours is upon us; and their ways of working the wherry entered more or less into all their trafficking, whether for the commonality, or for their own particular behoof and advantage.

"I have been thus large and frank in my reflections anent the death of the Bailie, because, poor man, he had outlived the times for which he was qualified; and instead of the merriment and jocularity that his wily by-hand ways used to cause among his neighbours, the rising generation began to pick and dab at him, in such a manner, that, had he been much longer spared, it is to be feared he would not have been allowed to enjoy his earnings both with ease and honour." — *The Provost*, pp. 171—174.

Accordingly, afterwards, when a corps of volunteers was raised in his Burgh, he observes: —

"I kept myself aloof from all handling in the pecuniaries of the business; but I lent a friendly countenance to every feasible project that was likely to strengthen the confidence of the King in the loyalty and bravery of his people. For by this time I had learnt that there was a wakerife Common Sense abroad among the opinions of men; and that the secret of the new way of ruling the world was to follow, not to control, the evident dictates of the popular voice; and I soon had reason to felicitate myself on this prudent and seasonable discovery; for it won me great reverence among the forward young men, who started up at the call of their country. — The which, as I tell frankly, was an admonition to me, that the peremptory will of authority was no longer sufficient for the rule of mankind; and, therefore, I squared my after conduct more by a deference to public opinion, than by any laid down maxims and principles of my own. The consequence of which was, that my influence still continued to grow and gather strength in the community, and I was enabled to accomplish many things that my predecessors would have thought it was almost beyond the compass of man to undertake." — *Ibid.* pp. 208—217.

Upon occasion of his third and last promotion to the Provostry, he thus records his own final conversion: —

"When I returned home to my own house, I retired into my private chamber for a time, to consult with myself in what manner my deportment should be regulated; for I was conscious that heretofore I had been overly governed with a disposition to do things my own way, and although not in an avaricious temper, yet something, I must confess, with a sort of sinister respect for my own interests. It may be, that standing now clear and free of the world, I had less incitement to be so grippy, and so was thought of me, I very well know; but in sobriety and truth I conscientiously affirm, and herein record, that I had lived to partake of the purer spirit which the great mutations of the age had conjured into public affairs; and I saw that there was a necessity to carry into all dealings with the concerns of the community, the same probity which helps a man to prosperity, in the sequestered traffic of private life." — *The Provost*, pp. 315, 316.

Trusting that these lessons from a person of such prudence, experience, and loyalty, will not be lost on his successors, we shall now indulge ourselves by quoting a few specimens of what will generally be regarded as his more interesting style; and, with our usual predilection for the tragic vein, shall begin with the following very touching account of the execution of a fair young woman for the murder of her new-born infant.

"The heinousness of the crime can by no possibility be lessened; but the beauty of the mother, her tender years, and her light-headedness, had won many favourers, and there was a great leaning in the hearts of all the town to compassionate her, especially when they thought of the ill example that had been set to her in the walk and conversation of her mother. It was not, however, within the power of the magistrates to overlook the accusation; so we were obligated to cause a precognition to be taken, and the search left no doubt of the wilfulness of the murder. Jeanie was in consequence removed to the Tolbooth, where she lay till the Lords were coming to Ayr, when she was sent thither to stand her trial before them; but, from the hour she did the deed, she never spoke.

"Her trial was a short procedure, and she was cast to be hanged — and not only to be hanged, but ordered to be executed in our town, and her body to be given to the doctors to make an Atomy. The execution of Jeanie was what all expected would happen; but when the news reached the town of the other parts of the sentence, the wail was as the sough of a pestilence, and fain would the council have got it dispensed with. But the Lord Advocate was just wud at the crime, both because there had been no previous concealment, so as to have been an extenuation for the shame of the birth, and because Jeanie would neither divulge the name of the father, nor make answer to all the interrogatories that were put to her, standing at the bar like a dumbie, and, looking round her, and at the judges, like a demented creature — and beautiful as a Flanders baby! It was thought by many, that her advocate might have made great use of her visible consternation, and pled that she was by herself; for in truth she had every appearance of being so. He was, however, a dure man, no doubt well enough versed in the particulars and punctualities of the law for an ordinary plea, but no of the right sort of knowledge and talent to take up the case of a forlorn lassie, misled by ill example and a winsome nature, and clothed in the allurement of loveliness, as the judge himself said to the jury.

"On the night before the day of execution, she was brought over in a chaise from Ayr between two town-officers, and placed again in our hands, and still she never spoke. Nothing could exceed the compassion that every one had for poor Jeanie; so she was na committed to a common cell, but laid in the council room, where the ladies of the town made up a comfortable bed for her, and some of them sat up all night and prayed for her, but her thoughts were gone, and she sat silent. In the morning, by break of day, her wanton mother that had been trolloping in Glasgow came to the Tolbooth door, and made a dreadful wally waeing; and the ladies were obligated, for the sake of peace, to bid her be let in. But Jeanie noticed her not, still sitting, with her eyes cast down, waiting the coming on of the hour of her doom.

"There had not been an execution in the town in the memory of the oldest person then living; the last that suffered was one of the martyrs in the time of the persecution, so that we were not skilled in the business, and had besides no hangman, but were necessitated to borrow the Ayr one. Indeed I, being the youngest bailie, was in terror that the obligation might have fallen on me. A scaffold was erected, at the Tron, just under the Tolbooth windows, by Thomas Gimblet, the Master-of-work, who had a good penny of profit by the job; for he contracted with the town council, and had the boards after the business was done to the bargain; but Thomas was then deacon of the wrights, and himself a member of our body.

"At the hour appointed, Jeanie, dressed in white, was led out by the town officers, and in the midst of the magistrates from among the ladies, with her hands tied behind her with a black ribbon. At the first sight of her at the Tolbooth stairhead, a universal sob rose from all the multitude, and the sternest e'e could na refrain from shedding a tear. We marched slowly down the stair, and on to the foot of the scaffold, where her younger brother, Willy, that was stable-boy at my lord's, was standing by himself, in an open ring made round him in the crowd; every one compassionating the dejected laddie, for he was a

fine youth, and of an orderly spirit. As his sister came towards the foot of the ladder, he ran towards her, and embraced her with a wail of sorrow that melted every heart, and made us all stop in the middle of our solemnity. Jeanie looked at him (for her hands were tied), and a silent tear was seen to drop from her cheek. But in the course of little more than a minute all was quiet, and we proceeded to ascend the scaffold. Willy, who had by this time dried his eyes, went up with us, and when Mr. Pittle had said the prayer, and sung the psalm, in which the whole multitude joined, as it were with the contrition of sorrow, the hangman stepped forward to put on the fatal cap, but Willy took it out of his hand, and placed it on his sister himself, and then kneeling down *with his back towards her*, closing his eyes, and shutting his ears with his hands, he saw not, nor heard when she was launched into eternity!

"When the awful act was over, and the stir was for the magistrates to return, and the body to be cut down, poor Willy rose, and, without looking round, went down the steps of the scaffold; the multitude made a lane for him to pass, and he went on through them hiding his face, and gaed straight out of the town." — *The Provost*, pp. 67—73.

This is longer than we had expected — and therefore, omitting all the stories of his wiles and jocosities, we shall take our leave of the Provost, with his very pathetic and picturesque description of the catastrophe of the Windy Yule, which we think would not discredit the pen of the great novelist himself.

"In the morning the weather was blasty and sleety, waxing more and more tempestuous, till about mid-day, when the wind checked suddenly round from the nor-east to the sou-west, and blew a gale, as if the prince of the powers of the air was doing his utmost to work mischief. The rain blattered, the windows clattered, the shop shutters flapped, pigs from the lum-heads came rattling down like thunder-claps, and the skies were dismal both with cloud and carry. Yet, for all that, there was in the streets a stir and a busy visitation between neighbours, and every one went to their high windows, to look at the five poor barks, that were warsling against the strong arm of the elements of the storm and the ocean.

"Still the lift gloomed, and the wind roared; and it was as doleful a sight as ever was seen in any town afflicted with calamity, to see the sailors' wives, with their red cloaks about their heads, followed by their hirpling and disconsolate bairns, going one after another to the kirkyard, to look at the vessels where their helpless breadwinners were battling with the tempest. My heart was really sorrowful, and full of a sore anxiety to think of what might happen to the town, whereof so many were in peril, and to whom no human magistracy could extend the arm of protection. Seeing no abatement of the wrath of heaven, that howled and roared around us, I put on my big coat, and taking my staff in my hand, having tied down my hat with a silk handkerchief, towards gloaming I walked likewise to the kirkyard, where I beheld such an assemblage of sorrow, as few men in my situation have ever been put to the trial to witness.

"In the lea of the kirk many hundreds of the town were gathered together; but there was no discourse among them. The major part were sailors' wives and weans, and at every new thud of the blast, a sob rose, and the mothers drew their bairns closer in about them, as if they saw the visible hand of a foe raised to smite them. Apart from the multitude, I observed three or four young lasses, standing behind the Whinnyhill families' tomb, and I jealoused that they had joes in the ships, for they often looked to the bay, with long necks and sad faces, from behind the monument But of all the piteous objects there, on that doleful evening, none troubled my thoughts more than three motherless children, that belonged to the mate of one of the vessels in the jeopardy. He was an Englishman that had been settled some years in the town, where his family had neither kith nor kin; and his wife having died about a month before, the bairns, of whom the eldest was about nine or so, were friendless enough, though both my gudewife, and other well-disposed ladies, paid them all manner of attention, till their father would come home. The three poor little things, knowing that he was in one of the ships, had been often out and anxious, and they were then sitting under the lea of a headstone, near their mother's grave, chittering and creeping closer and closer at every squall! Never was such an orphan-like sight seen.

"When it began to be so dark, that the vessels could no longer be discerned from the churchyard, many went down to the shore, and I took the three babies home with me, and Mrs. Pawkie made tea for them, and they soon began to play with our own younger children, in blythe forgetfulness of the storm; every now and then, however, the eldest of them, when the shutters rattled, and the lum-head roared, would pause in his innocent daffing, and cower in towards Mrs. Pawkie, as if he was daunted and dismayed by something he knew not what.

"Many a one that night walked the sounding shore in sorrow, and fires were lighted along it to a great extent, but the darkness and the noise of the raging deep, and the howling wind, never intermitted till about midnight; at which time a message was brought to me, that it might be needful to send a guard of soldiers to the beach, for that broken masts and tackle had come in, and that surely some of the barks had perished. I lost no time in obeying this suggestion, which was made to me by one of the owners of the Louping Meg; and to show that I sincerely sympathized with all those in affliction, I rose and dressed myself, and went down to the shore, where I directed several old boats to be drawn up by the fires, and blankets to be brought, and cordials prepared, for them that might be spared with life to

reach the land; and I walked the beach with the mourners till the morning.

"As the day dawned, the wind began to abate in its violence, and to wear away from the sou-west into the norit; but it was soon discovered, that some of the vessels with the corn had perished! for the first thing seen, was a long fringe of tangle and grain, along the line of the high water mark, and every one strained with greedy and grieved eyes, as the daylight brightened, to discover which had suffered. But I can proceed no farther with the dismal recital of that doleful morning! Let it suffice here to be known, that, through the haze, we at last saw three of the vessels lying on their beam-ends, with their masts broken, and the waves riding like the furious horses of destruction over them. What had become of the other two, was never known; but it was supposed that they had foundered at their anchors, and that all on board perished.

"The day being now Sabbath, and the whole town idle, every body in a manner was down on the beach, to help, and mourn, as the bodies, one after another, were cast out by the waves. Alas! few were the better of my provident preparation, and it was a thing not to be described, to see, for more than a mile along the coast, the new-made widows and fatherless bairns, mourning and weeping over the corpses of those they loved! Seventeen bodies were, before ten o'clock, carried to the desolated dwellings of their families; and when old Thomas Pull, the betherel, went to ring the bell for public worship, such was the universal sorrow of the town, that Nanse Donsie, an idiot natural, ran up the street to stop him, crying, in the voice of a pardonable desperation, 'Wha, in sic a time, can praise the Lord?'" — *The Provost*, pp. 177—184.

The next work on our list is the history of "Sir Andrew Wylie," in three volumes — and this, we must say, is not nearly so good as any of the former. It contains, however, many passages of great interest and originality, and displays, throughout, a power which we think ought naturally to have produced something better; but the story is clumsily and heavily managed, and the personages of polite life very unsuccessfully dealt with. The author's great error, we suspect, was in resolving to have three volumes instead of one, — and his writing, which was full of spirit, while he was labouring to confine his ideas within the space assigned to them, seems to have become flat and languid, the moment his task was to find matter to fill that space.

His next publication, however, though only in one volume, is undoubtedly the worst of the whole — we allude to the thing called "The Steam Boat," which has really no merit at all, and should never have been transplanted from the Magazine in which we are informed it first made its appearance. With the exception of some trash about the Coronation, which nobody of course could ever look at three months after the thing itself was over, it consists of a series of vulgar stories, with little either of probability or originality to recommend them. The attempt at a parallel or paraphrase on the story of Jeanie Deans, is, without any exception, the boldest and the most unsuccessful speculation we have ever seen in literary adventure.

The piece that follows, though in three volumes, is of a far higher order — and though in many points unnatural, and on the whole rather tedious, is a work undoubtedly of no ordinary merit. We mean "The Entail." It contains many strong pictures, much sarcastic observation, and a great deal of native and effective humour, though too often debased by a tone of wilful vulgarity. The ultimate conversion of the Entailer himself into a sublime and sentimental personage, is a little too romantic — the history of poor Watty the innocent imbecile, and his Betty Bodle, is perhaps the best full-length narrative — and the drowning of honest Mr. Walkingshaw the most powerful single sketch in the work. We can afford to make no extracts.

"Ringan Gilhaize," also in three volumes, is the last, in so far as we know, of this ready writer's publications; and is a bold attempt to emulate the fame of the Historical novels of his original; and to combine a striking sketch of great public occurrences, with the details of individual adventure. By the assistance of his grandfather's recollections, which fill nearly half the book, the hero contrives to embrace the period both of the Reformation from Popery, in the Reign of Queen Mary, and of the sufferings of the Covenanters from that of King Charles till the Revolution. But with all the benefit of this wide range, and the interest of those great events, we cannot say that he has succeeded in making a good book; or shown any spark of that spirit which glows in the pages of Waverley and Old Mortality. The work, however, is written with labour and care: and, besides a full narrative of all the remarkable passages of our ecclesiastical story, from the burning of Mr. Wishart at St. An-

drew's, to the death of Dundee at Killicrankie, contains some animated and poetical descriptions of natural scenery, and a few sweet pictures of humble virtue and piety. Upon the whole, however, it is a heavy work — and proves conclusively, that the genius of the author lies much more in the quieter walks of humorous simplicity, intermixed with humble pathos, than the lofty paths of enthusiasm or heroic emotion. In the first part we meet with nothing new or remarkable, but the picture of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's luxurious dalliance with his paramour, and of the bitter penitence and tragical death of that fair victim of his seductions, both which are sketched with considerable power and effect. In the latter part, there is some good and minute description of the perils and sufferings which beset the poor fugitive Covenanters, in the days of their long and inhuman persecution. The cruel desolation of Gilhaize's own household is also given with great force and pathos; as well as the description of that irresistible impulse of zeal and vengeance that drives the sad survivor to rush alone to the field of Killicrankie, and to repay at last, on the head of the slaughtered victor of that fight, the accumulated wrongs and oppressions of his race. But still the book is tiresome, and without effect. The narrative is neither pleasing nor probable, and the calamities are too numerous, and too much alike; while the uniformity of the tone of actual suffering and dim religious hope, weighs like a load on the spirit of the reader. There is no interesting complication of events or adventure, and no animating development or catastrophe. In short, the author has evidently gone beyond his means in entering the lists with the master of *historical* romance; and must be contented, hereafter, to follow his footsteps in the more approachable parts of his career.

Of the other set of publications before us, "Valerius" is the first in point of date; and the most original in conception and design. It is a Roman story, the scene of which is laid in the first stage of Christianity; and its object seems to be, partly to present us with a living picture of the manners and characters of those ancient times, and partly to trace the effects of the true faith on the feelings and affections of those who first embraced it, in the dangers and darkness of expiring Paganism. It is a work to be excepted certainly from our general remark, that the productions before us were imitations of the celebrated novels to which we have so often made reference, and their authors disciples of that great school. Such as it is, Valerius is undoubtedly original; or at least owes nothing to that new source of inspiration. It would be more plausible to say, that the author had borrowed something from the travels of Anacharsis, or the ancient romance of Heliodorus and Charielea—or the latter effusions of M. Chateaubriand. In the main, however, it is original; and it is written with very considerable power and boldness. But we cannot, on the whole, say that it has been successful; and even greater powers could not have ensured success for such an undertaking. We must know the daily life and ordinary habits of the people in whose domestic adventures we take an interest: — and we really know nothing of the life and habits of the ancient Romans and primitive Christians. We may patch together a *cento* out of old books, and pretend that it exhibits a view of their manners and conversation: but the truth is, that all that is authentic in such a compilation can amount only to a few fragments of such a picture; and that any thing like a complete and living portrait must be made up by conjecture, and inferences drawn at hazard. Accordingly, the work before us consists alternately of enlarged transcripts of particular acts and usages, of which accounts have been accidentally transmitted to us, and details of dialogue and observation in which there is nothing antique or Roman but the names, — and in reference to which, the assumed time and place of the action is felt as a mere embarrassment and absurdity. To avoid or to disguise this awkwardness, the only resource seems to be, to take shelter in a vague generality of talk and description, — and to save the detection of the modern in his masquerade of antiquity, by abstaining from every thing that is truly characteristic either of the one age or the other, and consequently from every thing by which either character or manners can be effectually delineated or distinguished. The very style of the work before us affords a curious example of the necessity of this timid

indefiniteness, under such circumstances, and of its awkward effect. To exclude the tone of modern times, it is without idiom, without familiarity, without any of those natural marks by which alone either individuality of character, or the stamp and pressure of the time, can possibly be conveyed, — and runs on, even in the gay and satirical passages, in a rumbling, roundabout, rhetorical measure, like a translation from solemn Latin, or some such academical exercitation. It is an attempt, in short, which, though creditable to the spirit and talents of the author, we think he has done wisely in not seeking to repeat, — and which, though it has not failed through any deficiency of his, has been prevented, we think, from succeeding by the very nature of the subject.

The next in order, we believe, is "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life,"—an affected, or at least too poetical a title, — and, standing before a book, not very natural, but bright with the lights of poetry. It is a collection of twenty-five stories or little pieces, half novels, half idols, characteristic of Scottish scenery and manners, — mostly pathetic, and mostly too favourable to the country to which they relate. They are, on the whole, we think, very beautifully and sweetly written, and in a soft spirit of humanity and gentleness. But the style is too elaborate and uniform; — there is occasionally a good deal of weakness and commonplace in the passages that are most emphatically expressed,—and the poetical heightenings are often introduced where they hurt both the truth and the simplicity of the picture. Still, however, they have their foundation in a fine sense of the peculiarities of our national character and scenery, and a deep feeling of their excellence and beauty—and, though not executed according to the dictates of a severe or correct taste, nor calculated to make much impression on those who have studied men and books, "with a learned spirit of observation," are yet well fitted to minister delight to less fastidious spirits, — and to revive, in many world-wearied hearts, those illusions which had only been succeeded by illusions less innocent and attractive, and those affections in which alone there is neither illusion nor disappointment.

As the author's style of narration is rather copious, we cannot now afford to present our readers with any of his stories — but, as a specimen of his tone and manner of composition, we may venture on one or two of his introductory descriptions. The following picture of a snowy morning is not the least characteristic.

"It was on a fierce and howling winter day that I was crossing the dreary moor of Auchindown, on my way to the Manse of that parish, a solitary pedestrian. The snow, which had been incessantly falling for a week past, was drifted into beautiful but dangerous wreaths, far and wide, over the melancholy expanse — and the scene kept visibly shifting before me, as the strong wind that blew from every point of the compass struck the dazzling masses, and heaved them up and down in endless transformation. There was something inspiriting in the labour with which, in the buoyant strength of youth, I forced my way through the storm — and I could not but enjoy those gleamings of sunlight that ever and anon burst through some unexpected opening in the sky, and gave a character of cheerfulness, and even warmth, to the sides or summits of the stricken hills. As the momentary cessation of the sharp drift allowed my eyes to look onwards and around, I saw here and there up the little opening valleys, cottages just visible beneath the black stems of their snow-covered clumps of trees, or beside some small spot of green pasture kept open for the sheep. These intimations of life and happiness came delightfully to me in the midst of the desolation; and the barking of a dog, attending some shepherd in his quest on the hill, put fresh vigour into my limbs, telling me that, lonely as I seemed to be, I was surrounded by cheerful though unseen company, and that I was not the only wanderer over the snows.

"As I walked along, my mind was insensibly filled with a crowd of pleasant images of rural winter life, that helped me gladly onwards over many miles of moor. I thought of the severe but cheerful labours of the barn — the mending of farm-gear by the fireside, — the wheel turned by the foot of old age, less for gain than as a thrifty pastime — the skilful mother, making 'auld claes look amaist as weel's the new' — the ballad unconsciously listened to by the family, all busy at their own tasks round the singing maiden — the old traditionary tale told by some wayfarer hospitably housed till the storm should blow by — the unexpected visit of neighbours, on need or friendship — or the footstep of lover undeterred by the snow-drifts that have buried up his flocks; — but above all, I thought of those hours of religious worship that have not yet escaped from the domestic life of the Peasantry of Scotland — of the sound of psalms that the depth of snow cannot deaden to the ear of Him to whom they are chanted — and of that sublime Sabbath-keeping, which, on days too tempestuous for the kirk, changes the cottage of the Shepherd into the Temple of God.

"With such glad and peaceful images in my heart, I travelled along that dreary moor, with the cutting wind in my face, and my feet sinking in the snow, or sliding on the hard blue ice beneath it — as cheerfully as I ever walked in the dewy warmth of a summer morning, through fields of fragrance and of flowers. And now I could discern, within half an hour's walk before me, the spire of the church, close to which stood the Manse of my aged friend and benefactor. My heart burned within me as a sudden gleam of stormy sunlight tipt it with fire — and I felt, at that moment, an inexpressible sense of the sublimity of the character of that grey-headed Shepherd who had, for fifty years, abode in the wilderness, keeping together his own happy little flock" — *Lights and Shadows*, pp. 131—133.

The next, of a summer storm among the mountains, is equally national and appropriate.

"An enormous thunder-cloud had lain all day over Ben-Nevis, shrouding its summit in thick darkness, blackening its sides and base, wherever they were beheld from the surrounding country, with masses of deep shadow, and especially flinging down a weight of gloom upon that magnificent Glen that bears the same name with the Mountain; till now the afternoon was like twilight, and the voice of all the streams was distinct in the breathlessness of the vast solitary hollow. The inhabitants of all the straths, vales, glens, and dells, round and about the Monarch of Scottish mountains, had during each successive hour been expecting the roar of thunder and the deluge of rain; but the huge conglomeration of lowering clouds would not rend asunder, although it was certain that a calm blue sky could not be restored till all that dreadful assemblage had melted away into torrents, or been driven off by a strong wind from the sea. All the cattle on the hills, and on the hollows, stood still or lay down in their fear, — the wild deer sought in herds the shelter of the pine-covered cliffs — the raven hushed his hoarse croak in some grim cavern, and the eagle left the dreadful silence of the upper heavens. Now and then the shepherds looked from their huts, while the shadow of the thunder-clouds deepened the hues of their plaids and tartans; and at every creaking of the heavy branches of the pines, or wide-armed oaks, in the solitude of their inaccessible birth-place, the hearts of the lonely dwellers quaked, and they lifted up their eyes to see the first wide flash — the disparting of the masses of darkness — and paused to hear the long loud rattle of heaven's artillery shaking the foundation of the everlasting mountains. But all was yet silent.

"The peal came at last! and it seemed as if an earthquake had smote the silence. Not a tree — not a blade of grass moved; but the blow stunned, as it were, the heart of the solid globe. Then was there a low, wild, whispering, wailing voice, as of many spirits all joining together from every point of heaven: it died away — and then the rushing of rain was heard through the darkness; and, in a few minutes, down came all the mountain torrents in their power, and the sides of all the steeps were suddenly sheeted, far and wide, with waterfalls. The element of water was let loose to run its rejoicing race — and that of fire lent it illumination, whether sweeping in floods along the great open straths, or tumbling in cataracts from cliffs over-hanging the eagle's eyrie.

"Great rivers were suddenly flooded — and the little mountain rivulets, a few minutes before only silver threads, and in whose fairy basins the minnow played, were now scarcely fordable to shepherds' feet. It was time for the strongest to take shelter, and none now would have liked to issue from it; for while there was real danger to life and limb in the many raging torrents, and in the lightning's flash, the imagination and the soul themselves were touched with awe in the long resounding glens, and beneath the savage scowl of the angry sky.

"It was not a time to be abroad: yet all by herself was hastening down Glen-Nevis, from a shealing far up the river, a little girl, not more than twelve years of age — in truth, a very child. Grief and fear, not for herself, but for another, bore her along, as upon wings, through the storm; she crossed rivulets from which, on any other occasion, she would have turned back trembling; and she did not even hear many of the crashes of thunder that smote the smoking hills. Sometimes at a fiercer flash of lightning she just lifted her hand to her dazzled eyes, and then, unappalled, hurried on through the hot and sulphurous air. Had she been a maiden of that tender age from village or city, her course would soon have been fatally stopt short; but she had been born among the hills; had first learned to walk among the heather, holding by its blooming branches, and many and many a solitary mile had she tripped, young as she was, over moss and moor, glen and mountain, even like the roe that had its lair in the coppice beside her own beloved shealing." — *Ibid.* pp. 369—372.

We must add a part of the story of a fair child's sickness, in the family of one of our cheerful and pious cottagers.

"The surgeon of the parish lived some miles distant, but they expected him now every moment, and many a wistful look was directed by tearful eyes along the moor. The daughter who was out at service, came anxiously home on this night, the only one that could be allowed her, for the poor must work in their grief, and servants must do their duty to those whose bread they eat, even when nature is sick, — sick at heart. Another of the daughters came in from the potato-field beyond the brae, with what was to be their frugal supper. The calm noiseless spirit of life was in and around the house, while death seemed dealing with one who, a few days ago, was like light upon the floor, and the sound of music, that always breathed up when most wanted. — 'Do you think the child is dying?'

said Gilbert with a calm voice to the surgeon, who, on his wearied horse, had just arrived from another sick-bed, over the misty range of hills, and had been looking stedfastly for some minutes on the little patient. The humane man knew the family well, in the midst of whom he was standing, and replied, 'While there is life there is hope; but my pretty little Margaret is, I fear, in the last extremity.' There was no loud lamentation at these words — all had before known, though they would not confess it to themselves, what they now were told — and though the certainty that was in the words of the skilful man made their hearts beat for a little with sicker throbbings, made their pale faces paler, and brought out from some eyes a greater gush of tears, yet death had been before in this house, and in this case he came, as he always does, in awe, but not in terror.

"The child was now left with none but her mother by the bedside, for it was said to be best so; and Gilbert and his family sat down round the kitchen fire, for a while in silence. In about a quarter of an hour, they began to rise calmly, and to go each to his allotted work. One of the daughters went forth with the pail to milk the cow, and another began to set out the table in the middle of the floor for supper, covering it with a white cloth. Gilbert viewed the usual household arrangements with a solemn and untroubled eye; and there was almost the faint light of a grateful smile on his cheek, as he said to the worthy surgeon, 'You will partake of our fare after your day's travel and toil of humanity.' In a short silent half hour, the potatoes and oat-cakes, butter and milk, were on the board; and Gilbert, lifting up his toil-hardened, but manly hand, with a slow motion, at which the room was as hushed as if it had been empty, closed his eyes in reverence, and asked a blessing. There was a little stool, on which no one sat, by the old man's side! It had been put there unwittingly, when the other seats were all placed in their usual order; but the golden head that was wont to rise at that part of the table was now wanting. There was silence — not a word was said — their meal was before them, — God had been thanked, and they began to eat.

"Another hour of trial past, and the child was still swimming for its life. The very dogs knew there was grief in the house; and lay without stirring, as if hiding themselves, below the long table at the window. One sister sat with an unfinished gown on her knees, that she had been sewing for the dear child, and still continued at the hopeless work, she scarcely knew why; and often, often putting up her hand to wipe away a tear. 'What is that?' said the old man to his eldest daughter — 'what is that you are laying on the shelf?' She could scarcely reply that it was a ribband and an ivory comb that she had brought for little Margaret, against the night of the dancing-school ball. And, at these words, the father could not restrain a long, deep, and bitter groan: at which the boy, nearest in age to his dying sister, looked up weeping in his face, and letting the tattered book of old ballads, which he had been poring on, but not reading, fall out of his hands, he rose from his seat, and, going into his father's bosom, kissed him, and asked God to bless him; for the holy heart of the boy was moved within him; and the old man, as he embraced him, felt that, in his innocence and simplicity, he was indeed a comforter. Scarcely could Gilbert reply to his first question about his child, when the surgeon came from the bed-room, and said, 'Margaret seems lifted up by God's hand above death and the grave; I think she will recover. She has fallen asleep: and, when she wakes, I hope — I believe — that the danger will be past, and that your child will live.' They were all prepared for death; but now they were found unprepared for life. One wept that had till then locked up all her tears within her heart; another gave a short palpitating shriek; and the tender-hearted Isobel, who had nursed the child when it was a baby, fainted away. The youngest brother gave way to gladsome smiles; and, calling out his dog Hector, who used to sport with him and his little sister on the moor, he told the tidings to the dumb irrational creature, whose eyes, it is certain, sparkled with a sort of joy." — *Lights and Shadows*, pp. 36—43.

There are many things better than this in the book — and there are many not so good. We had marked some passages for censure, and some for ridicule — but the soft-heartedness of the author has softened our hearts towards him — and we cannot, just at present, say any thing but good of him.

The next book is "Adam Blair," which, it seems, is by the author of Valerius, though it is much more in the manner of the Lights and Shadows. It is a story of great power and interest, though neither very pleasing, nor very moral, nor very intelligible. Mr. Blair is an exemplary clergyman in Scotland, who, while yet in the prime of life, loses a beloved wife, and is for a time plunged in unspeakable affliction. In this state he is visited by Mrs. Campbell, the intimate friend of his deceased wife, who had left her husband abroad — and soon after saves his little daughter, and indeed himself, from drowning. There are evident marks of love on the lady's part, and much affection on his — but both seem unconscious of the true state of their hearts, till she is harshly ordered home to the Highland tower of her husband, and he is left alone in the home she had so long cheered with her smiles. With nothing but virtue and prudence, as the author assures us, in his heart — he unaccountably runs off from his child and his parish, and makes a clandestine visit to her Celtic retreat — arrives there in the night — is rapturously

welcomed—drinks copiously of wine—gazes with her on the moonlight sea—is again pressed to the wine-cup—and finds himself the next morning—and is found by her servants, clasped in her embraces! His remorse and horror are now abundantly frantic—he flies from her into the desert—and drives her from him with the wildest execrations. His contrition, however, brings on frenzy and fever—he is carried back to her tower, and watched over by her for a while in his delirium. As he begins, after many days, to recover, he hears melancholy music, and sees slow boats on the water beneath his window—and soon after learns that she had caught the fever from him and died! and that it was the ceremony of her interment he had seen and heard on the water. He then journeys slowly homeward; proclaims his lapse to the presbytery, solemnly resigns his office, and betakes himself to the humble task of a day-labourer in his own former parish. In this state of penitence and humiliation he passes ten lonely and blameless years—gradually winning back the respect and esteem of his neighbours, by the depth of his contrition and the zeal of his humble piety—till at last his brethren of the presbytery remove the sentence of deprivation, and, on the next vacancy, restore him to the pastoral charge of his afflicted and affectionate flock.

There is no great merit in the design of this story, and there are many things both absurd and revolting in its details; but there is no ordinary power in the execution; and there is a spirit and richness in the writing, of which no notion can be formed from our little abstract of its substance. It is but fair, therefore, to the author, to let him speak for himself in one specimen; and we take the account, with which the book opens, of the death of the pastor's wife, and his own consequent desolation. She had suffered dreadfully from the successive loss of three children, and her health had gradually sunk under her affliction.

"The long melancholy summer passed away, and the songs of the harvest reapers were heard in the surrounding fields; while all, from day to day, was becoming darker and darker within the Manse of Cross-Meikle. Worn to a shadow—pale as ashes—feeble as a child—the dying mother had, for many weeks, been unable to quit her chamber; and the long-hoping husband at last felt his spirit faint within him; for even he perceived that the hour of separation could not much farther be deferred. He watched—he prayed by her bed-side—he strove even yet to smile and to speak of hope, but his lips trembled as he spake; and neither he nor his wife were deceived; for their thoughts were the same, and years of love had taught them too well all the secrets of each other's looks as well as hearts.

"Nobody witnessed their last parting; the room was darkened, and no one was within it but themselves and their child, who sat by the bed-side, weeping in silence she knew not wherefore—for of death she knew little, except the terrible name; and her father had as yet been, if not brave enough to shed no tears, at least strong enough to conceal them.—Silently and gently was the pure spirit released from its clay; but manly groans were, for the first time, heard above the sobs and wailings of the infant; and the listening household shrunk back from the door, for they knew that the blow had been stricken; and the voice of humble sympathy feared to make itself be heard in the sanctuary of such affliction. The village doctor arrived just at that moment; he listened, for a few seconds, and being satisfied that all was over, he also turned away. His horse had been fastened to the hook by the Manse door; he drew out the bridle, and led the animal softly over the turf, but did not mount again until he had far passed the outskirts of the green.

"Perhaps an hour might have passed before Mr. Blair opened the window of the room in which his wife had died. His footstep had been heard for some time hurriedly traversing and re-traversing the floor; but at last he stopped where the nearly fastened shutters of the window admitted but one broken line of light into the chamber. He threw every thing open with a bold hand, and the uplifting of the window produced a degree of noise, to the like of which the house had for some time been unaccustomed: he looked out, and saw the external world bright before him, with all the rich colourings of a September evening.—The hum of the village sent an occasional echo through the intervening hedge-rows; all was quiet and beautiful above and below; the earth seemed to be clothed all over with sights and sounds of serenity; and the sky, deepening into darker and darker blue overhead, showed the earliest of its stars intensely twinkling, as if ready to harbinger or welcome the coming moon.

"The widowed man gazed for some minutes in silence upon the glorious calm of nature, and then turned with a sudden start to the side of the room where the wife of his bosom had so lately breathed;—he saw the pale dead face; the black ringlets parted on the brow; the marble hand extended upon the sheet; the unclosed glassy eyes; and the little girl leaning towards her mother in a gaze of half-horrified bewilderment: he closed the stiffening eyelids over the soft but ghastly orbs; kissed the brow, the cheek, the lips, the bosom, and then rushed down the stairs, and went out, bare-headed, into the fields,

before any one could stop him, or ask whither he was going.

"There is an old thick grove of pines almost immediately behind the house; and after staring about him for a moment on the green, he leapt hastily over the little brook that skirts it, and plunged within the shade of the trees. The breeze was rustling the black boughs high over his head, and whistling along the bare ground beneath him. He rushed he knew not whither, on and on, between those naked brown trunks, till he was in the heart of the wood; and there, at last, he tossed himself down on his back among the withered fern leaves and mouldering fir-cones. All the past things of life floated before him, distinct in their lineaments, yet twined together, the darkest and the gayest into a sort of union that made them all appear alike dark. The mother, that had nursed his years of infancy — the father, whose grey heirs he had long before laid in the grave — sisters, brothers, friends, all dead and buried — the angel forms of his own early-ravished offspring — all crowded round and round him, and then rushing away, seemed to bear from him, as a prize and a trophy, the pale image of his expiring wife. Again SHE returned, and she alone was present with him — not the pale expiring wife, but the young radiant woman — blushing, trembling, smiling, panting, on his bosom, whispering to him all her hopes, and fears, and pride, and love, and tenderness, and meekness, like a bride! and then again all would be black as night. He would start up and gaze around, and see nothing but the sepulchral gloom of the wood, and hear nothing but the cold blasts among the leaves. He lay insensible alike to all things, stretched out at all his length, with his eyes fixed in a stupid stedfastness upon one great massy branch that hung over him — his bloodless lips fastened together as if they had been glued — his limbs like things entirely destitute of life and motion—every thing about him cold, stiff, and senseless. Minute after minute passed heavily away as in a dream — hour after hour rolled unheeded into the abyss — the stars twinkled through the pine-tops, and disappeared — the moon arose in her glory, rode through the clear autumn heaven, and vanished — and all alike unnoted by the prostrate widower.

"Adam Blair came forth from among the fir-trees in the grey light of the morning, walked leisurely and calmly several times round the garden-green, which lay immediately in front of his house, then lifted the latch for himself, and glided with light and hasty footsteps up stairs to the room, where, for some weeks past, he had been accustomed to occupy a solitary bed. The wakeful servants heard him shut his door behind him; one of them having gone out anxiously, had traced him to his privacy, but none of them had ventured to think of disturbing it. Until he came back, not one of them thought of going to bed. Now, however, they did so, and the house of sorrow was all over silent."—*Adam Blair*, pp. 4—12.

There is great merit too, though of a different kind, in the scene with Strahan and Campbell, and those with the ministers and elders. But the story is clumsily put together, and the diction, though strong and copious, is frequently turgid and incorrect.

"The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay," by the author of Lights and Shadows, is the last of these publications of which we shall now say any thing; and it is too pathetic and full of sorrow for us to say much of it. It is very beautiful and tender; but something cloying, perhaps, in the uniformity of its beauty, and exceedingly oppressive in the unremitting weight of the pity with which it presses on our souls. Nothing was ever imagined more lovely than the beauty, the innocence, and the sweetness of Margaret Lyndsay, in the earlier part of her trials; and nothing, we believe, is more true, than the comfortable lesson which her tale is meant to inculcate — that a gentle and affectionate nature is never inconsolable, nor permanently unhappy, but easily proceeds from submission to new enjoyment. But the tale of her trials, the accumulation of suffering on the heads of the humblest and most innocent of God's creatures, is too painful to be voluntarily recalled; and we cannot now undertake to give our readers any account of her father's desertion of his helpless family — of their dismal banishment from the sweet retreat in which they had been nurtured — their painful struggle with poverty and discomfort, in the darksome lanes of the city — the successive deaths of all this affectionate and harmless household, and her own ill-starred marriage to the husband of another wife. Yet we must enable them to form some notion of a work, which has drawn more tears from us than any we have had to peruse since the commencement of our career. This is the account of the migration of the ruined and resigned family from the scene of their early enjoyments.

"The twenty-fourth day of November came at last — a dim, dull, dreary, and obscure day, fit for parting everlastingly from a place or person tenderly beloved. There was no sun — no wind — no sound in the misty and unechoing air. A deadness lay over the wet earth, and there was no visible heaven. Their goods and chattels were few; but many little delays occurred, some accidental, and more in the unwillingness of their hearts to take a final farewell. A neighbour had lent his cart for the flitting, and it was now standing loaded at the door, ready to move away.

The fire, which had been kindled in the morning with a few borrowed peats, was now out — the shutters closed — the door was locked — and the key put into the hand of the person sent to receive it. And now there was nothing more to be said or done, and the impatient horse started briskly away from Braehead. The blind girl, and poor Marion, were sitting in the cart — Margaret and her mother were on foot. Esther had two or three small flower-pots in her lap, for in her blindness she loved the sweet fragrance, and the felt forms and imagined beauty of flowers; and the innocent carried away her tame pigeon in her bosom. Just as Margaret lingered on the threshold, the Robin red-breast that had been her boarder for several winters, hopped upon the stone-seat at the side of the door, and turned up its merry eyes to her face. 'There,' said she, 'is your last crumb from us, sweet Roby, but there is a God who takes care o' us a'.' The widow had by this time shut down the lid of her memory, and left all the hoard of her thoughts and feelings, joyful or despairing, buried in darkness. The assembled group of neighbours, mostly mothers with their children in their arms, had given the 'God bless you, Alice! God bless you, Margaret, and the lave!' and began to disperse; each turning to her own cares and anxieties, in which, before night, the Lyndsays would either be forgotten, or thought on with that unpainful sympathy which is all the poor can afford or expect, but which, as in this case, often yields the fairest fruits of charity and love.

"A cold sleety rain accompanied the cart and the foot travellers all the way to the city. Short as the distance was, they met with several other flittings, some seemingly cheerful, and from good to better, — others with woe-begone faces, going like themselves down the path of poverty, on a journey from which they were to rest at night in a bare and hungry house And now they drove through the suburbs, and into the city, passing unheeded among crowds of people, all on their own business of pleasure or profit, laughing, jibing, shouting, cursing,— the stir, and tumult, and torrent of congregated life. Margaret could hardly help feeling elated with the glitter of all the shining windows, and the hurry of the streets. Marion sat silent *with her pigeon warm in her breast below her brown cloak*, unknowing she of change, of time, or of place, and reconciled to sit patiently there, with the soft plumage touching her heart, if the cart had gone on, through the cold and sleet, to midnight!

"The cart stopt at the foot of a lane too narrow to admit the wheels, and also too steep for a laden horse. Two or three of their new neighbours,—persons in the very humblest condition, coarsely and negligently dressed, but seemingly kind and decent people, came out from their houses at the stopping of the cart-wheels. The cart was soon unladen, and the furniture put into the empty room. A cheerful fire was blazing, and the animated and interested faces of the honest folks who crowded into it, on a slight acquaintance, unceremoniously and curiously, but without rudeness, gave a cheerful welcome to the new dwelling. In a quarter of an hour the beds were laid down, — the room decently arranged, — one and all of the neighbours said 'Gude night,' — and the door was closed upon the Lyndsays in their new dwelling.

"They blessed and ate their bread in peace. The Bible was then opened, and Margaret read a chapter. There was frequent and loud noise in the lane, of passing merriment or anger, — but this little congregation worshipped God in a hymn, Esther's sweet voice leading the sacred melody, and they knelt together in prayer."—*The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*, pp. 66—70.

Her brother goes to sea, and returns affectionate and happy, with a young companion, whom the opening beauty of Margaret Lyndsay charms into his first dream of love, and whose gallant bearing and open heart cast the first, and almost the last, gleam of joy and enchantment over the gentle and chastened heart of the maiden. But this, like all her other dawnings of joy, led only to more bitter affliction. She had engaged to go with him and her brother to church, one fine summer Sunday, and — the author shall tell the rest of the story himself.

"Her heart was indeed glad within her, when she saw the young sailor at the spot. His brown sunburnt face was all one smile of exulting joy — and his bold clear eyes burned through the black hair that clustered over his forehead. There was not a handsomer, finer-looking boy in the British navy. Although serving before the mast, as many a noble lad has done, he was the son of a poor gentleman; and as he came up to Margaret Lyndsay, in his smartest suit, with his white straw hat, his clean shirt-neck tied with a black ribband, and a small yellow cane in his hand, a brighter boy and a fairer girl never met in affection in the calm sunshine of a Scottish Sabbath-day.

"'Why have you not brought Laurence with you?' Harry made her put her arm within his, and then told her that it was not her brother's day on shore. Now all the calm air was filled with the sound of bells, and Leith Walk covered with well-dressed families. The nursery-gardens on each side were almost in their greatest beauty — so soft and delicate the verdure of the young imbedded trees, and so bright the glow of intermingled early flowers. 'Let us go to Leith by a way I have discovered,' said the joyful sailor — and he drew Margaret gently away from the public walk, into a retired path winding with many little white gates through these luxuriantly cultivated enclosures. The insects were dancing in the air—birds singing all about them — the sky was without a cloud — and a bright dazzling line of light was all that was now seen from the sea. The youthful pair loitered in their happiness — they never marked that the bells had ceased ringing; and when at last they hurried to reach the chapel, the door was

closed, and they heard the service chanting. Margaret durst not knock at the door, or go in so long after worship was begun; and she secretly upbraided herself for her forgetfulness of a well-known and holy hour. She felt unlike herself walking on the streets during the time of church, and beseeched Harry to go with her out of the sight of the windows, that all seemed watching her in her neglect of Divine worship. So they bent their steps towards the shore.

"Harry Needham had not perhaps had any preconceived intention to keep Margaret from church; but he was very well pleased, that, instead of being with her in a pew there, in a crowd, he was now walking alone with her on the brink of his own element. The tide was coming fast in, hurrying on its beautiful little bright ridges of variegated foam, by short successive encroachments over the smooth hard level shore, and impatient, as it were, to reach the highest line of intermingled sea-weed, silvery sand, and deep-stained or glittering shells. The friends, or lovers—and their short dream was both friendship and love—retreated playfully from every little watery wall that fell in pieces at their feet, and Margaret turned up her sweet face in the sun-light to watch the slow dream-like motion of the sea-mews, who seemed sometimes to be yielding to the breath of the shifting air, and sometimes obeying only some wavering impulse of joy within their own white-plumaged breasts. Or she walked softly behind them, as they alighted on the sand, that she might come near enough to observe that beautifully wild expression that is in the eyes of all winged creatures whose home is on the sea.

"Alas! home—church—every thing on earth was forgotten—for her soul was filled exclusively with its present joy. She had never before, in all her life, been down at the sea-shore—and she never again was within hearing of its bright, sunny, hollow-sounding and melancholy waves!

"'See,' said Harry, with a laugh, 'the kirks have scaled, as you say here in Scotland—the pier-head is like a wood of bonnets.—Let us go there, and I think I can show them the bonniest face among them a'.' The fresh sea-breeze had tinged Margaret's pale face with crimson,—and her heart now sent up a sudden blush to deepen and brighten that beauty. They mingled with the cheerful, but calm and decent crowd, and stood together at the end of the pier, looking towards the ship. 'That is our frigate, Margaret, the Tribune;—she sits like a bird on the water, and sails well, both in calm and storm.' The poor girl looked at the ship with her flags flying, till her eyes filled with tears. 'If we had a glass, like one my father once had, we might, perhaps, see Laurence.' And for the moment she used the word 'father' without remembering what and where he was in his misery. 'There is one of our jigger-rigged boats coming right before the wind. Why, Margaret, this is the last opportunity you may have of seeing your brother. We may sail to-morrow; nay to-night.'—A sudden wish to go on board the ship seized Margaret's heart. Harry saw the struggle—and wiling her down a flight of steps, in a moment lifted her into the boat, which, with the waves rushing in foam within an inch of the gunwale, went dancing out of harbour, and was soon half-way over to the anchored frigate.

"The novelty of her situation, and of all the scene around, at first prevented the poor girl from thinking deliberately of the great error she had committed, in thus employing her Sabbath hours in a way so very different to what she had been accustomed; but she soon could not help thinking what she was to say to her mother when she went home, and was obliged to confess that she had not been at church at all, and had paid a visit to her brother on board the ship. It was very sinful in her thus to disobey her own conscience and her mother's will, and the tears came into her eyes. The young sailor thought she was afraid, and only pressed her closer to him, with a few soothing words. At that moment a sea-mew came winnowing its way toward the boat, and one of the sailors rising up with a musquet, took aim as it flew over their heads. Margaret suddenly started up, crying, 'Do not kill the pretty bird,' and stumbling, fell forward upon the man, who also lost his balance. A flaw of wind struck the mainsail—the helmsman was heedless—the sheet fast—and the boat instantly filling, went down in a moment, head foremost, in twenty fathom water!

"The accident was seen both from the shore and the ship; and a crowd of boats put off to their relief. But death was beforehand with them all; and when the frigate's boat came to the place, nothing was seen upon the waves. Two of the men, it was supposed, had gone to the bottom entangled with ropes or beneath the sail,—in a few moments the grey head of the old steersman was apparent, and he was lifted up with an oar—drowned. A woman's clothes were next descried; and Margaret was taken up with something heavy weighing down the body. It was Harry Needham, who had sunk in trying to save her; and in one of his hands was grasped a tress of her hair that had given way in the desperate struggle. There seemed to be faint symptoms of life in both; but they were utterly insensible. The crew, among which was Laurence Lyndsay, pulled swiftly back to the ship; and the bodies were first of all laid down together side by side in the captain's cabin."—*Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*, pp. 125—130.

We must conclude with something less desolating—and we can only find it in the account of the poor orphan's reception from an ancient miserly kinsman, to whom, after she had buried all her immediate family, she went, like Ruth, in the simple strength of her innocence. After walking all day, she comes at night within sight of his rustic abode.

"With a beating heart, she stopt for a little while at the mouth of the avenue, or lane, that seemed to lead up to the house. It was much overgrown with

grass, and there were but few marks of wheels; the hedges on each side were thick and green, but unclipped, and with frequent gaps; something melancholy lay over all about; and the place had the air of being uninhabited. But still it was beautiful; for it was bathed in the dews of a rich midsummer gloaming, and the clover filled the air with fragrance that revived the heart of the solitary orphan, as she stood for a few minutes, irresolute, and apprehensive of an unkind reception.

"At last she found heart, and the door of the house being open, Margaret walked in, and stood on the floor of the wide low-roofed kitchen. An old man was sitting as if half asleep, in a high-backed armchair, by the side of the chimney. Before she had time or courage to speak, her shadow fell upon his eyes, and he looked towards her with strong visible surprise, and, as she thought, with slight displeasure. 'Ye hae got off your road, I'm thinking, young woman; what seek you here?' Margaret asked respectfully if she might sit down. 'Ay, ay, ye may sit down, but we keep nae refreshment here — this is no a public-house. There's ane a mile west in the Clachan.' The old man kept looking upon her, and with a countenance somewhat relaxed from its inhospitable austerity. Her appearance did not work as a charm or a spell, for she was no enchantress in a fairy tale; but the tone of her voice, so sweet and gentle, the serenity of her face, and the meekness of her manner, as she took her seat upon a stool not far from the door, had an effect upon old Daniel Craig, and he bade her come forward, and take a chair 'farther ben the house.'

"'I am an Orphan, and have perhaps but little claim upon you, but I have ventured to come here — my name is Margaret Lyndsay, and my mother's name was Alice Craig.' The old man moved upon his chair, as if a blow had struck him, and looked long and earnestly into her face. Her features confirmed her words. Her countenance possessed that strong power over him that goes down mysteriously through the generations of perishable man, connecting love with likeness, so that the child in its cradle may be smiling almost with the self-same expression that belonged to some one of its forefathers mouldered into ashes many hundred years ago. 'Nae doubt, nae doubt, ye are the daughter o' Walter Lyndsay and Alice Craig. Never were twa faces mair unlike than theirs, yet yours is like them baith. Margaret — that is your name — I give you my blessing. Hae you walked far? Mysie's doun at the Rashy-riggs, wi' milk to the calf, but will be in belyve. Come, my bonny bairn, take a shake o' your uncle's hand.'

"Margaret told, in a few words, the principal events of the last three years, as far as she could; and the old man, to whom they had been almost all unknown, heard her story with attention, but said little or nothing. Meanwhile, Mysie came in — an elderly, hard-featured woman, but with an expression of homely kindness that made her dark face not unpleasant.

"Margaret felt herself an inmate of her uncle's house, and her heart began already to warm towards the old grey-headed solitary man. His manner exhibited, as she thought, a mixture of curiosity and kindness; but she did not disturb his taciturnity, and only returned immediate and satisfactory answers to his few short and abrupt questions. He evidently was thinking over the particulars which she had given him of her life at Braehead, and in the lane; and she did not allow herself to fear, but that, in a day or two, if he permitted her to stay, she would be able to awaken in his heart a natural interest in her behalf. Hope was a guest that never left her bosom — and she rejoiced when, on the return of the old domestic from the bed-room, her uncle requested her to read aloud a chapter of the Bible. She did so, — and the old man took the book out of her hand with evident satisfaction, and, fastening the clasp, laid it by in the little cupboard in the wall near his chair, and wished her good night.

"Mysie conducted her into a bed-room, where every thing was neat, and superior, indeed, to the ordinary accommodation of a farm-house. 'Ye need na fear, for feather-beds and sheets are a' as dry as last year's hay in the stack. I keep a' things in the house weel aired, for damp's a great disaster. But, for a' that, sleepin' breath has na been drawn in that bed these saxteen year!' Margaret thanked her for the trouble she had taken, and soon laid down her limbs in grateful rest. A thin calico curtain was before the low window; but the still serene radiance of a midsummer night glimmered on the floor. All was silent — and in a few minutes Margaret Lyndsay was asleep.

"In the quiet of the succeeding evening, the old man took her with him along the burn-side, and into the green ewe-bught, where they sat down for a while in silence. At last he said, 'I have nae wife — nae children — nae friends, I may say, Margaret — nane that cares for me, but the servant in the house, an auld friendless body like mysel'; but if you choose to bide wi' us, you are mair than welcome; for I know not what is in that face o' thine; but this is the pleasantest day that has come to me these last thirty years.'

"Margaret was now requested to tell her uncle more about her parents and herself, and she complied with a full heart. She went back with all the power of nature's eloquence, to the history of her young years at Braehead — recounted all her father's miseries — her mother's sorrows — and her own trials. All the while she spoke, the tears were streaming from her eyes, and her sweet bosom heaved with a crowd of heavy sighs. The old man sat silent; but more than once he sobbed, and passed his withered toil-worn hands across his forehead. — They rose up together, as by mutual consent, and returned to the house. Before the light had too far died away, Daniel Craig asked Margaret to read a chapter in the Bible, as she had done the night before; and when she had concluded, he said, 'I never heard the Scriptures so well read in all my days — did you Mysie?'

The quiet creature looked on Margaret with a smile of kindness and admiration, and said that 'she had never understood that chapter sae weel before, although, aiblins, she had read it a hundred times.'—'Ye can gan to your bed without Mysie to show you the way to-night, my good niece—ye are one of the family now—and Nether-Place will after this be as cheerfu' a house as in a' the parish.'"—*Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*, pp. 251, 252.

We should now finish our task by saying something of "Reginald Dalton;"—but such of our readers as have accompanied us through this long retrospect, will readily excuse us, we presume, for postponing our notice of that work, till another opportunity. There are two decisive reasons, indeed, against our proceeding with it at present,—one, that we really have not yet read it fairly through—the other, that we have no longer room to say all of it that we foresee it will require.

GENERAL POLITICS.

A GREAT deal that should naturally come under this title has been unavoidably given already, under that of History; and more, I fear, may be detected under still less appropriate denominations. If any unwary readers have been thus unwittingly decoyed into Politics, while intent on more innocent studies, I can only hope that they will now take comfort, from finding how little of this obnoxious commodity has been left to appear in its proper colours; and also from seeing, from the decorous title now assumed, that all intention of engaging them in *Party* discussions is disclaimed.

I do not think that I was ever a violent or (consciously) uncandid partisan; and at all events, ten years of honest abstinence and entire segregation from party contentions (to say nothing of the sobering effects of threescore antecedent years!), should have pretty much effaced the vestiges of such predilections, and awakened the least considerate to a sense of the exaggerations, and occasional unfairness, which such influences must almost unavoidably impart to political disquisitions. In what I now reprint I have naturally been anxious to select what seemed least liable to this objection: and though I cannot flatter myself that a tone of absolute, Judicial impartiality is maintained in all these early productions, I trust that nothing will be found in them that can suggest the idea either of personal animosity, or of an ungenerous feeling towards a public opponent.

To the two first, and most considerable, of the following papers, indeed, I should wish particularly to refer, as fair exponents both of the principles I think I have always maintained, and of the temper in which I was generally disposed to maintain them. In some of the others a more vehement and contentious tone may no doubt be detected. But as they touch upon matters of permanent interest and importance, and advocate opinions which I still think substantially right, I have felt that it would be pusillanimous now to suppress them, from a poor fear of censure, which, if just, I cannot but know that I deserve — or a still poorer distrust of those allowances which I have no reason to think will be withheld from me by the better part of my readers.

ESSAY ON BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

(NOVEMBER, 1812.)

Essay on the Practice of the British Government, distinguished from the abstract Theory on which it is supposed to be founded. By GOULD FRANCIS LECKIE. 8vo. London: 1812.*

THIS is the most direct attack which we have ever seen in English, upon the free constitution of England; — or rather upon political liberty in general, and upon our government only in so far as it is free: — and it consists partly in an eager exposition of the inconveniences resulting from parliaments or representative legislatures, and partly in a warm defence and undisguised panegyric of Absolute, or, as the author more elegantly phrases it, *Simple* monarchy.

The pamphlet which contains these consolitary doctrines, has the further merit of being, without any exception, the worst written, and the worst reasoned, that has ever fallen into our hands; and there is nothing indeed but the extreme importance of the subject, and the singular complexion of the times in which it appears, that could induce us to take any notice of it. The rubbish that is scattered in our

* I used to think that this paper contained a very good defence of our free constitution; and especially the most complete, temperate, and searching vindication of our Hereditary Monarchy that was any where to be met with: and, though it now appears to me rather more elementary and elaborate than was necessary, I am still of opinion that it may be of use to young politicians,—and suggest cautions and grounds of distrust, to rash discontent and thoughtless presumption.

common walks, we merely push aside and disregard; but, when it defiles the approaches to the temple, or is heaped on the sanctuary itself, it must be cast out with other rites of expiation, and visited with severer penalties. When the season is healthy, we may walk securely among the elements of corruption, and warrantably decline the inglorious labour of sweeping them away:—but, when the air is tainted and the blood impure, we should look with jealousy upon every speck, and consider that the slightest remission of our police may spread a pestilence through all the borders of the land.

There are two periods, as it appears to us, when the promulgation of such doctrines as are maintained by this author may be considered as dangerous, or at least as of evil omen, in a country like this. The one, when the friends of arbitrary power are strong and daring, and advantageously posted, and when, meditating some serious attack on the liberties of the people, they send out their emissaries and manifestoes, to feel and to prepare their way;—the other, when they are substantially weak, and unfit to maintain a conflict with their opponents, but where the great body of the timid and the cautious are alarmed at the prospect of such a conflict, and half disposed to avert the crisis, by supporting whatever is in actual possession of power. Whether either of these descriptions may suit the aspect of the present times, we willingly leave it to our readers to determine: but before going farther, we think it proper to say, that we impute no corrupt motives to the author before us; and that there is, on the contrary, every appearance of his being conscientiously persuaded of the advantages of arbitrary power, and sincerely eager to reconcile the minds of his countrymen to the introduction of so great a blessing. The truth indeed seems to be, that having lived so long abroad as evidently to have lost, in a great degree, the use of his native language, it is not surprising that he should have lost along with it, a great number of those feelings without which it really is not possible to reason, in this country, on the English Constitution; and has gradually come, not only to speak, but to feel like a foreigner, as to many of those things which will constitute both the pride and the happiness of his countrymen. We have no doubt that he would be a very useful and enlightened patriot in Sicily; but we think it was rather rash in him to venture before the public with his speculations on the English government, with his present stock of information and habits of thinking. Though we do not, however, impute to him any thing worse than these disqualifications, there are persons enough in the country to whom it will be a sufficient recommendation of any work, that it inculcates principles of servility; and who will be abundantly ready to give it every chance of making an impression, which it may derive from their approbation, and indeed we have already heard such testimonies in favour of this slender performance, as seem to impose it upon us as a duty to give some little account of its contents, and some short opinion of its principles.

The first part of the task may be performed in a very moderate compass; for though the learned author has not always the gift of writing intelligibly, it is impossible for a diligent reader not to see what he would be at; and his doctrine, when once fairly understood, may readily be reduced to a few very simple propositions. After preluding on a variety of minor topics, and suggesting some curious enough remedies for our present unhappy condition, he candidly admits that none of those would reach to the root of the evil; which consists entirely, it seems, in our "too great jealousy of the Crown:" and accordingly proceeds to draw a most seducing picture of his favourite Simple monarchy; and indirectly indeed, but quite unequivocally, to intimate, that the only effectual cure for the evils under which we now suffer is to be found in the total abolition of Parliaments, and the conversion of our Constitution into an absolute monarchy: or, shortly to "advert," as he expresses himself, "to the advantages which a Monarchy, such as has been described, has over our boasted British Constitution."* These advantages, after a good deal of puzzling, he next settles to be —First, that the sovereign will be "more likely to feel a pride, as well as a zeal, to act a great and good part;"—secondly, that the ministers will have more time to attend to their duties when they have no parliamentary contentions to manage;—thirdly, that the public councils will be guided by fixed and

steady principles; — fourthly, that if the Monarch should act in an oppressive manner, it will be easier for the people to get the better of him than of a whole parliament, who might act in the same manner; — fifthly, that the heir apparent might then be allowed to travel in foreign countries for the improvement of his manners and understanding; — sixthly, and lastly, that there would be no longer any pretext for a cry against "what is styled *back-stair influence!*"

Such is the sum of Mr. Leckie's publication; of which, as a curious specimen of the infinite diversity of human opinions and endowments, and of the licence of political speculation that is still occasionally indulged in this country, we have thought it right that some memorial should be preserved — a little more durable than the pamphlet itself seemed likely to afford. But though what we have already said is probably more than enough to settle the opinion of all reasonable persons with regard to the merits of the work, we think we can trace, even in some of the most absurd and presumptuous of its positions, the operation of certain errors, which we have found clouding the views, and infecting the opinions of persons of far sounder understanding; and shall presume, therefore, to offer a few very plain and simple remarks upon some of the points which we think we have most frequently found either misrepresented or misunderstood.

The most important and radical of those, is that which relates to the nature and uses of Monarchy, and the rights and powers of a sovereign; upon which, therefore, we beg leave to begin with a few observations. And here we shall take leave to consider Royalty as being, on the whole, but a Human Institution, — originating in a view to the general good, and not to the gratification of the individual upon whom the office is conferred; or at least only capable of being justified, or deserving to be retained, where it is found, or believed, to be actually beneficial to the whole society. Now we think that, generally speaking, it is a highly beneficial institution: and that the benefits which it is calculated to confer are great and obvious.

From the first moment that men began to associate together, and to act in concert for their general good and protection, it would be found that all of them could not take a share in consulting and regulating their operations, and that the greater part must submit to the direction of certain managers and leaders Among these, again, some one would naturally assume a preeminence; and in time of war especially, would be allowed to exercise a great authority. Struggles would as necessarily ensue for retaining this post of distinction, and for supplanting its actual possessor; and whether there was a general acquiescence in the principle of having one acknowledged chief, or a desire to be guided and advised by a plurality of those who seemed best qualified for the task, there would be equal hazard, or rather certainty, of perpetual strife, tumult, and dissension, from the attempts of ambitious individuals, either to usurp an ascendency over all their competitors, or to dispute with him who had already obtained it, his right to continue its possession. Every one possessed of any considerable means of influence would thus be tempted to aspire to a precarious sovereignty; and while the inferior persons of the community would be opposed to each other as adherents of the respective pretenders, not only would all care of the general good be omitted, but the society would become a prey to perpetual feuds, cabals, and hostilities, subversive of the first principles of its institution.

Among the remedies which would naturally present themselves for this great evil, the most efficacious, though not perhaps at first sight the most obvious, would be to provide some regular and authentic form for the election of One acknowledged chief, by a fair but pacific competition; — the term of whose authority would gradually be prolonged to that of his natural life, — and afterwards extended to the lives of his remotest descendants. The advantages which seem to us to be peculiar to this arrangement are, first, to disarm the ambition of dangerous and turbulent individuals by removing the great prize of supreme authority, at all times, and entirely, from competition; and, secondly, to render this authority itself more manageable and less hazardous, by delivering it over peaceably, and upon expressed or understood conditions, to an hereditary prince; instead of letting it be seized upon by a fortunate conqueror, who would think himself entitled to use it — as conquerors com-

monly use their booty — for his own exclusive gratification.

The steps, then, by which we are conducted to the justification of Hereditary Monarchy, are shortly as follows. Admitting all men to be equal in rights, they can never be equal in natural endowments,—nor long equal in wealth and other acquisitions: — absolute liberty, therefore, or equal participation of power, is altogether out of the question; and a kind of Aristocracy, or disorderly and fluctuating supremacy of the richest and most accomplished, may be considered as the primeval state of society. Now this, even if it could be supposed to be peaceable and permanent, is by no means a desirable state for the persons subjected to this multifarious and irregular authority. But it is plain that it could not be peaceable — that even among the rich, and the accomplished, and the daring, some would be more rich, more daring, and more accomplished than the rest; and that those in the foremost ranks who were most nearly on an equality, would be armed against each other by mutual jealousy and ambition; while those who were a little lower would combine, out of envy and resentment, to defeat or resist, by their junction, the pretensions of the few who had thus outstripped their original associates. Thus there would not only be no liberty or security for the body of the people, but the whole would be exposed to the horror and distraction of perpetual intestine contentions. The creation of one sovereign, therefore, whom the whole society would acknowledge as supreme, was a great point gained for tranquillity as well as individual independence; and in order to avoid the certain evils of perpetual struggles for dominion, and the imminent hazard of falling at last under the absolute will of an exasperated conqueror, nothing could be so wisely devised as to agree upon the nomination of a king; and thus to get rid of a multitude of petty tyrants, and the risk of military despotism, by the establishment of a legitimate monarchy. The first king would probably be the most popular and powerful individual in the community; and the first idea would in all likelihood be to appoint his successor on account of the same qualifications: but it would speedily be discovered, that this would give rise at the death of every sovereign — and indeed, prospectively, long before it — to the same fatal competitions and dissensions, which had formerly been perpetual; and not only hazard a civil war on every accession, but bring the successful competitor to the throne, with feelings of extreme hostility towards one half of his subjects, and of extreme partiality to the other. The chances of not finding eminent talents for command in the person of the sovereign, therefore, would soon be seen to be *a far less evil* than the sanguinary competitions that would ensue, if merit were made the sole ground of preferment; and a very little reflection, or experience, would also serve to show, that the sort of merit which was most likely to succeed in such a competion, did not promise a more desirable sovereign than might be probably reckoned on, in the common course of hereditary succession. The only safe course, therefore, was, to take this Great Prize altogether out of the Lottery of human life — to make the supreme dignity of the state, professedly and altogether independent of merit or popularity; and to fix it immutably in a place quite out of the career of ambition.

This great point then was gained by the mere institution of Monarchy, and by rendering it hereditary: the chief cause of internal discord was removed, and the most dangerous incentive to ambition placed in a great measure beyond the sphere of its operation;—and this we have always considered to be the peculiar and characteristic advantage of that form of government. A pretty important chapter, however, remains, as to the extent of the Powers that ought to be vested in the monarch, and the nature of the Checks by which the limitation of those powers should be rendered effectual. And here it will be readily understood, that considering, as we do, the chief advantage of monarchy to consist in its taking away the occasions of contention for the First Place in the state, and in a manner neutralizing that place by separating it entirely from any notion of merit or popularity in the possessor — we cannot consistently be for allotting a greater measure of actual power to it than is absolutely necessary for answering this purpose. Our notions of this measure, however, are by no means of a jealous or penurious description. We must give enough of real power, and distinction and prerogative, to make it truly and

substantially the first place in the State, and also to make it impossible for the occupiers of inferior places to endanger the general peace by *their* contentions;—for, otherwise, the whole evils which its institution was meant to obviate would recur with accumulated force, and the same fatal competitions be renewed among persons of disorderly ambition, for those other situations, by whatever name they might be called, in which, though nominally subordinate to the throne, the actual powers of sovereignty were embodied. But, on the other hand, we would give no powers to the sovereign, or to any other officer in the community, beyond what were evidently required for the public good; — and no powers at all, on the exercise of which there was not an efficient control, and for the use of which there was not a substantial responsibility. It is in the reconciling of these two conditions that the whole difficulty of the theory of a perfect monarchy consists. If you do not control your sovereign, he will be in danger of becoming a despot; and if you do control him, there is danger, unless you choose the depository of this control with singular caution, that you create another power, that is uncontrolled and uncontrollable — to be the prey of audacious leaders and outrageous factions, in spite of the hereditary settlement of the nominal sovereignty. Though there is some difficulty, however, in this problem, and though we learn from history, that various errors have been committed in an attempt at its practical solution, yet we do not conceive it as by any means insoluble; and think indeed that, with the lights which we may derive from the experience of our own Constitution, its demonstration may be effected by a very moderate exertion of sagacity. It will be best understood, however, by a short view of the nature of the powers to be controlled, and of the system of checks which have, at different times, been actually resorted to.

In the first place, then, we must beg leave to remind our readers, however superfluous it may appear, that as kings are now generally allowed to be mere mortals, they cannot of themselves have any greater powers, either of body or mind, than other individuals, and must in fact be inferior in both respects, to very many of their subjects. Whatever powers they have, therefore, must be powers conferred upon them by *the consent* of the stronger part of their subjects, and are in fact really and truly the powers of those persons. The most absolute despot accordingly, of whom history furnishes any record, must have governed merely by the free will of those who *chose to obey him*, in *compelling the rest of his subjects to obedience*. The Sultan, as Mr. Hume remarks, may indeed drive the bulk of his unarmed subjects, like brutes, by mere force; but he must lead his armed Janissaries like men, by their reason and free will. And so it is in all other governments: the power of the sovereign is nothing else than the power — the actual force of muscle or of mind—which a certain part of his subjects *choose* to lend for carrying his orders into effect; and the check or limit to this power is, in all cases, ultimately and in effect, nothing else than their refusal to act any longer as the instruments of his pleasure. The check, therefore, is substantially the same in kind, in all cases whatever; and must necessarily exist in full vigour in every country in the world; though the likelihood of its *beneficial* application depends greatly on the structure of society in each particular nation; and the possibility of applying it with *ease and safety* must result wholly from the contrivances that have been adopted to make it bear, at once gradually and steadily, on the power it is destined to regulate. It is here accordingly, and here only, that there is any material difference between a good and a bad constitution of Monarchical government.

The ultimate and only real limit to what is called the power of the sovereign, is the refusal of the consent or co-operation of those who possess the substantial power of the community, and who, during their voluntary concert with the sovereign, allow this power of theirs to pass under his name. In considering whether this refusal is likely to be wisely and beneficially interposed, it is material therefore to inquire in whom, in any particular case, the power of interposing it is vested; or, in other words, in what individuals the actual power of coercing and compelling the submission of the bulk of the community is intrinsically vested. If every individual were equally gifted, and equally situated, the answer would be, In the numerical majority: but as this can never be the case, this power will frequently be found

to reside in a very small proportion of the whole society.

In rude times, when there is little intelligence or means of concert and communication, a very moderate number of armed and disciplined forces will be able, so long as they keep together, to overawe and actually overpower the whole unarmed inhabitants, even of an extensive region; and accordingly, in such times, the necessity of procuring the good will and consent of the soldiery, is the only check upon the power of the sovereign; or, in other words, the soldiers may do what they choose — and their nominal master can do nothing which they do not choose. Such is the state of the worse despotisms. The check upon the royal authority is the same in substance as in the best administered monarchies, viz. the refusal of the consent or co-operation of those who possess for the time the natural power of the community: but, from the unfortunate structure of society, which (in the case supposed) vests this substantial power in a few bands of disciplined ruffians, the check will scarcely ever be interposed for the benefit of the nation, and will merely operate to prevent the king from doing any thing to the prejudice or oppression of the soldiery themselves.

When civilization has made a little further progress, a number of the leaders of the army, or their descendants, acquire landed property, and associate together not merely in their military capacity, but as guardians of their new acquisitions and hereditary dignities. Their soldiers become their vassals in time of peace; and the real power of the State is gradually transferred from the hands of detached and mercenary battalions, to those of a Feudal Nobility. The check on the royal authority comes then to lie in the refusal of *this* body to co-operate in such of his measures as do not meet with their approbation; and the king can now do nothing to the prejudice of the order of Nobility. The body of the people fare a little better under the operation of this check; — because their interest is much more identified with that of their feudal lords, than with that of a standing army of regular or disorderly forces.

As society advances in refinement, and the arts of peace are developed, men of the lower orders assemble, and fortify themselves in towns and cities, and thus come to acquire a power independent of their patrons. *Their* consent also accordingly becomes necessary to the development of the public authority within their communities; and hence another check to what is called the power of the sovereign. And, finally, to pass over some intermediate stages, when society has attained its full measure of civility and intelligence, and is filled from top to bottom with wealth and industry, and reflection; when every thing that is done or felt by any one class, is communicated on the instant to all the rest, — and a vast proportion of the whole population takes an interest in the fortunes of the country, and possesses a certain intelligence as to the public conduct of its rulers, — then the substantial power of the nation may be said to be vested in the Nation at large; or at least in those individuals who can habitually command the good-will and support of the greater part of them: — and the ultimate check to the power of the sovereign comes to consist in the general unwillingness of The People to comply with those orders, which, if at all united in their resolution, they may now effectually disobey and resist. *This* check, when applied at all, is likely, of course, to be applied for the general good; and, though the same in substance with those which have been already considered, namely, the refusal of those in whom the real power is vested, to lend it to the monarch for purposes which they do not approve, is yet infinitely more beneficial in its operation, in consequence of the more fortunate position of those to whom that power now belongs.

Thus we see that kings have no power of their own; and that, even in the purest despotisms they are the mere organs or directors of that power which they who truly possess the physical and intellectual force of the nation may choose to put at their disposal; and are at all times, and under every form of monarchy, entirely under the control of that only virtual and effective power. There is at bottom, therefore, no such thing as an unlimited monarchy; or indeed as a monarchy that is potentially either more or less limited than every other. All kings *must* act by the consent of that order or portion of the nation which can really command all the rest, and may generally do whatever those substantial masters do not disapprove

of: but as it is their power which is truly exerted in the name of the sovereign, so, it is not so much a necessary consequence as an identical proposition to say, that where they are clearly opposed to the exercise of that power, the king has no means whatever of asserting the slightest authority. This is the universal law indeed of all governments; and though the different constitution of society, in the various stages of its progress, may give a different character to the controlling power, the principles which regulate its operation are substantially the same in all. There is no room, therefore, for the question, whether there should be any control on the power of a king, or what that control should be; because, as the power really is not the king's, but belongs inalienably to the stronger part of the nation itself, whether it derive that strength from discipline, talents, numbers, or situation, it is impossible that it should be exercised at his instigation, without the concurrence, or acquiescence at least, of those in whom it is substantially vested.

Such, then, is the abstract and fundamental doctrine as to the true nature of Monarchical, and indeed of every other species of political power; and, abstract as it is, we cannot help thinking that it goes far to settle all controversies as to *the rights* of sovereigns, and ought to be kept clearly in mind in proceeding to the more practical views of the subject. For, though what we have now said as to all actual power belonging to the predominant mass of physical and intellectual force in every community, and the certainty of its ultimately impelling the public authority in the direction of its interests and inclinations, be unquestionably true in itself; it is still of infinite importance to consider what provisions are made by the form of the government, or what is called its Constitution, for the ready operation of those interests and inclinations upon the immediate agents of the public authority. That they will operate with full effect in the long-run, whether those provisions be good or bad, or whether there be any such provision formally recognized in the government or not, we take to be altogether indisputable: but, in the one case, they will operate only after long intervals of suffering, — and by means of much suffering; while, on the other, they will be constantly and almost insensibly in action, and will correct the first declination of the visible index of public authority, from the natural line of action of the radical power of which it should be the exponent, or rather will prevent any sensible variation or disconformity in their respective movements. The whole difference, indeed, between a good and a bad government, appears to us to consist in this particular, viz. in the greater or the less facility which it affords for the early, the gradual and steady operation of the substantial power of the community upon its constituted authorities; while the freedom, again, and ultimate happiness of the nation depend on the degree in which the substantial power is possessed by a greater or a smaller, and a more or less moral and instructed part of the whole society — a matter almost independent of the form or name of the government, and determined in a great degree by the progress which the society itself has made in civilization and refinement.

Thus, to take the most abominable of all governments — a ferocious despotism, such as that of Morocco — where an Emperor, in concert with a banditti of armed ruffians, butchers, plunders, and oppresses the whole unarmed population, — the check to the monarchical power is complete, even there, in the disobedience or dissatisfaction of the banditti; although, from the character of that body, it affords but little protection to the community, and, from the want of any contrivance for its early or systematic operation, can scarcely ever be applied, even for its own objects, but with irreparable injury to both the parties concerned. As there is no arrangement by which the general sense of this lawless soldiery can be collected, upon any proposed measures of their leader, or the moment ascertained when the degree of his oppression exceeds that of their patience, they never begin to act till his outrages have gone far beyond what was necessary to decide their resistance; and, accordingly, he, on the one hand, goes on decapitating and torturing, for months after all the individuals, by whose consent alone he was enabled to take this amusement, were truly of opinion that it should have been discontinued; and, on the other, receives the intimation at last, not in the form of a remonstrance, upon which he might amend, but in the shape of a bowstring, a dose of poison, or a stroke of the

dagger. Thus, from the mere want of any provision for ascertaining the sentiments of the individuals possessing the actual power of the state, or for communicating them to the individual appointed to administer it, infinite evils result to both parties. They first suffer intolerable oppressions before they feel such confidence in their unanimity as to interfere at all; and then, they do it at last, in the form of brutal violence and vindictive infliction. Every admonition, in short, given to their elected leader is preceded by *their* suffering, and followed by *his* death; and every application of the check which nature itself has provided for the abuse of all delegated power, is accompanied by a total dissolution of the government, and the hazard of a long series of revolutionary tumults.

This is the history of all Military despotisms, in barbarous and uninstructed communities. When they get on to Feudal aristocracies, matters are a little mended; both by the transference of the actual power to a larger and worthier body, and by the introduction of some sort of machinery or contrivance, however rude, to ensure or facilitate the operation of this power upon the ostensible agents of the government. The person of the sovereign is now surrounded by some kind of council or parliament; and threats and remonstrances are addressed to him, with considerable energy, by such of its members as take offence at the measures he proposes. Such, however, is the imperfection of the means devised for these communications, and such the difficulty of collecting the sentiments of those who can make them with effect, that this necessary operation is still performed in a very clumsy and hazardous manner. These are the times, accordingly, when Barons enter their protests, by openly waging war on their sovereign, or each other; and, even when they are tolerably agreed among themselves, can think of no better way of controlling, or enlightening their monarch, than by marching down in arms to Runnymede, and compelling him, by main force, and in sight of all his people, to sign a charter of their liberties. The evils, in short, are the same in substance as in the sanguinary revolutions of Morocco. The mischief goes to a dangerous length before any remedy is applied; and the remedy itself is a great mischief: although, from the improved state of intelligence and civilization, the outrages are not on either side so horrible.

The next stage brings us to commercial and enlightened times, in which the real strength and power of the nation is scattered pretty widely through the whole of its population, and in which, accordingly, the check upon the misapplication of that power must arise from the dissatisfaction of that great body. The check must always exist, — and is sure, sooner or later, to operate with sufficient efficacy; but the safety and the promptitude of its operation depend, in this case as in all the others, upon the nature of the contrivances which the Constitution has provided, first, for collecting and ascertaining the sentiments of that great and miscellaneous aggregate in whom the actual power is now vested; and, secondly, for communicating this in an authentic manner to the executive officers of the government. The most effectual and complete way of effecting this, is undoubtedly by a Parliament, so elected as to represent pretty fairly the views of all the considerable classes of the people, and so constituted as to have at all times the means, both of suggesting those views to the executive, and of effectually checking or preventing its malversations. Where no such institution exists, the tranquillity of the state will always be exposed to considerable hazard; and the danger of great convulsions will unfortunately become greater, exactly in proportion as the body of the people become more wealthy and intelligent.

Under the form of society, however, of which we are now speaking, there must always be some channels, however narrow and circuitous, by which the sense of the people may be let in to act upon the administrators of their government. The channel of the press, for example, and of general literature — provincial magistracies and assemblies, such as the States and Parliaments of old France — even the ordinary courts of law — the stage — the pulpit — and all the innumerable occasions of considerable assemblages for deliberation on local interests, election to local offices, or for mere solemnity and usage of festivity — which must exist in all large, ancient, and civilized communities, may afford indications of that general sentiment, which must ultimately govern all things;

and may serve to admonish observant kings and courtiers how far the true possessors of the national power are likely to sanction any of its proposed applications. Where those indications, however, are neglected or misconstrued, or where, from other circumstances, institutions that may seem better contrived, fail either to represent the true sense of the ruling part of the community, or to convince the Executive magistrate that they do represent it, there, even in the most civilized and intelligent countries, the most hazardous and tremendous distractions may ensue; — such distractions as broke the peace, and endangered the liberties, of this country in the time of Charles the First — or such as have recently torn in pieces the frame of society in France; and in their consequences still threaten the destiny of the world.

Both these convulsions, it appears to us, arose from nothing else than the want of some proper or adequate contrivance for ascertaining the sentiments of those holding the actual strength of the nation, — and for conveying those sentiments, with the full evidence of their authenticity, to the actual administrators of their affairs. And the two cases, we take it, were more nearly alike than has generally been imagined; for though the House of Commons had an existence long before the time of King Charles, it had not previously been recognized as the vehicle of commanding opinions, nor the proper organ of that great body to whom the actual power of the State had been recently and insensibly transferred. The Court still considered the effectual power to reside in the feudal aristocracy, by the greater part of which it was supported; and, when the Parliament, or rather the House of Commons, spoke in name of the people of England, thought it might safely disregard the admonitions of a body which had not hitherto advanced any such authoritative claims to attention. It refused, therefore, to acknowledge this body as the organ of the supreme power of the State; and was only undeceived when it fell before its actual exertion. In France again, the error, though more radical, was of the very same nature. The administration of the government was conducted, up to the very eve of the Revolution, upon the same principles as when the Nobles were every thing, and the People nothing; — though the people, in the mean time, had actually become far more than a match for the nobility, in wealth, in intelligence, and in the knowledge of their own importance. The Constitution, however, provided no means for the peaceable but authoritative intimation of this change to the official rulers; or for the gradual development of the new power which had thus been generated in the community; and the consequence was, that its more indirect indications were overlooked, and nothing yielded to its accumulating pressure, till it overturned the throne, — and overwhelmed with its wasteful flood the whole ancient institutions of the country. If there had been any provision in the structure of the government, by which the increasing power of the lower orders had been enabled to make itself distinctly felt, and to bear upon the constituted authorities, as gradually as it was generated, the great calamities which have befallen that nation might have been entirely avoided, — the condition of the monarchy might have insensibly accommodated itself to the change in the condition of the people, — and a most beneficial alteration might have taken place in its administration, without any shock or convulsion in any part of the community. For want of some such provision, however, the Court was held in ignorance of the actual power of the people, till it burst in thunder on their heads. The pent-up vapours disploded with the force of an earthquake; and those very elements that would have increased the beauty and strength of the Constitution by their harmonious combination, crumbled its whole fabric into ruin by their sudden and untempered collision. The bloody revolutions of the Seraglio were acted over again in the heart of the most polished and enlightened nation of Europe; — and from the very same cause — the want of a channel for conveying constantly and temperately and effectually, the sense of those who possess power, to those whose office it was to direct its application; — and the outrage was only the greater and more extensive, that the body among whom this power was diffused was larger, and the period of its unsuspected accumulation of longer duration.

The great point, then, is to ensure a free, an authoritative, and an uninterrupted com-

munication between the ostensible administrators of the national power and its actual constituents and depositories; and the chief distinction between a good and a bad government consists in the degree in which it affords the means of such a communication. The main end of government, to be sure, is, that wise laws should be enacted and enforced: but such is the condition of human infirmity, that the hazards of sanguinary contentions about the exercise of power, is a much greater and more imminent evil than a considerable obstruction in the making or execution of the laws; and the best government therefore is, not that which promises to make the best laws, and to enforce them most vigorously, but that which guards best against the tremendous conflicts to which all administrations of government, and all exercise of political power is so apt to give rise. It happens fortunately, indeed, that the same arrangements which most effectually ensure the peace of society against those disorders, are also, on the whole, the best calculated for the purposes of wise and efficient legislation. But we do not hesitate to look upon their negative or preventive virtues as of a far higher cast than their positive and active ones; and to consider a representative legislature as incomparably of more value, when it truly enables the efficient force of the nation to control and direct the executive, than when it merely enacts wholesome statutes in its legislative capacity.

The result of the whole then is, that in a civilized and enlightened country, the actual power of the State resides in a great body of the people, and especially among the more wealthy and intelligent in all the different ranks of which it consists; and consequently, that the administration of a government can never be either safe or happy, unless it be conformable to the wishes and sentiments of that great body; while there is little chance of its answering either of these conditions, unless the forms of the constitution provide some means for the regular, constant, and authentic expression of their sentiments, — to which, when so expressed, it is the undoubted duty, as well as the obvious interest of the executive to conform. A Parliament, therefore, which really and truly represents the sense and opinions — we mean the general and mature sense, not the occasional prejudices and fleeting passions — of the efficient body of the people, and which watches over and effectually controls every important act of the executive magistrate, is necessary, in a country like this, for the tranquillity of the government, and the ultimate safety of the Monarchy itself, — much more even than for the enactment of laws; and, in proportion as it varies from this description, or relaxes in this control, will the peace of the country and the security of the government be endangered.

But then comes Mr. Leckie, and a number of loyal gentlemen, from Sicily, or other places, exclaiming that this is mere treason and republicanism, — and asking whether the king is to have no will or voice of his own? — what is to become of the balance of the constitution if he is to be reduced to a mere cypher added to the end of every ministerial majority? — and how, if the office is thus divested of all real power, it can ever fulfil the purposes for which we ourselves have preferred Monarchy to all other constitutions? We shall endeavour to answer these questions; — and after the preceding full exposition of our premises, we think they may be answered very briefly.

In the *first* place, then, it does not appear to us that it can be seriously maintained that any national or salutary purpose can ever be served by recognizing the private will or voice of the king as an individual, as an element in the political government, especially in an Hereditary Monarchy. The person upon whom that splendid lot may fall, not having been selected for the office on account of any proof or presumption of his fitness for it, but being called to it as it were by mere accident, may be fairly presumed to have less talent or capacity than any one of the individuals who have made their own way to a place of influence or authority in his councils; and his voice or opinion therefore, considered naturally and in itself, must be of less value or intrinsic authority than that of any other person in high office under him: and when it is farther considered that this sovereign may be very young or very old — almost an idiot — almost a madman — and altogether a dotard, while he is still in the full possession and the lawful exercise of the whole authority of his station, it

must seem perfectly extravagant to maintain that it can be of advantage to the nation, that his *individual* wishes or opinions should be the measure or the condition of any one act of legislation or national policy. — Assuredly it is not for his wisdom or his patriotism, and much less for his own delight and gratification, that an hereditary monarch is placed upon the throne of a free people; and this obvious consideration alone might lead us at once to the true end and purpose of royalty.

But the letter and theory of the English Constitution recognize the individual will of the sovereign, just as little as reason and common sense can require it, as an integral element in that Constitution. It declares that the king as an individual can do no wrong, and can be made accountable for nothing — but that his ministers and advisers shall be responsible for all his acts without any exception — or at least with the single exception of the act of naming those advisers. In every one act of his peculiar and official prerogative, in which, if in any thing, his individual and private will must be understood to have been exerted, the Constitution sees only the will and the act of his ministers. The king's speech — the speech pronounced by his own lips, and as his voluntary act, in the face of the whole nation — is the speech of the minister, and as such, is openly canvassed, and condemned, if need be, by the Houses of Parliament, in the ordinary course of their duty. The king's personal answers to addresses — his declarations of peace or war — the honours he personally confers — the bills he personally passes or rejects — are all considered by the Constitution as the acts only of his counsellors. It is not only the undoubted right, but the unquestionable duty, of the Houses of Parliament, to consider of their propriety — to complain of them if they think them inexpedient — to get them rescinded if they admit of such a correction; and at all events to prosecute, impeach, and punish those advisers, — to whom, and not to the sovereign in whose name they run, they are exclusively attributed. This great doctrine, then, of ministerial responsibility, answers the first question of Mr. Leckie and his adherents, as to the enormity of subjecting the personal will and opinion of the sovereign at all times to the control of those who represent the efficient power of the community. Mr. Leckie himself, it is to be observed, is for leaving this grand feature of ministerial responsibility, even when he is for dispensing with the attendance of Parliaments; — though, to be sure, among his other omissions, he has forgotten to tell us by whom, and in what manner, it could be enforced, after the abolition of those troublesome assemblies.

The next question relates to the theoretical balance of the Constitution, which they say implies that the will and the power of the Monarch is to be a separate and independent element in the government. We have not left ourselves room now to answer this at large; nor indeed do we think it necessary; and accordingly we shall make but two remarks in regard to it, and that in the most summary manner. The first is, that the powers ascribed to the sovereign, in the theory of the Constitution, are not supposed to be vested in him as an insulated and independent individual — but in him as guided and consubstantiated with his responsible counsellors — that *the King*, in that balance, means not *the person* of the reigning prince, but the *department of the Executive government* — the whole body of ministers and their dependants — to whom, for the sake of convenience and dispatch, the initiative of many important measures is entrusted, and who are only entitled or enabled to carry on business, under burden of their responsibility to Parliament, and in reliance on its ultimate support. The second remark is, that the balance of the Constitution, in so far as it has any real existence, will be found to subsist almost entirely in the House of Commons, which possesses exclusively both the power of impeachment, and the power of granting supplies; and has besides, the most natural and immediate communication with that great body of the Nation, in whom the power of control over all the branches of the Legislature is ultimately vested. The Executive, therefore, has its chief ministers in that House, and exerts in that place all the influence which is attached to its situation. If it is successfully opposed there, it would for the most part be infinitely dangerous for it to think of resisting in any other quarter. But if it were to exercise its legal prerogative by refusing a series of favourite bills, or disregarding an unanimous

address of the Commons, the natural consequence would be, that the Commons would retort, by exercising *their* legal privilege of withholding the supplies; and as things could not go on for a moment on such a footing, the king must either submit at discretion, or again bethink himself of raising his royal standard against that of a Parliamentary army. The general view, indeed, which we have taken above of the true nature of that which is called the power of the monarch, is enough to show, that it can only be upon the very unlikely, *but not impossible supposition*, that the nominal representatives of the people are really more estranged from their true sentiments than the ministers of the Crown, that it can ever be safe or allowable for the latter, to refuse immediate compliance with the will of those representatives.

There remains then but one other question, viz. Whether we are really for reducing the king to the condition of a mere tool in the hands of a ministerial majority, without any real power or influence whatsoever; and whether, upon this supposition, there can be any use in the institution of monarchy—as the minister, on this view of things, must be regarded as the real sovereign, and *his* office is still open to competition, as the reward of dangerous and disorderly ambition? Now, the answer to this is a denial of the assumption upon which the question is raised. The king, upon our view of his office—which it has been seen is exactly that taken by the Constitution—would still hold, indisputably, the first place in the State, and possess a substantial power, not only superior to that which any minister could ever obtain under him, but sufficient to repress the pretensions of any one who, under any other form of government, might be tempted to aspire to the sovereignty. The king of England, it will be remembered, is a perpetual member of the cabinet—and perpetually *the First Member* of it. No disapprobation of its measures, whether expressed by votes of the Houses, or addresses from the people, can turn *him* out of his situation: and he has also the power of nominating its other members; not indeed the power of maintaining them in their offices against the sense of the nation—but the power of *trying the experiment*, and putting it on the country to take the painful and difficult step of insisting on their removal. If he have any portion of ministerial talents, therefore, he must have, in the first place, all the power that could attach to *a Perpetual Minister*—with all the peculiar influence that is inseparable from the splendour of his official station: and, in the second place, he has the actual power, if not absolutely to make or unmake all the other members of his cabinet at his pleasure, at least to choose, at his own discretion, among all who are not upon very strong grounds exceptionable to the country at large.

Holding it to be quite clear, then, that the private and individual will of the sovereign is not to be recognized as a separate element in the actual legislation, or administrative government of the country, and that it must in all cases give way to the mature sense of the nation, we shall still find, that his place is conspicuously and beyond all question *the First* in the State, and that it is invested with quite as much substantial power as is necessary to maintain all other offices in a condition of subordination. To see this clearly, indeed, it is only necessary to consider, a little in detail, what is the ordinary operation of the regal power, and on what occasions the necessary checks to which we have alluded come in to control it. The king, then, as the presiding member of the cabinet, can not only resist, but suggest, or propose, or recommend any thing which he pleases for the adoption of that executive council; and his suggestions must at all times be more attended to than those of any other person of the same knowledge or capacity. Such, indeed, are the indestructible sources of influence belonging to his situation, that, if he be only *compos mentis*, he may rely upon having more authority than any two of the gravest and most experienced individuals with whom he can communicate; and that there will be a far greater disposition to adopt his recommendations, than those of the wisest and most popular minister that the country has ever seen. He may, indeed, be outvoted even in the cabinet;—the absurdity of his suggestions may be so palpable, or their danger so great, that no habitual deference, or feeling of personal dependence, may be sufficient to induce his advisers to venture on their adoption. *This*, however, we imagine, will scarcely

be looked upon as a source of national weakness or hazard; and is, indeed, an accident that may befal any sovereign, however absolute — since the veriest despot cannot work without tools — and even a military sovereign, at the head of his army, must submit to abandon any scheme which that army positively refuses to execute. If he is baffled in one cabinet, however, the king of England may in general repeat the experiment in another; and change his counsellors over and over, till he find some who are more courageous or more complying.

But, suppose that the cabinet acquiesces: — the Parliament also may no doubt oppose, and defeat the execution of the project. The cabinet may be outvoted in the House of Commons, as the sovereign may be outvoted in the Cabinet; and all its other members may be displaced by votes of that House. The minister who had escaped being dismissed by the king through his compliance with the Royal pleasure, may be dismissed *for* that compliance, by the voice of the Legislature. But the sovereign, with whom, upon this supposition, the objectionable measure originated, is not dismissed; and may not only call another minister to his councils to try this same measure a second time, but may himself *dismiss the Parliament* by which it had been censured; and submit its proceedings to the consideration of another assembly! We really cannot see any want of effective power in such an order of things; nor comprehend how the royal authority is rendered altogether nugatory and subordinate, merely by requiring it to have *ultimately* the concurrence of the Cabinet and of the Legislature. The last stage of this hypothesis, however, will clear all the rest.

The king's measure may triumph in Parliament as well as in the council — and yet it may be resisted by the Nation. The Parliament may be outvoted in the country, as well as the Cabinet in the Parliament; and if the measure, even in this last stage, and after all these tests of its safety, be not abandoned, the most dreadful consequences may ensue. If addresses and clamours are disregarded, recourse may be had to arms; and an open civil war be left again to determine, whether the sense of the people at large be, or be not, resolutely against its adoption. This last species of check on the power of the sovereign, no political arrangement, and no change in the Constitution, can obviate or prevent; and as all the other checks of which we have spoken refer ultimately to this, so the defence of their necessity and justice is complete, when we merely say, that their use is *to prevent a recurrence to this last* extremity — and, by enabling the sense of the nation to repress pernicious counsels in the outset, through the safe and pacific channels of the Cabinet and the Parliament, to remove the necessity of resisting them at last, by the dreadful expedient of actual force and compulsion.

If a king, under any form of monarchy, attempt to act against the sense of the commanding part of the population, he will inevitably be resisted and overthrown. This is not a matter of institution or policy; but a necessary result from the nature of his office, and of the powers of which he is the administrator — or rather from the principles of human nature. But that form of monarchy is the worst — both for the monarch and for the people — which exposes him the most to the shock of such ultimate resistance; and that is the best, which interposes the greatest number of intermediate bodies between *the oppressive purpose* of the king and his actual attempt to carry it into execution, — which tries the projected measure upon the greatest number of selected samples of the public sense, before it comes into collision with its general mass, — and affords the most opportunities for retreat, and the best cautions for advance, before the battle is actually joined. The Cabinet is presumed to know more of the sentiments of the nation than the king; — and the Parliament to know more than the Cabinet. Both these bodies, too, are presumed to be rather more under the personal influence of the king than the great body of the nation; and therefore, whatever suggestions of his are ultimately rejected in those deliberative assemblies, must be held to be such as would have been still less acceptable to the bulk of the community. By rejecting them there, however, by silent votes or clamorous harangues, the nation is saved from the necessity of rejecting them, by actual resistance and insurrection in the field. The person and the office of the monarch remain untouched, and untainted for all pur-

poses of good; and the peace of the country is maintained, and its rights asserted, without any turbulent exertion of its power. The whole frame and machinery of the constitution, in short, is contrived for the express purpose of preventing the kingly power from dashing itself to pieces against the more radical power of the people: and those institutions that are absurdly supposed to restrain the authority of the sovereign within too narrow limits, are in fact its great safeguards and protectors, by providing for the timely and peaceful operation of that great controlling power, which it could only elude for a season, at the expense of much certain misery to the people, and the hazard of final destruction to itself.

Mr. Leckie, however, and his adherents, can see nothing of all this. The facility of casting down a single tyrant, we have already seen, is one of the prime advantages which he ascribes to the institution of simple monarchy; — and so much is this advocate of kingly power enamoured of the uncourtly doctrine of resistance, that he not only recognizes it as a familiar element in the Constitution, but lays it down in express terms, that it affords *the only remedy* for all political corruption. "History," he observes, "has furnished us with no example of the reform of a corrupt and tyrannical government, but *either from intestine war*, or conquest from without. Thus, the objection against a simple monarchy, because there is no remedy for its abuse, holds the same, but in a greater degree, against any other form. Each is borne with, as long as possible; and when the evil is as its greatest height, the nation either *rises against it*, or, not having the means of so doing, sinks into abject degradation and misery."

Such, however, are not *our* principles of policy; on the contrary, we hold, that the chief use of a free Constitution is to prevent the recurrence of these dreadful extremities; and that the excellence of a limited monarchy consists less in the good laws, and the good administration of law, to which it naturally gives birth, than in the security it affords against such a melancholy alternative. To some, we know, who have been accustomed to the spectacle of long-established despotisms, the hazards of such a terrific regeneration appear distant and inconsiderable; and, if they could only prolong the intervals of patient submission, and polish away some of the harsher features of oppression, they imagine a state of things would result more tranquil and desirable than can ever be presented by the eager and salutary contentions of a free government. To such persons we shall address but two observations. The first, that though the body of the people may indeed be kept in brutish subjection for ages, where the state of society, as to intelligence and property, is such that the actual power and command of the nation is vested in a few bands of disciplined troops, this could never be done in a nation abounding in independent wealth, very generally given to reading and reflection, and knit together in all its parts by a thousand means of communication and ties of mutual interest and sympathy; and least of all could it be done in a nation already accustomed to the duties and enjoyments of freedom, and regarding the safe and honourable struggles it is constantly obliged to maintain in its defence, as the most ennobling and delightful of its exercises. The other remark is, that even if it were possible, as it is not, to rivet and shackle down an enlightened nation in such a way as to make it submit for some time, in apparent quietness, to the abuses of arbitrary power, it is never to be forgotten that this submission is itself an evil — and an evil only inferior to those through which it must ultimately seek its relief. If any form of tyranny, therefore, were as secure from terrible convulsions as a regulated freedom, it would not cease for that to be a far less desirable condition of existence; and as the mature sense of a whole nation may be fairly presumed to point more certainly to the true means of their happiness than the single opinion even of a patriotic king, so it must be right and reasonable, in all cases, that his opinion should give way to theirs; and that a power should be generated, if it did not naturally and necessarily exist, to ensure its predominance.

We have still a word or two to say on the alleged inconsistency and fluctuation of all public councils that are subjected to the control of popular assemblies, and on the unprincipled violence of the factions to which they are said to give rise. The first of these topics, however, need not detain us long. If it be meant, that errors in public measures are more

speedily detected, and more certainly repaired, when they are maturely and freely discussed by all the wisdom and all the talent of a nation, than when they are left to the blind guidance of the passions or conceit of an individual; — if it be meant, that, under a Simple monarchy, we should have persevered longer and more steadily in the principles of the Slave Trade, of Catholic Proscription, and of the Orders in Council: — then we cheerfully admit the justice of the charge — we readily yield to those governments the praise of such consistency and such perseverance — and offer no apology for that change from folly to wisdom, and from cruelty to mercy, which is produced by the variableness of a free Constitution. But if it be meant that an absolute monarch keeps the faith which he pledges more religiously than a free people, or that he is less liable to sudden and capricious variations in his policy, we positively deny the truth of the imputation, and boldly appeal to the whole course of history for its confutation. What nation, we should like to know, ever stood half so high as our own, for the reputation of good faith and inviolable fidelity to its allies? Or in what instance has the national honour been impeached, by the refusal of one set of ministers to abide by the engagements entered into by their predecessors? — With regard to mere caprice and inconsistency again, will it be seriously maintained, that councils, depending upon the individual will of an absolute sovereign — who may be a boy, or a girl, or a dotard, or a driveller — are more likely to be steadily and wisely pursued, than those that are taken up by a set of experienced statesmen, under the control of a vigilant and intelligent public? It is not by mere popular clamour — by the shouts or hisses of an ignorant and disorderly mob — but by the deep, the slow, and the collected voice of the intelligent and enlightened part of the community, that the councils of a free nation are ultimately guided. But if they were at the disposal of a rabble — what rabble, we would ask, is so ignorant, so contemptible, so fickle, false, and empty of all energy of purpose or principle, as the rabble that invests the palaces of arbitrary kings — the favourites, the mistresses, the pandars, the flatterers and intriguers, who succeed or supplant each other in the crumbling soil of his favour, and so frequently dispose of all that ought to be at the command of wisdom and honour?

Looking only to the eventful history of our own day, will any one presume to say, that the conduct of the simple monarchies of Europe has afforded us, for the last twenty years, any such lessons of steady and unwavering policy as to make us blush for our own democratical inconstancy? What, during that period, has been the conduct of Prussia — of Russia — of Austria herself — of every state, in short, that has not been terrified into constancy by the constant dread of French violence? And where, during all that time, are we to look for any traces of manly firmness, but in the conduct and councils of the only nation whose measures were at all controlled by the influence of popular sentiments? If that nation too was not exempt from the common charge of vacillation — if she did fluctuate between designs to restore the Bourbons, and to enrich herself by a share of their spoils — if she did contract one deep stain on her faith and her humanity, by encouraging and deserting the party of the Royalists in La Vendée — if she did waver and wander from expeditions into Flanders to the seizure of West Indian islands, and from menaces to extirpate Jacobinism to missions courting its alliance — will any man pretend to say, that these signs of infirmity of purpose were produced by yielding to the varying impulses of popular opinions, or the alternate preponderance of hostile factions in the state? is it not notorious, on the contrary, that they all occurred during that lamentable but memorable period, when the alarm excited by the aspect of new dangers had in a manner *extinguished* the constitutional spirit of party, and composed the salutary conflicts of the nation — that they occurred in the first ten years of Mr. Pitt's war administration, when opposition was almost extinct, and when the government was not only more entirely in the hands of one man than it had been at any time since the days of Cardinal Wolsey, but when the temper and tone of its administration approached very nearly to that of an arbitrary monarchy?

On the doctrine of parties and party dissensions, it is now too late for us to enter at large; — and indeed when we recollect what Mr.

Burke has written upon the subject*, we do not know why we should wish for an opportunity of expressing our feeble sentiments. Parties are necessary in all free governments — and are indeed the characteristics by which such governments may be known. One party, that of the rulers or the court, is necessarily formed and disciplined from the permanence of its chief, and the uniformity of the interests it has to maintain; — the party in opposition, therefore, must be marshalled in the same way. When bad men combine, good men must unite: — and it would not be less hopeless for a crowd of worthy citizens to take the field without leaders or discipline, against a regular army, than for individual patriots to think of opposing the influence of the sovereign by their separate and uncombined exertions. As to the lengths which they should be permitted to go in support of the common cause, or the extent to which each ought to submit his private opinion to the general sense of his associates, it does not appear to us — though casuists may varnish over dishonour, and purists startle at shadows — either that any man of upright feelings can be often at a loss for a rule of conduct, or that, in point of fact, there has ever been any blameable excess in the maxims upon which the great parties of this country have been generally conducted. The leading principle is, that a man should satisfy himself that the party to which he attaches himself means well to the country, and that more substantial good will accrue to the nation from its coming into power, than from the success of any other body of men whose success is at all within the limits of probability. Upon this principle, therefore, he will support that party in all things which he approves — in all things that are indifferent — and even in some things which he partly disapproves, provided they neither touch the honour and vital interests of the country, nor imply any breach of the ordinary rules of morality. — Upon the same principle he will attack not only all that he individually disapproves in the conduct of the adversary, but all that might appear indifferent and tolerable enough to a neutral spectator, if it afford an opportunity to weaken this adversary in the public opinion, and to increase the chance of bringing that party into power from which alone he sincerely believes that any sure or systematic good is to be expected. Farther than this we do not believe that the leaders or respectable followers of any considerable party, intentionally allow themselves to go. Their zeal, indeed, and the heats and passions engendered in the course of the conflict, may sometimes hurry them into measures for which an impartial spectator cannot find this apology — but to their own consciences and honour we are persuaded that they generally stand acquitted; — and, on the score of duty or morality, that is all that can be required of human beings. For the baser retainers of the party indeed — those marauders who follow in the rear of every army, not for battle but for booty — who concern themselves in no way about the justness of the quarrel, or the fairness of the field — who plunder the dead, and butcher the wounded, and desert the unprosperous and betray the daring; for those wretches who truly belong to no party, and are a disgrace and a drawback upon all, we shall assuredly make no apology, nor propose any measures of toleration. The spirit by which they are actuated is the very opposite of that spirit which is generated by the parties of a free people; and accordingly it is among the advocates of arbitrary power that such persons, after they have served their purpose by a pretence of patriotic zeal, are ultimately found to range themselves.

We positively deny, then, that the interests of the country have ever been sacrificed to a vindictive desire to mortify or humble a rival party; — though we freely admit that a great deal of the time and the talent that might be devoted more directly to her service, is wasted in such an endeavour. This, however, is unavoidable — nor is it possible to separate those discussions, which are really necessary to expose the dangers or absurdity of the practical measures proposed by a party, from those which have really no other end but to expose it to general ridicule or *odium*. This too, however, it should be remembered, is a point in which the country has a still deeper, though a more indirect interest than in the former; since it is only by such means that a system that is radically vicious can be exploded, or a set of

* See his "Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents." *Sub initio — et passim.*

men fundamentally corrupt and incapable removed. If the time be well spent, therefore, which is occupied in preventing or palliating some particular act of impolicy or oppression, it is impossible to grudge that by which the spring and the fountain of all such acts may be cut off.

With regard to the tumult — the disorder — the danger to public peace — the vexation and discomfort which certain sensitive persons and great lovers of tranquillity represent as the fruits of our political dissensions, we cannot help saying that we have no sympathy with their delicacy or their timidity. What they look upon as a frightful commotion of the elements, we consider as no more than a wholesome agitation; and cannot help regarding the contentions in which freemen are engaged by a conscientious zeal for their opinions, as an invigorating and not ungenerous exercise. What serious breach of the public peace has it occasioned? — to what insurrections, or conspiracies, or proscriptions has it ever given rise? — what mob even, or tumult, has been excited by the contention of the two great parties of the state, since their contention has been open, and their weapons appointed, and their career marked out in the free list of the Constitution? Suppress these contentions, indeed — forbid these weapons, and shut up these lists, and you will have conspiracies and insurrections enough. — These are the short-sighted fears of tyrants. — The dissensions of a free people are the preventives and not the indications of radical disorder — and the noises which make the weak-hearted tremble, are but the natural murmurs of those mighty and mingling currents of public opinion, which are destined to fertilize and unite the country, and can never become dangerous till an attempt is made to obstruct their course, or to disturb their level.

Mr. Leckie has favoured his readers with an enumeration of the advantages of absolute monarchy; — and we are tempted to follow his example, by concluding with a dry catalogue of the advantages of free government — each of which would require a chapter at least as long as that which we have now bestowed upon one of them. Next, then, to that of its superior security from great reverses and atrocities, of which we have already spoken at sufficient length, we should be disposed to rank that pretty decisive feature, of the superior happiness which it confers upon all the individuals who live under it. The consciousness of liberty is a great blessing and enjoyment in itself. — The occupation it affords — the importance it confers — the excitement of intellect, and the elevation of spirit which it implies, are all elements of happiness peculiar to this condition of society, and quite separate and independent of the external advantages with which it may be attended. In the second place, however, liberty makes men more industrious, and consequently more generally prosperous and wealthy; the result of which is, both that they have among them more of the good things that wealth can procure, and that the resources of the State are greater for all public purposes. In the third place, it renders men more valiant and high-minded, and also promotes the development of genius and talents, both by the unbounded career it opens up to the emulation of every individual in the land, and by the natural effect of all sorts of intellectual or moral excitement to awaken all sorts of intellectual and moral capabilities. In the fourth place, it renders men more patient, and docile, and resolute in the pursuit of any public object; and consequently both makes their chance of success greater, and enables them to make much greater efforts in every way, in proportion to the extent of their population. No slaves could ever have undergone the toils to which the Spartans or the Romans tasked themselves for the good or the glory of their country; — and no tyrant could ever have extorted the sums in which the Commons of England have voluntarily assessed themselves for the exigencies of the state. These are among the positive advantages of freedom; and, in our opinion, are its chief advantages. — But we must not forget, in the fifth and last place, that there is nothing else but a free government by which men can be secured from those arbitrary invasions of their persons and properties — those cruel persecutions, oppressive imprisonments, and lawless executions, which no formal code can prevent an absolute monarch from regarding as a part of his prerogative; and above all, from those provincial exactions and oppressions, and those universal insults, and contumelies, and indignities, by which the inferior minions of power spread

misery and degradation among the whole mass of every people which has no political independence.

PEACE OF 1814.

(April, 1814.)

A Song of Triumph. By W. Sotheby, Esq. 8vo. London: 1814.

L'Acte Constitutionnel, en la Séance du 9 Avril, 1814. 8vo. Londres: 1814.

Of Bonaparte, the Bourbons, and the Necessity of rallying round our legitimate Princes, for the Happiness of France and of Europe. By F. A. Chateaubriand. 8vo. London: 1814.*

It would be strange, indeed, we think, if pages dedicated like ours to topics of present interest, and the discussions of the passing hour, should be ushered into the world at such a moment as this, without some stamp of that common joy and anxious emotion with which the wonderful events of the last three months are still filling all the regions of the earth. In such a situation, it must be difficult for any one who has the means of being heard, to refrain from giving utterance to his sentiments; but to us, whom it has assured, for the first time, of the entire sympathy of all our countrymen, the temptation, we own, is irresistible; and the good-natured part of our readers, we are persuaded, will rather smile at our simplicity, than fret at our presumption, when we add, that we have sometimes permitted ourselves to fancy that, if any copy of these our lucubrations should go down to another generation, it may be thought curious to trace in them *the first effects* of events that are probably destined to fix the fortune of succeeding centuries, and to observe the impressions which were made on the minds of contemporaries, by those mighty transactions, which will appear of yet greater moment in the eyes of a distant posterity. *We* are still too near that great image of Deliverance and Reform which the Genius of Europe has just set up before us to discern with certainty its just lineaments, or construe the true character of the aspect with which it looks onward to futurity! We see enough, however, to fill us with innumerable feelings, and the germs of many high and anxious speculations. The feelings, we are sure, are in unison with all that exists around us; and we reckon therefore on more than usual indulgence for the speculations into which they may expand.

The *first* and predominant feeling which rises on contemplating the scenes that have just burst on our view, is that of deep-felt gratitude and delight, — for the liberation of so many oppressed nations, — for the cessation of bloodshed and fear and misery over the fairest portions of the civilized world, — and for the enchanting, though still dim and uncertain prospect of long peace and measureless improvement, which seems at last to be opening on the suffering kingdoms of Europe. The very novelty of such a state of things, which could be known only by description to the greater part of the existing generation — the suddenness of its arrival, and the contrast which it forms with the anxieties and alarms to which it has so immediately succeeded, all concur most powerfully to enhance its vast intrinsic attractions. It has come upon the world like the balmy air and flushing verdure of a late spring, after the dreary chills of a long and interminable winter; and the refreshing sweetness with which it has visited the earth, feels like Elysium to those who have just escaped from the driving tempests it has banished.

* This, I am afraid, will now be thought to be too much of a mere "Song of Triumph;" or, at least, to be conceived throughout in a far more sanguine spirit than is consistent either with a wise observation of passing events, or a philosophical estimate of the frailties of human nature: and having certainly been written under that prevailing excitement, of which I chiefly wish to preserve it as a memorial, I have no doubt that, to some extent, it is so. At the same time it should be recollected, that it was written immediately after the *first* restoration of the Bourbons; and before the startling drama of the Hundred Days, and its grand catastrophe at Waterloo, had dispelled the first wholesome fears of the Allies, or sown the seeds of more bitter ranklings and resentments in the body of the French people: and, above all, that it was so written, before the many lawless invasions of national independence, and broken promises of Sovereigns to their subjects, which have since revived that distrust, which both nations and philosophers were then, perhaps, but too ready to renounce. And after all, I must say, that an attentive reader may find, even in this strain of good auguries, both such traces of misgivings, and such iteration of anxious warnings, as to save me from the imputation of having merely predicted a Millennium.

We have reason to hope, too, that the riches of the harvest will correspond with the splendour of this early promise. All the periods in which human society and human intellect have been known to make great and memorable advances, have followed close upon periods of general agitation and disorder. Men's minds, it would appear, must be deeply and roughly stirred, before they become prolific of great conceptions, or vigorous resolves; and a vast and alarming fermentation must pervade and agitate the mass of society, to inform it with that kindly warmth, by which alone the seeds of genius and improvement can be expanded. The fact, at all events, is abundantly certain; and may be accounted for, we conceive, without mystery, and without metaphors.

A popular revolution in government or religion — or any thing else that gives rise to general and long-continued contention, naturally produces a prevailing disdain of authority, and boldness of thinking in the leaders of the fray, — together with a kindling of the imagination and development of intellect in a great multitude of persons, who, in ordinary times, would have vegetated stupidly in the places where fortune had fixed them. Power and distinction, and all the higher prizes in the lottery of life, are then brought within the reach of a larger proportion of the community; and that vivifying spirit of ambition, which is the true source of all improvement, instead of burning at a few detached points on the summit of society, now pervades every portion of its frame. Much extravagance, and, in all probability, much guilt and much misery, result, in the first instance, from this sudden extrication of talent and enterprise, in places where they can as yet have no legitimate issue, or points of application. But the contending elements at last find their spheres, and their balance. The disorder ceases; but the activity remains. The multitudes that had been raised into intellectual existence by dangerous passions and crazy illusions, do not all relapse into their original torpor, when their passions are allayed and their illusions dispelled. There is a great permanent addition to the power and the enterprise of the community: and the talent and the activity which at first convulsed the state by their unmeasured and misdirected exertions, ultimately bless and adorn it, under a more enlightened and less intemperate guidance. If we may estimate the amount of this ultimate good by that of the disorder which preceded it, we cannot be too sanguine in our calculations of the happiness that awaits the rising generation. The fermentation, it will readily be admitted, has been long and violent enough to extract all the virtue of all the ingredients that have been submitted to its action; and enough of scum has boiled over, and enough of pestilent vapour been exhaled, to afford a reasonable assurance that the *residuum* will be both ample and pure.

If this delight in the spectacle and the prospect of boundless good, be *the first* feeling that is excited by the scene before us, the *second*, we do not hesitate to say, is a stern and vindictive joy at the downfal of the Tyrant and the tyranny by whom that good had been so long intercepted. We feel no compassion for that man's reverses of fortune, whose heart, in the days of his prosperity, was steeled against that, or any other humanizing emotion. He has fallen, substantially, without the pity, as he rose without the love, of any portion of mankind; and the admiration which was excited by his talents and activity and success, having no solid stay in the magnanimity or generosity of his character, has been turned, perhaps rather too eagerly, into scorn and derision, now that he is deserted by fortune, and appears without extraordinary resources in the day of his calamity. — We do not think that an ambitious despot and sanguinary conqueror can be too much execrated, or too little respected by mankind; but the popular clamour, at this moment, seems to us to be carried too far, even against this very dangerous individual. It is now discovered, it seems, that he has neither genius nor common sense, and he is accused of cowardice for not killing himself, by the very persons who would infallibly have exclaimed against his suicide, as a clear proof of weakness and folly. History, we think, will not class him quite so low as the English newspapers of the present day. He is a creature to be dreaded and condemned, but not, assuredly, to be despised by men of ordinary dimensions. His catastrophe, so far as it is yet visible, seems unsuitable indeed, and incongruous with the part he has hitherto sustained; but we have perceived nothing in it materially to alter

the estimate which we formed long ago of his character. He still seems to us a man of consummate conduct, valour, and decision in war, but without the virtues, or even the generous or social vices, of a soldier of fortune; — of matchless activity indeed, and boundless ambition, but entirely without principle, feeling, or affection; — suspicious, vindictive, and overbearing; — selfish and solitary in all his pursuits and gratifications; — proud and overweening, to the very borders of insanity; — and considering at last the laws of honour and the principles of morality, equally beneath his notice with the interests and feelings of other men. — Despising those who submitted to his pretensions, and pursuing, with implacable hatred, all who presumed to resist them, he seems to have gone on in a growing confidence in his own fortune, and contempt for mankind, — till a serious check from without showed him the error of his calculation, and betrayed the fatal insecurity of a career which reckoned only on prosperity.

Over the downfal of such a man, it is fitting that the world should rejoice; and his downfal, and the circumstances with which it has been attended, seem to us to hold out three several grounds of rejoicing.

In the *first* place, we think it has established for ever the impracticability of any scheme of universal dominion; and proved that Europe possesses sufficient means to maintain and assert the independence of her several states, in despite of any power that can be brought against them. It might formerly have been doubted, — and many minds of no abject cast were depressed with more than doubts on the subject, — whether the undivided sway which Rome exercised of old, by means of superior skill and discipline, might not be revived in modern times by arrangement, activity, and intimidation, — and whether, in spite of the boasted intelligence of Europe at the present day, the ready communication between all its parts, and the supposed weight of its public opinion, the sovereign of one or two great kingdoms might not subdue all the rest, by rapidity of movement and decision of conduct, and retain them in subjection by a strict system of disarming and *espionage*—by a constant interchange of armies and stations—and, in short, by a dexterous and alert use of those very means, of extensive intelligence and communication, which their civilization seemed at first to hold out as their surest protection. The experiment, however, has now been tried; and the result is, that the nations of Europe can never be brought under the rule of one conquering sovereign. No individual, it may be fairly presumed, will ever try that fatal experiment again, with so many extraordinary advantages, and chances of success, as he in whose hands it has now finally miscarried. The different states, it is to be hoped, will never again be found so shamefully unprovided for defence — so long insensible to their danger — and, let us not scruple at last to speak the truth, so little worthy of being saved—as most of them were at the beginning of that awful period; while there is still less chance of any military sovereign again finding himself invested with the absolute disposal of so vast a population, at once habituated to war and victory by the energies of a popular revolution, and disposed to submit to any hardships and privations for a ruler who would protect them from a recurrence of revolutionary horrors. That ruler, however, and that population, reinforced by immense drafts from the countries he had already overrun, has now been fairly beaten down by the other nations of Europe — at length cordially united by a sense of their common danger. Henceforward, therefore, they know their strength, and the means and occasions of bringing it into action; and the very notoriety of that strength, and of the scenes on which it has been proved, will in all probability prevent the recurrence of any necessity for proving it again.

The *second* ground of rejoicing in the downfal of Bonaparte is on account of the impressive lesson it has read to Ambition, and the striking illustration it has afforded, of the inevitable tendency of that passion to bring to ruin the power and the greatness which it seeks so madly to increase. No human being, perhaps, ever stood on so proud a pinnacle of worldly grandeur, as this insatiable conqueror, at the beginning of his Russian campaign. He had done more — he had acquired more — and he possessed more, as to actual power, influence, and authority, than any individual that ever figured on the scene of European story. He had visited, with a victorious army, almost

every capital of the Continent; and dictated the terms of peace to their astonished princes. He had consolidated under his immediate dominion, a territory and population apparently sufficient to meet the combination of all that it did not include; and interwoven himself with the government of almost all that was left. He had cast down and erected thrones at his pleasure; and surrounded himself with tributary kings, and principalities of his own creation. He had connected himself by marriage with the proudest of the ancient sovereigns; and was at the head of the largest and the finest army that was ever assembled to desolate or dispose of the world. Had he known where to stop in his aggressions upon the peace and independence of mankind, it seems as if this terrific sovereignty might have been permanently established in his person. But the demon by whom he was possessed urged him on to his fate. He could not bear that any power should exist which did not confess its dependence on him. Without a pretext for quarrel, he attacked Russia—insulted Austria—trod contemptuously on the fallen fortunes of Prussia—and by new aggressions, and the menace of more intolerable evils, drove them into that league which rolled back the tide of ruin on himself, and ultimately hurled him into the insignificance from which he originally sprung.

It is for this reason, chiefly, that we join in the feeling, which we think universal in this country, of joy and satisfaction at the utter destruction of this victim of Ambition,—and at the failure of those negociations, which would have left him, though humbled, in possession of a sovereign state, and of great actual power and authority. We say nothing at present of the policy or the necessity, that may have dictated those propositions; but the actual result is far more satisfactory, than any condition of their acceptance. Without this, the lesson to Ambition would have been imperfect, and the retribution of Eternal Justice apparently incomplete. It was fitting, that the world should see it again demonstrated, by this great example, that the appetite of conquest is in its own nature insatiable;—and that a being, once abandoned to that bloody career, is fated to pursue it to the end; and must persist in the work of desolation and murder, till the accumulated wrongs and resentments of the harassed world sweep him from its face. The knowledge of this may deter some dangerous spirits from entering on a course, which will infallibly bear them on to destruction;—and at all events should induce the sufferers to cut short the measure of its errors and miseries, by accomplishing their doom at the beginning. Sanguinary conquerors, we do not hesitate to say, should be devoted by a perpetual proscription, in mercy to the rest of the world.

Our *last* cause of rejoicing over this grand catastrophe, arises from the discredit, and even the derision, which it has so opportunely thrown upon the character of conquerors in general. The thinking part of mankind did not perhaps need to be disabused upon this subject;—but no illusion was ever so strong, or so pernicious with the multitude, as that which invested heroes of this description with a sort of supernatural grandeur and dignity, and bent the spirits of men before them, as beings intrinsically entitled to the homage and submission of inferior natures. It is above all things fortunate, therefore, when this spell can be broken, by merely reversing the operation by which it had been imposed; when the idols that success had tricked out in the mock attributes of divinity, are stripped of their disguise by the rough hand of misfortune, and exhibited before the indignant and wondering eyes of their admirers, in the naked littleness of humbled and helpless men,—depending, for life and subsistence, on the pity of their human conquerors,—and spared with safety, in consequence of their insignificance.—Such an exhibition, we would fain hope, will rescue men for ever from that most humiliating devotion, which has hitherto so often tempted the ambition, and facilitated the progress of conquerors.—It is not in our days, at least, that it will be forgotten, that Bonaparte turned out a mere mortal in the end;—and neither in our days, nor in those of our children, is it at all likely, that any other adventurer will arise to efface the impressions connected with that recollection, by more splendid achievements than distinguished the greater part of his career. The kind of shame, too, that is felt by those who have been the victims or the instruments of a being so weak and fallible, will

make it difficult for any successor to his ambition, so to overawe the minds of the world again; and will consequently diminish the dread, while it exasperates the hatred, with which presumptuous oppression ought always to be regarded.

If the downfal of Bonaparte teach this lesson, and fix this feeling in the minds of men, we should almost be tempted to say that the miseries he has inflicted are atoned for; and that his life, on the whole, will have been useful to mankind. Undoubtedly there is no other single source of wretchedness so prolific as that strange fascination by which atrocious guilt is converted into an object of admiration, and the honours due to the benefactors of the human race lavished most profusely on their destroyers. A sovereign who pursues schemes of conquest for the gratification of his personal ambition, is neither more nor less than a being who inflicts violent death upon thousands, and miseries still more agonizing on millions, of innocent individuals, to relieve his own *ennui*, and divert the languors of a base and worthless existence: — and, if it be true that the chief excitement to such exploits is found in the false glory with which the madness of mankind has surrounded their successful performance, it will not be easy to calculate how much we are indebted to him whose history has contributed to dispel it.

Next to our delight at the overthrow of Bonaparte, is our exultation at the glory of England. — It is a proud and honourable distinction to be able to say, in the end of such a contest, that we belong to the only nation that has never been conquered; — to the nation that set the first example of successful resistance to the power that was desolating the world — and who always stood erect, though she sometimes stood alone, before it. From England alone, that power, to which all the rest had successively bowed, has won no trophies, and extorted no submission; on the contrary, she has been constantly baffled and disgraced whenever she has grappled directly with the might and the energy of England. During the proudest part of her continental career, England drove her ships from the ocean, and annihilated her colonies and her commerce. The first French army that capitulated, capitulated to the English forces in Egypt; and Lord Wellington is the only commander against whom six Marshals of France have successively tried in vain to procure any advantage.

The efforts of England have not always been well directed — nor her endeavours to rouse the other nations of Europe very wisely timed: — but she has set a magnificent example of unconquerable fortitude and unalterable constancy; and she may claim the proud distinction of having kept alive the sacred flame of liberty and the spirit of national independence, when the chill of general apprehension, and the rushing whirlwind of conquest, had apparently extinguished them for ever, in the other nations of the earth. No course of prosperity, indeed, and no harvest of ultimate success, can ever extinguish the regret of all the true friends of our national glory and happiness, for the many preposterous, and the occasionally disreputable expeditions, in which English blood was more than unprofitably wasted, and English character more than imprudently involved; nor can the delightful assurance of our actual deliverance from danger efface the remembrance of the tremendous hazard to which we were so long exposed by the obstinate misgovernment of Ireland. These, however, were the sins of the Government, — and do not at all detract from the excellent spirit of the People, to which, in its main bearings, it was necessary for the Government to conform. That spirit was always, and we believe universally, a spirit of strong attachment to the country, and of stern resolution to do all things, and to suffer all things in its cause; — mingled with more or less confidence, or more or less anxiety, according to the temper or the information of individuals, — but sound, steady, and erect, we believe, upon the whole, — and equally determined to risk all for independence, whether it was believed to be in great or in little danger.

Of our own sentiments and professions, and of the consistency of our avowed principles, from the first to the last of this momentous period, it would be impertinent to speak at large, in discussing so great a theme as the honour of our common country. None of our readers, and none of our censors, can be more persuaded than we are of the extreme insignificance of such a discussion — and not many

of them can feel more completely indifferent about the aspersions with which we have been distinguished, or more fully convinced of the ultimate justice of public opinion. We shall make no answer therefore to the sneers and calumnies of which it has been thought worth while to make us the subject, except just to say, that if any man can read what we have written on public affairs, and entertain any serious doubt of our zeal for the safety, the honour, and the freedom of England, he must attach a different meaning to all these phrases from that which we have most sincerely believed to belong to them; and that, though we do not pretend to have either foreseen or foretold the happy events that have so lately astonished the world, we cannot fail to see in them the most gratifying confirmation of the very doctrines we have been the longest and the most loudly abused for asserting.

The *last* sentiment, in which we think all candid observers of the late great events must cordially agree, is that of admiration and pure and unmingled approbation of the magnanimity, the prudence, the dignity and forbearance of the Allies. There has been something in the manner of those extraordinary transactions as valuable as the substance of what has been achieved, — and, if possible, still more meritorious. History records no instance of union so faithful and complete — of councils so firm — of gallantry so generous — of moderation so dignified and wise. In reading the addresses of the Allied Sovereigns to the people of Europe and of France; and, above all, in tracing every step of their demeanour after they got possession of the metropolis, we seem to be transported from the vulgar and disgusting realities of actual story, to the beautiful imaginations and exalted fictions of poetry and romance. The proclamation of the Emperor Alexander to the military men who might be in Paris on his arrival — his address to the Senate — the terms in which he has always spoken of his fallen adversary, are all conceived in the very highest strain of nobleness and wisdom. They have all the spirit, the courtesy, the generosity, of the age of chivalry; and all the liberality and mildness of that of philosophy. The disciple of Fenelon could not have conducted himself with more perfect amiableness and grandeur; and the fabulous hero of the loftiest and most philanthropic of moralists, has been equalled, if not outdone, by a Russian monarch, in the first flush and tumult of victory. The sublimity of the scene indeed, and the merit of the actors, will not be fairly appreciated, if we do not recollect that they were arbitrary sovereigns, who had been trained rather to consult their own feelings than the rights of mankind — who had been disturbed on their hereditary thrones by the wanton aggressions of the man who now lay at their mercy — and had seen their territories wasted, their people butchered, and their capitals pillaged, by him they had at last chased to his den, and upon whose capital, and whose people, they might now repay the insults that had been offered to theirs. They judged more magnanimously, however: and they judged more wisely—for their own glory, for the objects they had in view, and for the general interests of humanity. By their generous forbearance, and singular moderation, they not only put their adversary in the wrong in the eyes of all Europe, but they made him appear little and ferocious in comparison; and, while overbearing all opposition by superior force, and heroic resolution, they paid due honour to the valour by which they had been resisted, and gave no avoidable offence to that national pride which might have presented the greatest of all obstacles to their success. From the beginning to the end of their hostile operations, they avoided naming the name of the ancient family; and not in words merely, but in the whole strain and tenor of their conduct, respected the inherent right of the nation to choose its own government, and stipulated for nothing but what was indispensable for the safety of its neighbours. Born, as they were, to unlimited thrones, and accustomed in their own persons to the exercise of power that admitted but little control, they did not scruple to declare publicly, that France, at least, was entitled to a larger measure of freedom; and that the intelligence of its population entitled it to a share in its own government. They exerted themselves sincerely to mediate between the different parties that might be supposed to exist in the state; and treated each with a respect that taught its opponents that they might coalesce without being dishonoured. In this way the seeds of civil discord, which

such a crisis could scarcely have failed to quicken, have, we trust, been almost entirely destroyed; and if France escapes the visitation of internal dissension, it will be chiefly owing to the considerate and magnanimous prudence of those very persons to whom Europe has been indebted for her deliverance.

In this high and unqualified praise, it is a singular satisfaction to us to be able to say, that our own Government seems fully entitled to participate. In the whole of those most important proceedings, the Ministry of England appears to have conducted itself with wisdom, moderation, and propriety. In spite of the vehement clamours of many in their own party, and the repugnance which was said to exist in higher quarters to any negociation with Bonaparte, they are understood to have adhered with laudable firmness to the clear policy of not disjoining their country from that great confederacy, through which alone, either peace, or victory, was rationally to be expected: — and, going heartily along with their allies, both in their unrivalled efforts and in their heroic forbearance, they too refrained from recognizing the ancient family, till they were invited to return by the spontaneous voice of their own nation; and thus gave them the glory of being recalled by the appearance at last of affection, instead of being replaced by force; while the nation, which force would either have divided, or disgusted entire, did all that was wanted, as the free act of their own patriotism and wisdom. Considering the temper that had long been fostered, and the tone that had been maintained among their warmest supporters at home, we think this conduct of the ministry entitled to the highest credit; and we give it our praise now, with the same freedom and sincerity with which we pledge ourselves to bestow our censure, whenever they do any thing that seems to call for that less grateful exercise of our duty.

Having now indulged ourselves, by expressing a few of the sentiments that are irresistibly suggested by the events that lie before us, we turn to our more laborious and appropriate vocation, of speculating on the nature and consequences of those events. Is the restoration of the Bourbons the best possible issue of the long struggle that has preceded? Will it lead to the establishment of a free government in France? Will it be favourable to the general interests of liberty in England and the rest of the world? These are great and momentous questions, — which we are far from presuming to think we can answer explicitly, without the existence of that great expositor — time. Yet we should think the man unworthy of the great felicity of having lived to the present day, who could help asking them of himself; and *we* seem to stand in the particular predicament of being obliged to try at least for an answer.

The first, we think, is the easiest; and we scarcely scruple to answer it at once in the affirmative. We know, indeed, that there are many who think, that a permanent change of dynasty might have afforded a better guarantee against the return of those ancient abuses which first gave rise to the revolution, and may again produce all its disasters; and that France, reduced within moderate limits, would, under such a dynasty, both have served better as a permanent warning to other states of the danger of such abuses, and been less likely to unite itself with any of the old corrupt governments, in schemes against the internal liberty or national independence of the great European communities. And we are far from underrating the value of these suggestions. But there are considerations of more urgent and immediate importance, that seem to leave no room for hesitation in the present position of affairs.

In the first place, the restoration of the Bourbons seems the natural and only certain *end* of that series of revolutionary movements, and that long and disastrous experiment which has so awfully overshadowed the freedom and happiness of the world. It naturally figures as the final completion of a cycle of convulsions and miseries; and presents itself to the imagination as the point at which the tempest-shaken vessel of the state again reaches the haven of tranquillity from the stormy ocean of revolution. Nor is it merely to the imagination, or through the mediation of such figures, that this truth presents itself. To the coldest reason it is manifest, that by the restoration of the old line, the whole tremendous evils of a disputed title to the crown are at once obviated: for when the dynasty of Napoleon has once lost *possession*, it has lost *all* upon which

its pretensions could ever have been founded, and may fairly be considered as annihilated and extinguished for ever. The novelty of a government is in all cases a prodigious inconvenience—but if it be substantially unpopular, and the remnants of an old government at hand, its insecurity becomes not only obvious but alarming: since nothing but the combination of great severity and great success can give it even the appearance of stability. Now, the government of Napoleon was not only new and oppressive, and consequently insecure, but it was absolutely dissolved and at an end, before the period had arrived at which alone the restoration of the Bourbons could be made a subject of deliberation.

The chains of the Continent, in fact, were broken at Leipsic; and the Despotic sceptre of the great nation cast down to the earth, as soon as the allies set foot as conquerors on its ancient territory. If the Bourbons were not then to be restored, there were only three other ways of settling the government — To leave Bonaparte at the head of a limited and reduced monarchy — to vest the sovereignty in his infant son — or to call or permit some new adventurer to preside over an entire new constitution, republican or monarchical, as might be most agreeable to his supporters.

The first would have been fraught with measureless evils to France, and dangers to all her neighbours; — but fortunately, though it was tried, it was in its own nature impracticable: and Napoleon knew this well enough, when he rejected the propositions made to him at Chatillon. He knew well enough what stuff his Parisians and his Senators were made of; and what were the only terms upon which the nation would submit to his dominion. He knew that he had no real hold of the affections of the people; and ruled but in their fears and their vanity — that he held his throne, in short, only because he had identified his own greatness with the Glory of France, and surrounded himself with a vast army, drawn from all the nations of Europe, and so posted and divided as to be secured against any general spirit of revolt. The moment this army was ruined, therefore, and he came back a beaten and humbled sovereign, he felt that his sovereignty was at an end. To rule at all, it was necessary that he should rule with glory, and with full possession of the means of intimidation. As soon as these left him, his throne must have tottered to its fall. Royalist factions and Republican factions would have arisen in every part of the nation — discontent and insurrection would have multiplied in the capital, and in the provinces—and if not cut off by the arm of some new competitor, he must soon have been overwhelmed in the tempest of civil commotion.

The second plan would have been less dangerous to other states, but still more impracticable with a view to France itself. The nerveless arm of an infant could never have wielded the iron sceptre of Napoleon,—and his weakness, and the utter want of native power or influence in the members of his family, would have invited all sorts of pretensions, and called forth to open day all the wild and terrific factions which the terror of his father's power had chased for a season to their dens of darkness. Jealousy of the influence of Austria, too, would have facilitated the deposition of the baby despot; — and even if his state could have been upheld, it is plain that it could have been only by the faithful energy of his predecessor's ministers of oppression, — and that the dynasty of Napoleon could only have maintained itself by the arts and the crimes of its founder.

The third expedient must plainly have been the most inexpedient and unmerciful of all; since, after the experience of the last twenty years, we may venture to say with confidence, that it could only have led, through a repetition of those monstrous disorders over which reason has blushed and humanity sickened so long, to the dead repose of another military despotism.

The restoration of the Bourbons, therefore, we conceive, was an act, not merely of wisdom, but of necessity, — or of that strong and obvious expediency, with a view either to peace or security, which in politics amounts to necessity. It is a separate, however, or at least an ulterior question, whether this restoration is likely to give a free government to France, or to bring it back to the condition of its old arbitrary monarchy? a question certainly of great interest and curiosity, — and upon which it does not appear to us that the politicians of this country are by any means agreed.

There are many, we think, who cannot be brought to understand that the restoration of the ancient line can mean any thing else but the restoration of the ancient constitution of the monarchy, — who take it for granted, that they must return to the substantial exercise of all their former functions, and conceive, that all restraints upon the sovereign authority, and all stipulations in favour of public liberty, must be looked upon with contempt and aversion, and be speedily swept away, as vestiges of that tremendous revolution, the whole brood and progeny of which must be held in abhorrence at the court of the new monarch: — and truly, when we remember what Mr. Fox has said, with so much solemnity, upon this subject, and call to mind the occasion, with reference to which he has declared that "a Restoration is, for the most part, the most pernicious of all Revolutions," — it is not easy to divest ourselves of apprehensions, that such may in some degree be the consequence of the events over which we are rejoicing. Yet the circumstances of the present case, we will confess, do not seem to us to warrant such apprehensions in their full extent; and our augury, upon the whole, is favourable upon this branch of the question also.

They who think differently, and who hope, or fear, that things are to go back exactly to the state in which they were in 1788; and that all the sufferings, and all the sacrifices, of the intermediate period, are to be in vain, look only, as it appears to us, to the naked fact, that the old line of kings is restored, and the ancient nobility re-established in their honours. They consider the case, as it would have been, if this restoration had been effected by the triumphant return of the emigrants from Coblentz in 1792 — by the success of the Royalist arms in La Vendée — or by the general prevalence of a Royalist party, spontaneously regenerated over the kingdom: forgetting that the ancient family has only been recalled in a crisis brought on by foreign successes; when the actual government was virtually dissolved, and no alternative left to the nation, but those which we have just enumerated; — forgetting that it is not restored unconditionally, and as a matter of right, but rather called anew to the throne, upon terms and stipulations, propounded in the name of a nation, free to receive or to reject it; — forgetting that an interval of twenty-five long years has separated the subjects from the sovereign; and broken all those ties of habitual loyalty, by which a people is most effectually bound to an hereditary monarch; and that those years, filled with ideas of democratic licence, or despotic oppression, cannot have tended to foster associations favourable to royalty, or to propagate kindly conceptions of the connection of subject and king; — forgetting, above all, that along with her ancient monarchy, a new legislative body is associated in the government of France, — that a constitution has been actually adopted by which the powers of those monarchs may be effectually controlled; and that the illustrious person who has ascended the throne, has already bound himself to govern according to that constitution, and to assume no power with which it does not expressly invest him.

If Louis XVIII., then, trained in the school of misfortune, and seeing and feeling all the permanent changes which these twenty-five eventful years have wrought in the condition of his people; — if this monarch, mild and unambitious as he is understood to be in his character, is but faithful to his oath, grateful to his deliverers, and observant of the counsels of his most prudent and magnanimous allies, he will feel, that he is *not* the lawful inheritor of the powers that belonged to his predecessor; that his crown is not the crown of Louis XVI.; and that to assert *his* privileges, would be to provoke his fate. By this time, he probably knows enough of the nature of his countrymen, perhaps we should say of mankind in general, not to rely too much on those warm expressions of love and loyalty, with which his accession has been hailed, and which would probably have been lavished with equal profusion on his antagonist, if victory had again attended his arms, in this last and decisive contest. It is not improbable that he may be more acceptable to the body of the nation, than the despot he has supplanted; and that some recollections or traditions of a more generous loyalty than the sullen nature of that ungracious ruler either invited or admitted, have mingled themselves with the hopes of peace and of liberty, which must be the chief solid ingredients in his welcome; and acting upon the constitutional vivacity of the people, and the

servility of mobs, always ready to lackey the heels of the successful, have taken the form of ardent affection, and the most sincere devotedness and attachment. But we think it is very apparent, that there is no great love or spontaneous zeal for the Bourbons in the body of the French nation; that the joy so tardily manifested for their return, is mainly grounded upon the hope of consequential benefits to themselves; and, at all events, that there is no personal attachment, which will lead them to submit to any thing that may be supposed to be encroaching, or felt to be oppressive. It will probably require great temper and great management in the new sovereigns to exercise, without offence, the powers with which they are legitimately invested; but their danger will be great indeed, if they suddenly attempt to go beyond them. With temper and circumspection, they may in time establish the solid foundations of a splendid, though limited, throne; if they aspire again to be absolute, the probability is that they will soon cease to reign.

The restoration of the old Nobility seems, at first sight, a more hazardous operation than that of the ancient monarchs; but the danger, there also, is more apparent than real. The various inclemencies of a twenty-five years' exile have sadly thinned the ranks of those rash and sanguine spirits who assembled at Coblentz in 1792, and may be presumed to have tamed the pride and lowered the pretensions of the few that remain. A great multitude of families have become extinct,— a still greater number had reconciled themselves to the Imperial Government,—and the small remnant that have continued faithful to the fortunes of their Royal Master, will probably be satisfied with the conditions of his return. Thus dwindled in number,—decayed in fortune,—and divided by diversities of conduct that will not be speedily forgotten, we do not think that there is any great hazard of their attempting either to assert those privileges as a body, or to assume that tone, by which they formerly revolted the inferior classes of the state, and would now be considered as invading the just rights and constitutional dignity of the other citizens.

We do not see any thing, therefore, in the restoration itself, either of the Prince or of his nobles, that seems to us very dangerous to the freedom of the people, or very likely to pervert those constitutional provisions by which it is understood that their freedom is to be secured. Yet we did not need the example that France herself has so often afforded, to make us distrustful of constitutions on paper; —and are not only far from feeling assured of the practical benefits that are to result from this new experiment, but are perfectly convinced that all the benefit that does result, must be ascribed, not to the wisdom of the actual institutions, but to the continued operation of the extraordinary circumstances, by which these institutions have been suggested, and by the permanent pressure of which alone their operation can yet be secured. The bases of the new constitution sound well certainly; and may be advantageously contrasted with the famous declaration of the rights of man, which initiated the labours of the Constituent Assembly. But the truth is, that the bases of most paper constitutions sound well; and that principles not much less wise and liberal than those which we now hope to see reduced into practice, have been laid down in most of the constitutions which have proved utterly ineffectual within the last twenty-five years, to repress popular disorder or despotic usurpation in this very country. The constitution now adopted by Louis XVIII. is not very unlike that which was imposed on his unfortunate predecessor, in the Champ de Mars in 1790; and it certainly leaves less power to the crown than was conceded by that first arrangement. Yet the power vested in Louis XVI. was found quite inadequate to protect the regal office against the encroachments of an insane democracy; and the throne was overthrown by the sudden irruption of the popular part of the government. On the other hand, it is still more remarkable that the constitution now about to be put on its trial, is yet more like the constitution adopted by Bonaparte on his accession to the sovereign authority. He too had a Senate and a Legislative Body,—and trial by jury,—and universal eligibility,— and what was pretended to be liberty of printing. The freedom of the people, in short, was as well guarded, in most respects, by the words and forms of that constitution, as they are by those of this which is now under con-

sideration; and yet those words and forms were found to be no obstacle at all to the practical exercise and systematic establishment of the most efficient despotism that Europe has ever witnessed.

What then shall we say? Since the same institutions, and the same sort of balance of power, give at one time too much weight to the Crown, and at another too much indulgence to popular feeling, shall we conclude that all sorts of institutions and balances are indifferent or nugatory? or only that their efficacy depends greatly on the circumstances to which they are applied, and on the actual balance and relation in which the different orders of the state previously stood to each other? The last, we think, is the only sane conclusion; and it is by attending to the conditions which it involves, that we shall best be enabled to conjecture, whether an experiment, that has twice failed already in so signal a manne is now likely to be attended with success.

When a limited monarchy was proposed for France in 1790, the whole body of the nation had just emancipated itself by force from a state of political vassalage, and had begun to feel the delight and intoxication of that consciousness of power, which always tempts at first to so many experiments on its reality and extent. New to the exercise of this power, and jealous of its security so long as any of those institutions remained which had so long repressed or withheld it, they first improvidently subverted all that was left of their ancient establishments; and then, from the same impetuosity of inexperience, they split into factions, that began with abuse, and ended in bloodshed; and, setting out with an extreme zeal for reason and humanity, plunged themselves very speedily in the very abyss of atrocity and folly. In such a violent state of the public mind *no institutions* had any chance of being permanent. The root of the evil was in the suddenness of the extrication of such a volume of political energy, — or rather, perhaps, in the arrangements by which it had been so long pent up and compressed. The only true policy would have been for those among the ancient leaders, whose interest or judgment enabled them to see the hazards upon which the new-sprung enthusiasts were rushing — to have thrown themselves into their ranks; to have united cordially with those who were least insane or intemperate; and by going along with them at all hazards, to have retarded the impetuosity of their movements, and watched the first opportunity to bring them back to sobriety aad reason. Instead of this, they abandoned them, with demonstrations of contempt and hostility, to the career upon which they had entered. They emigrated from the territory — and thus threw the mass of the population at once into the hands of the incendiaries of the capital. Twenty-five years have nearly elapsed since the period of that terrible explosion. A great part of its force has been wasted and finally dissipated in that long interval; and though its natural flow has been again repressed in the latter part of it, there is no hazard of such another eruption, now that those obstructions are again thrown off. *That* was produced by the accumulation of all the energy, intelligence, and discontent, that had been generated among a people deprived of political rights, during a full century of peaceful pursuits and growing intelligence, without any experience or warning of the perils of its sudden expansion. *This* can be but the collection of a few years of a very different description, and with all the dreadful consequences of its untempered and undirected indulgence still glaring in view. We do not think, therefore, that the attempt to establish a limited monarchy is now in very great danger of miscarrying in the same way as in 1790; and conceive, that the conduits of an ordinary representative assembly, if instantly prepared and diligently watched, may now be quite sufficient to carry off and direct all the popular energy that is generated in the nation — though the quantity was then so great as to tear all the machinery to pieces, and blow the ancient monarchy to the clouds, with the fragments of the new constitution.

With regard to the late experiment under Bonaparte, it is almost enough to observe, that it seems to us to have been from the beginning a mere piece of mockery and delusion. The government was substantially despotic and military, or, at all events, a government of undisguised force, ever since the time of the triumvirs, — perhaps we might say, since that of Robespierre; and when Bonaparte assumed the supreme power, the nation willingly

gave up its liberty, for the chance of tranquillity and protection. Wearied out with the perpetual succession of sanguinary factions, each establishing itself by bloody proscriptions, deportations, and confiscations, it gladly threw itself into the arms of a ruler who seemed sufficiently strong to keep all lesser tyrants in subjection; and, despairing of freedom, was thankful for an interval of repose. In such a situation the constitution was dictated by the master of the state for his own glory and convenience, — not imposed upon him by the nation for his direction and control; and, with whatever names or pretences of liberty and popular prerogative the members of it might be adorned, it was sufficiently known to all parties that it was intended substantially as an instrument of command, — that the only effective power that was meant to be exercised or recognized in the government, was the power of the Emperor, abetted by his army; and that all the other functionaries were in reality to be dependent upon him. That the Senate and Legislative Body, therefore, did not convert the military despotism upon which they were thus engrafted into a free government, is no inconsiderable presumption against the fitness of such institutions to maintain the principles of freedom under different circumstances; nor can the fact be justly regarded as a new example of their inefficiency for that purpose. In this instance they were never intended to minister to the interests of liberty; nor instituted with any serious expectation that they would have that effect. Here, therefore, there was truly no failure, and no disappointment. They actually answered all the ends of their establishment; by facilitating the execution of the Imperial will, and disguising, to those who chose to look no farther, the naked oppression of the government. It does not seem to us, therefore, that this instance more than the other, should materially discourage our expectations of now seeing something like a system of regulated freedom in that country. The people of France have lived long enough under the capricious atrocities of a crazy democracy, to be aware of the dangers of that form of government, — to feel the necessity of contriving some retarding machinery to break the impulse of the general will, and providing some apparatus for purifying, concentrating, and cooling the first fiery runnings of popular spirit and enthusiasm; while they have also felt enough of the oppressions and miseries of arbitrary power, to instruct them in the value of some regular and efficient control. In such a situation, therefore, when a scheme of government that has been found to answer both these purposes in other countries, is offered by the nation as the accompaniment and condition of the monarchy, and is freely accepted by the sovereign on his accession, there seems to be a reasonable hope that the issue will at length be fortunate; — and that a free and stable constitution may succeed to the calamitous experiments which have been suggested by the imperfections of that which was originally established.

All this, however, we readily admit, is but problematical; and affords ground for nothing more than expectation and conjecture. There are grounds certainly for doubting, whether the French are even yet capable of a regulated freedom; — and for believing, at all events, that they will for a good while be but awkward in discharging the ordinary offices of citizens of a limited monarchy. They have probably learned, by this time, that for a nation to be free, something more is necessary than that it should will it. To be practically and tranquilly free, *a great deal more* is necessary; and though we do not ascribe much to positive institutions, we ascribe almost every thing to temper and habit. — A genuine system of national representation, for example, can neither be devised, nor carried into operation in a day. The practical benefits of such a system depend in a great measure upon the internal arrangements of the society in which it exists, by means of which the sentiments and opinions of the people may be peacefully and safely transmitted from their first small and elementary gatherings, to the great public depositories of national energy and wisdom. The structure, which answers those purposes, however, is in all cases more the work of time than of contrivance; and can never be impressed at once upon a society, which is aiming for the first time at these objects. — Without some such previous and internal arrangement, however, — and without the familiar existence of a long gradation of virtual and unelected representatives, no pure or fair representation

can ever be obtained. Instead of the cream of the society, we shall have the froth only in the legislature — or, it may be, the scum, and the fiery spirit, instead of the rich extract of all its strength and its virtues. But even independent of the common hazards and disadvantages of novelty, there are strong grounds of apprehension in the character and habits of the French nation. The very vivacity of that accomplished people, and the raised imagination which they are too apt to carry with them into projects of every description, are all against them in those political adventures. They are too impatient, we fear — too ambitious of perfection — too studious of effect, to be satisfied with the attainable excellence or vulgar comforts of an English constitution. If it captivate them in the theory, it will be sure to disappoint them in the working: — From endeavouring universally, each in his own department, to top their parts, they will be very apt to go beyond them; — and will run the risk, not only of encroaching upon each other, but, generally, of missing the substantial advantages of the plan, through disdain of that sobriety of effort, and calm mediocrity of principle, to which alone it is adapted.

The project of giving them a free constitution, therefore, may certainly miscarry — and it may miscarry in two ways. If the Court can effectually attach to itself the Marshals and Military Senators of Bonaparte, in addition to the old Nobility;—and if, through their means, the vanity and ambition of the turbulent and aspiring spirits of the nation can be turned either towards military advancement, or to offices and distinction about the Court, the legislative bodies may be gradually made subservient in most things to the will of the government; — and, by skilful management, may be rendered almost as tractable and insignificant as they have actually been in the previous stages of their existence. On the other hand, if the discordant materials, out of which the higher branch of the legislature is to be composed, should ultimately arrange it into two hostile parties,—of the old Noblesse on the one hand, and the active individuals who have fought their way to distinction through scenes of democratic and imperial tyranny, on the other, it is greatly to be feared, that the body of the nation will soon be divided into the same factions; and that while the Court throws all its influence into the scale of the former, the latter will in time unite the far more formidable weight of the military body — the old republicans, and all who are either discontented at their lot, or impatient of peaceful times. By their assistance, and that of the national vehemence and love of change, it will most probably get the command of the legislative body and the capital; and then, unless the Prince play his part with singular skill, as well as temper, there will be imminent hazard of a revolution, — not less disastrous perhaps than that which has just been completed.

Of these two catastrophes, the first, which would be the least lamentable or hopeless, seems, in the present temper of the times, to be rather the most likely to happen; — and, even though it should occur, the government would most probably be considerably more advanced towards freedom than it has ever yet been in that country — and the organization would remain entire, into which the breath of liberty might be breathed, as soon as the growing spirit of patriotism and intelligence had again removed the shackles of authority. Against the second and more dreadful catastrophe, and in some considerable degree against both, there seems to exist a reasonable security in the small numbers and general weakness of that part of the old aristocracy which has survived to reclaim its privileges. One of the bases of the new constitution, and perhaps the most important of them all, is, that every subject of the kingdom shall be equally capable of all honours or employments. Had the sovereign, however, who is the fountain of honour and the giver of employment, returned with that great train of nobility which waited in the court of his predecessor, this vital regulation, we fear, might have proved a mere dead letter; and the same unjust monopoly of power and distinction that originally overthrew the throne, might again have sapped its foundations. — As things now are, however, there are far too few of that order to sustain such a monopoly; and the prince must of necessity employ subjects of all ranks and degrees, in situations of the greatest dignity and importance. A real equality of rights will thus be practically recognized; and a fair and intelli-

gent distribution of power and consideration will go far to satisfy the wishes of every party in the state, or at least to disarm those who would foment discontents and disaffection, of their most plausible topics and pretexts.

On the whole, then, we think France has now a tolerable prospect of obtaining a free government — and, without extraordinary mismanagement, is almost sure of many great improvements on her ancient system. Her great security and *panacea* must be a spirit of general mildness, and mutual indulgence and toleration. All parties have something to forgive, and something to be forgiven; and there is much in the history of the last twenty-five years, which it would be for the general interest, and the general credit of the country, to consign to oblivion. The scene has opened, we think, under the happiest auguries in this respect. The manner of the abdication, and the manner of the restoration, are ominous, we think, of forbearance and conciliation in all the quarters from which intractable feelings were most to be apprehended; and the commanding example of the Emperor Alexander, will go further to diffuse and confirm this spirit, than the professions or exhortations of any of the parties more immediately concerned. The blood of the Bourbons, too, we believe to be mild and temperate; and the adversity by which their illustrious Chief has so long been tried, we are persuaded, has not altered its sweetness. He is more anxious, we make no doubt, to relieve the sufferings, than to punish the offences, of any part of his subjects — and returns, we trust, to the impoverished cities and wasted population of his country, with feelings, not of vengeance, but of pity. If to the philanthropy which belongs to his race, he could but join the firmness and activity in which they have been supposed to be wanting, he might be the most glorious king of the happiest people that ever escaped from tyranny; and, we fondly hope that fortune and prudence will combine to render the era of his accession for ever celebrated in the grateful memory of his people. In the mean time, his most dangerous enemies are the Royalists; and the only deadly error he can commit, is to rely on his own popularity or personal authority.

If we are at all right in this prognostication, there should be little doubt on the only remaining subject of discussion. It must be favourable to the general interests of freedom, that a free government is established in France; and the principles of liberty, both here and elsewhere, must be strengthened by this large accession to her domains. There are persons amongs us, however, who think otherwise, — or profess at least to see, in the great drama which has just been completed, no other moral than this — that rebellion against a lawful sovereign is uniformly followed with great disasters, and ends in the complete demolition and exposure of the insurgents, and the triumphal restoration of the rightful prince. These reasoners find it convenient to take a very compendious and summary view indeed of the great transactions of which they thus extract the essence — and positively refuse to look at any other points in the eventful history before them, but that the line of the Bourbons was expelled, and that great atrocities and great miseries ensued — that the nation then fell under a cruel despotism, and that all things are set to rights again by the restoration of the Bourbons! The comfortable conclusion which they draw, or wish at least to be drawn, from these premises, is, that if the lesson have its proper effect, this restoration will make every king on the Continent more absolute than ever; and confirm every old government in an attachment to its most inveterate abuses.

It is not worth while, perhaps, to combat these extravagancies by reasoning; —yet, in their spirit, they come so near certain opinions that seem to have obtained currency in this country, that it is necessary to say a word or two with regard to them. We shall merely observe, therefore, that the Bourbons were expelled, on account of great faults and abuses in the old system of the government; and that they have only been restored upon condition that these abuses shall be abolished. They were expelled, in short, because they were arbitrary monarchs; and they are only restored, upon paction and security that they shall be arbitrary no longer. *This* is the true summary of the great transaction that has just been completed; and the correct result of the principles that regulated its beginning and its ending. The intermediate proceedings, too, bear the very same character. After the abolition of the old royalty, the nation fell no

doubt into great disorders and disasters,—not, however, for want of the old abuses,—or even of the old line of sovereigns,—but in consequence of new abuses, crimes, and usurpations. These also they strove to rectify and repress as they best could, by expelling or cutting off the delinquents, and making provision against the recurrence of this new form of tyranny;—at last, they fell under the arbitrary rule of a great military commander, and for some time rejoiced in a subjection which ensured their tranquillity. By and by, however, the evils of this tyranny were found far to outweigh its advantages; and when the destruction of his military force gave them an opportunity of expressing their sentiments, the nation rose against him as one man, and expelled him also, for his tyranny, from that throne, from which, for a much smaller degree of the same fault, they had formerly expelled the Bourbons.—Awaking then to the advantages of an undisputed title to the crown, and recovered from the intoxication of their first burst into political independence, they ask the ancient line of their kings, whether they will renounce the arbitrary powers which had been claimed by their predecessors, and submit to a constitutional control from the representatives of the people? and upon their solemn consent and cordial acquiescence in those conditions, they recal them to the throne, and enrol themselves as their free and loyal subjects.

The lesson, then, which is taught by the whole history is, that oppressive governments must always be insecure; and that, after nations have attained to a certain measure of intelligence, the liberty of the people is necessary to the stability of the throne. We may dispute for ever about the immediate or accidental causes of the French revolution; but no man of reflection can now doubt, that its true and efficient cause was the undue limitation of the rights and privileges of the great body of the people, after their wealth and intelligence had virtually entitled them to greater consequence. Embarrassments in finance, or blunders, or ambition in particular individuals, may have determined the time and the manner of the explosion; but it was the system which withheld all honours and distinction from the mass of the people, after nature had made them capable of them, which laid the train, and filled the mine that produced it. Had the government of France been free in 1788, the throne of its monarch might have bid a proud defiance to *deficits* in the treasury, or disorderly ambition in a thousand Mirabeaus. Had the people enjoyed their due weight in the administration of the government, and their due share in the distribution of its patronage, there would have been no democratic insurrection, and no materials indeed for such a catastrophe as ensued. That movement, like all great national movements, was produced by a sense of injustice and oppression; and though its immediate consequences were far more disastrous than the evils by which it had been provoked, it should never be forgotten, that those evils were the necessary and lamented causes of the whole. The same principle, indeed, of the necessary connexion of oppression and insecurity, may be traced through all the horrors of the revolutionary period. What, after all, was it but *their tyranny* that supplanted Marat and Robespierre, and overthrew the tremendous power of the wretches for whom they made way? Or, to come to its last and most conspicuous application, does any one imagine, that if Bonaparte had been a just, mild, and equitable sovereign, under whom the people enjoyed equal rights and impartial protection, he would ever have been hurled from his throne, or the Bourbons invited to replace him? He, too, fell ultimately a victim to *his tyranny:*—and his fall, and their restoration on the terms that have been stated, concur to show, that there is but one condition by which, in an enlightened age, the loyalty of nations can be secured—the condition of their being treated with kindness; and but one bulwark by which thrones can now be protected—the attachment and conscious interest of a free and intelligent people.

This is the lesson which the French revolution reads aloud to mankind; and which, in its origin, in its progress, and in its termination, it tends equally to impress. It shows also, no doubt, the dangers of popular insurrection, and the dreadful excesses into which a people will be hurried, who rush at once from a condition of servitude to one of unbounded licentiousness. But the state of servitude leads *necessarily* to resistance and insurrection, when

the measure of wrong and of intelligence is full; and though the history before us holds out most awful warnings as to the reluctance and the precautions with which resistance should be attempted, it is so far from showing that it either can or ought to be repressed, that it is the very moral of the whole tragedy, and of each of its separate acts, that resistance is as inevitably the effect, as it is immediately the cure and the punishment of oppression. The crimes and excesses with which the revolution may be attended, will be more or less violent in proportion to the severity of the preceding tyranny, and the degree of ignorance and degradation in which it has kept the body of the people. The rebellion of West India slaves is more atrocious than the insurrection of a Parisian populace;—and that again far more fierce and sanguinary than the movements of an English revolution. But in all cases, the radical guilt is in the tyranny which compels the resistance; and they who are the authors of the misery and the degradation, are also responsible for the acts of passion and debasement to which they naturally lead. If the natural course of a stream be obstructed, the pent up waters will to a certainty, sooner or later, bear down the bulwarks by which they are confined. The devastation which may ensue, however, is not to be ascribed to the weakness of those bulwarks, but to the fundamental folly of their erection. The stronger they had been made, the more dreadful, and not the less certain, would have been the ultimate eruption; and the only practical lesson to be learned from the catastrophe is, that the great agents and elementary energies of nature are never dangerous but when they are repressed; and that the only way to guide and disarm them, is to provide a safe and ample channel for their natural operation. The laws of the physical world, however, are not more absolute than those of the moral; nor is the principle of the rebound of elastic bodies more strictly demonstrated than the reaction of rebellion and tyranny.

If there ever was a time, however, when it might be permitted to doubt of this principle, it certainly is *not* the time when the tyranny of Napoleon has just overthrown the mightiest empire that pride and ambition ever erected on the ruins of justice and freedom. Protected as he was by the vast military system he had drawn up before him, and still more, perhaps, by the dread of that chaotic and devouring gulf of Revolution which still yawned behind him, and threatened to swallow up all who might drive him from his place, he was yet unable to maintain a dominion which stood openly arrayed against the rights and liberties of mankind. But if tyranny and oppression, and the abuse of imperial power, have cast down the throne of Bonaparte, guarded as it was with force and terror, and all that art could devise to embarrass, or glory furnish to dazzle and overawe, what tyrannical throne can be expected to stand hereafter? or what contrivances can secure an oppressive sovereign from the vengeance of an insurgent people? Looking only to the extent of his resources, and the skill and vigour of his arrangements, no sovereign on the Continent seemed half so firm in his place as Bonaparte did but two years ago. There was the canker of tyranny, however, in the full-blown flower of his greatness. With all the external signs of power and prosperity, he was weak, because he was unjust—he was insecure, because he was oppressive—and his state was assailed from without, and deserted from within, for no other reason than that his ambitious and injurious proceedings had alienated the affections of his people, and alarmed the fears of his neighbours.

The moral, then, of the grand drama which has occupied the scene of civilized Europe for upwards of twenty years, is, we think, at last sufficiently unfolded;—and strange indeed and deplorable it certainly were, if all that labour should have been without fruit, and all that suffering in vain. Something, surely, for our own guidance, and for that of our posterity, we ought at last to learn, from so painful and so costly an experiment. We have lived ages in these twenty years; and have seen condensed into the period of one short life, the experience of eventful centuries. All the moral and all the political elements that engender or diversify great revolutions, have been set in action, and made to produce their full effect before us; and all the results of misgovernment, in all its forms and in all its extremes, have been exhibited, on the grandest scale, in our view. Whatever quiescent indo-

lence or empiric rashness, individual ambition or popular fury, unrectified enthusiasm or brutal profligacy, could do to disorder the counsels and embroil the affairs of a mighty nation, has been tried, without fear, and without moderation. We have witnessed the full operation of every sort of guilt, and of every sort of energy — the errors of strength and the errors of weakness — and the mingling or contrasting effects of terror and vanity, and wild speculations and antiquated prejudices, on the whole population of Europe. There has been an excitement and a conflict to which there is nothing parallel in the history of any past generation; and it may be said, perhaps, without any great extravagance, that during the few years that have elapsed since the breaking out of the French revolution, men have thought and acted, and sinned and suffered, more than in all the ages that have passed since their creation. In that short period, every thing has been questioned, every thing has been suggested — and every thing has been tried. There is scarcely any conceivable combination of circumstances under which men have not been obliged to act, and to anticipate and to suffer the consequences of their acting. The most insane imaginations — the most fantastic theories — the most horrible abominations, have all been reduced to practice, and taken seriously upon trial. Nothing is now left, it would appear, to be projected or attempted in government. We have ascertained experimentally the consequences of all extremes; and exhausted, in the real history of twenty-five years, all the problems that can be supplied by the whole science of politics.

Something *must* have been learned from this great condensation of experience;—some leading propositions, either positive or negative, must have been established in the course of it; — and although *we* perhaps are as yet too near the tumult and agitation of the catastrophe, to be able to judge with precision of their positive value and amount, we can hardly be mistaken as to their general tendency and import. The clearest and most indisputable result is, that the prodigious advances made by the body of the people, throughout the better parts of Europe, in wealth, consideration, and intelligence, had rendered the ancient institutions and exclusions of the old continental governments altogether unsuitable to their actual condition; that public opinion had tacitly acquired a commanding and uncontrollable power in every enlightened community; and that, to render its operation in any degree safe, or consistent with any regular plan of administration, it was absolutely necessary to contrive some means for bringing it to act directly on the machine of government, and for bringing it regularly and openly to bear on the public counsels of the country. This was not necessary while the bulk of the people were poor, abject, and brutish, — and the nobles alone had either education, property, or acquaintance with affairs; and it was during that period that the institutions were adopted, which were maintained too long for the peace and credit of the world. Public opinion overthrew those in France; and the shock was felt in every feudal monarchy in Europe. But this sudden extrication of a noble and beneficent principle, produced, at first, far greater evils than those which had proceeded from its repression. "Th' extravagant and erring spirit" was not yet enshrined in any fitting organization; and, acting without balance or control, threw the whole mass of society into wilder and more terrible disorder than had ever been experienced before its disclosure. It was then tried to compress it again into inactivity by violence and intimidation: but it could not be so over-mastered — nor laid to rest, by all the powerful conjurations of the reign of terror; and, after a long and painful struggle under the pressure of a military despotism, it has again broken loose, and pointed at last to the natural and appropriate remedy, of embodying it in a free Representative Constitution, through the mediation of which it may diffuse life and vigour through every member of society.

The true theory of that great revolution therefore is, that it was produced by the repression or practical disregard of public opinion, and that the evils with which it was attended, were occasioned by the want of any institution to control and regulate the application of that opinion to the actual management of affairs: — and the grand moral that may be gathered from the whole eventful history, seems therefore to be, that in an enlightened period of society, no government can be either prosperous or secure, which does not

provide for expressing and giving effect to the general sense of the community.

This, it must be owned, is a lesson worth buying at some cost: — and, looking back on the enormous price we have paid for it, it is no slight gratification to perceive, that it seems not only to have been emphatically taught, but effectually learned. In every corner of Europe, principles of moderation and liberality are at last not only professed, but, to some extent, acted upon; and doctrines equally favourable to the liberty of individuals, and the independence of nations, are universally promulgated, in quarters where some little jealousy of their influence might have been both expected and excused. If any one doubts of the progress which the principles of liberty have made since the beginning of the French revolution, and of the efficacy of that lesson which its events have impressed on every court of the Continent, let him compare the conduct of the Allies at this moment, with that which they held in 1790 — let him contrast the treaty of Pilnitz with the declaration of Frankfurt — and set on one hand the proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick upon entering the French territories in 1792, and that of the Emperor of Russia on the same occasion in 1814; — let him think how La Fayette and Dumourier were treated at the former period, and what honours have been lavished on Moreau and Bernadotte in the latter — or, without dwelling on particulars, let him ask himself, whether it would have been tolerated among the loyal Antigallicans of that day, to have proposed, in a moment of victory, that a representative assembly should share the powers of legislation with the restored sovereign — that the noblesse should renounce all their privileges, except such as were purely honorary — that citizens, of all ranks should be equally eligible to all employments — that all the officérs and dignitaries of the revolutionary government should retain their rank — that the nation should be taxed only by its representatives — that all sorts of national property should be ratified, and that perfect toleration in religion, liberty of the press, and trial by jury, should be established. Such, however, are the chief *bases* of that constitution, which was cordially approved of by the Allied Sovereigns, after they were in possession of Paris; and, with reference to which, their August Chief made that remarkable declaration, in the face of Europe, "That France stood in need of strong institutions, and such as were suited to the intelligence of the age."

Such is the improved creed of modern courts, as to civil liberty and the rights of individuals. With regard to national justice and independence again, — is there any one so romantic as to believe, that if the Allied Sovereigns had dissipated the armies of the republic, and entered the metropolis as conquerors in 1792, they would have left to France all her ancient territories, — or religiously abstained from interfering in the settlement of her government, — or treated her baffled warriors and statesmen with honourable courtesies, and her humbled and guilty Chief with magnanimous forbearance and clemency? The conduct we have just witnessed, in all these particulars, is wise and prudent, no doubt, as well as magnanimous; — and the splendid successes which have crowned the arms of the present Deliverers of Europe may be ascribed even more to the temper than to the force with which they have been wielded; — certainly more to the plain justice and rationality of the cause in which they were raised, than to either. Yet those very successes exclude all supposition of this justice and liberality being assumed out of fear or necessity; — and establish the sincerity of those professions, which it would no doubt have been the best of all policy at any rate to have made. It is equally decisive, however, of the merit of the agents and of the principles, that the most liberal maxims were held out by the most decided victors; and the greatest honours paid to civil and to national freedom, when it was most in their power to have crushed the one, and invaded the other. Nothing, in short, can account for the altered tone and altered policy of the great sovereigns of the Continent, but their growing conviction of the necessity of regulated freedom to the peace and prosperity of the world, — but their feeling that, in the more enlightened parts of Europe, men could no longer be governed but by their reason, and that justice and moderation were the only true safeguards of a polished throne. By this high testimony, we think, the cause of Liberty is at length set up above all hazard

of calumny or discountenance; — and its interests, we make no doubt, will be more substantially advanced, by being thus freely and deliberately recognized, in the face of Europe, by its mightiest and most absolute princes, than they could otherwise have been by all the reasonings of philosophy, and the toils of patriotism, for many successive generations.

While this is the universal feeling among those who have the best opportunity, and the strongest interest to form a just opinion on the subject, it is not a little strange and mortifying, that there should still be a party in this country, who consider those great transactions under a different aspect; — who look with jealousy and grudging upon all that has been done for the advancement of freedom; and think the splendour of the late events considerably tarnished by those stipulations for national liberty, which form to other eyes their most glorious and happy feature. We do not say this invidiously, nor out of any spirit of faction: but the fact is unquestionable; — and it is worth while both to record and to try to account for it. An arrangement, which satisfies all the arbitrary Sovereigns of Europe, and is cordially adopted by the Monarch who is immediately affected by it, is objected to as too democratical, by a party in this free country! The Autocrator of all the Russias — the Imperial Chief of the Germanic principalities — the Military Sovereign of Prussia — are all agreed that France should have a free government: nay, the King of France himself is thoroughly persuaded of the same great truth; — and all the world rejoices at its ultimate acknowledgment — except only the Tories of England! *They* cannot conceal their mortification at this final triumph of the popular cause; and, while they rejoice at the restoration of the King to the throne of his ancestors, and the recal of his loyal nobility to their ancient honours, are evidently not a little hurt at the advantages which have been, at the same time, secured to the People. They are very glad, certainly, to see Louis XVIII. on the throne of Napoleon, — but they would have liked him better if he had not spoken so graciously to the Marshals of the revolution, — if he had not so freely accepted the constitution which restrained his prerogative, — nor so cordially held out the hand of conciliation to all descriptions of his subjects: — if he had been less magnanimous in short, less prudent, and less amiable. It would have answered better to *their* ideas of a glorious restoration, if it could have been accomplished without any conditions; and if the Prince had thrown himself entirely into the hands of those bigoted emigrants, who affect to be displeased with his acceptance of a limited crown. In their eyes, the thing would have been more complete, if the noblesse had been restored at once to all their feudal privileges, and the church to its ancient endowments. And we cannot help suspecting, that they think the loss of those vain and oppressive trappings, but ill compensated by the increased dignity and worth of the whole population, by the equalization of essential rights, and the provision made for the free enjoyment of life, property, and conscience, by the great body of the people.

Perhaps we exaggerate a little in our representation of sentiments in which we do not at all concur: — but certainly, in conversation and in common newspapers — those light straws that best show how the wind sits — one hears and sees, every day, things that approach at least to the spirit we have attempted to delineate, — and afford no slight presumption of the prevalence of such opinions as we lament. In lamenting them, however, we would not indiscriminately blame. — They are not all to be ascribed to a spirit of servility, or a disregard of the happiness of mankind. Here, as in other heresies, there is an intermixture of errors that are to be pardoned, and principles that are to be respected. There are patriotic prejudices, and illusions of the imagination, and misconceptions from ignorance, at the bottom of this unnatural antipathy to freedom in the citizens of a free land; as well as more sordid interests, and more wilful perversions. Some sturdy Englishmen are staunch for our monopoly of liberty; and feel as if it was an insolent invasion of British privileges, for any other nation to set up a free constitution! — Others apprehend serious dangers to our greatness, if this mainspring and fountain of our prosperity be communicated to other lands. — A still greater proportion, we believe, are influenced by considerations yet more fantastical. — They have been so long used to consider the old government of France as the perfect

model of a feudal monarchy, softened and adorned by the refinements of modern society, that they are quite sorry to part with so fine a specimen of chivalrous manners and institutions; and look upon it, with all its characteristic and imposing accompaniments, of a brilliant and warlike nobility — a gallant court — a gorgeous hierarchy — a gay and familiar vassalage, with the same sort of feelings with which they would be apt to regard the sumptuous pageantry and splendid solemnities of the Romish ritual. They are very good Protestants themselves; and know too well the value of religious truth and liberty, to wish for any less simple or more imposing system at home; but they have no objection that it should exist among their neighbours, that their taste may be gratified by the magnificent spectacles it affords, and their imaginations warmed with the ideas of venerable and pompous antiquity, which it is so well fitted to suggest. The case is nearly the same with their ideas of the old French monarchy. They have read Burke, till their fancies are somewhat heated with the picturesque image of tempered royalty and polished aristocracy, which he has held out in his splendid pictures of France as it was before the revolution; and have been so long accustomed to contrast those comparatively happy and prosperous days, with the horrors and vulgar atrocities that ensued, that they forget the many real evils and oppressions of which that brilliant monarchy was productive, and think that the succeeding abominations cannot be completely expiated till it be restored as it originally existed.

All these, and we believe many other illusions of a similar nature, slight and fanciful as they may appear, contribute largely, we have no doubt, to that pardonable feeling of dislike to the limitation of the old monarchy, which we conceive to be very discernible in a certain part of our population. The great source of that feeling, however, and that which gives root and nourishment to all the rest, is *the Ignorance* which prevails in this country, both of the evils of arbitrary government, and of the radical change in the feelings and opinions of the Continent, which has rendered it no longer practicable in its more enlightened quarters. Our insular situation, and the measure of freedom we enjoy, have done us this injury; along with the infinite good of which they have been the occasions. We do not know either the extent of the misery and weakness produced by tyranny, or the force and prevalence of the conviction which has recently arisen, where they are best known, that they are no longer to be tolerated. On the Continent, experience has at last done far more to enlighten public opinion upon these subjects, than reflection and reasoning in this Island. There, nations have been found irresistible, when the popular feeling was consulted; and absolutely impotent and indefensible where it had been outraged and disregarded: and this necessity of consulting the general opinion, has led, on both sides, to a great relaxation of many of the principles on which they originally went to issue.

Of this change in the terms of the question — and especially of the great abatement which it had been found necessary to make in the pretensions of the old governments, we were generally but little aware in this country. Spectators as we have been of the distant and protracted contest between ancient institutions and authorities on the one hand, and democratical innovation on the other, we are apt still to look upon the parties to that contest, as occupying nearly the same positions, and maintaining the same principles, they did at the beginning; while those who have been nearer to the scene of action, or themselves partakers of the fray, are aware that, in the course of that long conflict, each party has been obliged to recede from some of its pretensions, and to admit, in some degree, the justice of those that are made against it. Here, where we have been but too apt to consider the mighty game which has been playing in our sight, and partly at our expense, as an occasion for exercising our own party animosities, or seeking illustrations for our peculiar theories of government, we are still as diametrically opposed, and as keen in our hostilities, as ever. The controversy with us being in a great measure speculative, would lose its interest and attraction, if any thing like a compromise were admitted; and we choose, therefore, to shut our eyes to the great and visible approximation into which time, and experience, and necessity, have forced the

actual combatants. We verily believe, that, except in the imaginations of English politicians, there no longer exist in the world any such aristocrats and democrats as actually divided all Europe in the early days of the French revolution. In this country, however, we still speak and feel as if they existed; and the champions of aristocracy in particular, continue, with very few exceptions, both to maintain pretensions that their principals have long ago abandoned, and to impute to their adversaries, crimes and absurdities with which they have long ceased to be chargeable. To them, therefore, no other alternative has yet presented itself but the absolute triumph of one or other of two opposite and irreconcileable extremes. Whatever is taken from the sovereign, they consider as being necessarily given to crazy republicans; and very naturally dislike all limitations of the royal power, because they are unable to distinguish them from usurpations by the avowed enemies of all subordination. That the real state of things has long been extremely different, men of reflection might have concluded from the known principles of human nature, and men of information must have learned from sources of undoubted authority: but no small proportion of our zealous politicians belong to neither of those classes; and we ought not, perhaps, to wonder, if they are slow in admitting truths which a predominating party has so long thought it for its interest to misrepresent or disguise. The time, however, seems almost come, when conviction must be forced even upon their reluctant understandings,—and by the sort of evidence best suited to their capacity. They would probably be little moved by the best arguments that could be addressed to them, and might distrust the testimony of ordinary observers; but they cannot well refuse to yield to the opinions of the great sovereigns of the Continent, and must even give faith to their professions, when they find them confirmed at all points by their actions. If the establishment of a limited monarchy in France would be dangerous to sovereign authority in all the adjoining regions, it is not easy to conceive that it should have met with the cordial approbation of the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and the King of Prussia, in the day of their most brilliant success; or that that moment of triumph on the part of the old princes of Europe should have been selected as the period when the thrones of France, and Spain, and Holland were to be surrounded with permanent limitations,—imposed with their cordial assent, and we might almost say, by their hands. Compared with acts so unequivocal, all declarations may justly be regarded as insignificant: but there are declarations also to the same purpose,—made freely and deliberately on occasions of unparalleled importance,—and for no other intelligible purpose but solemnly to announce to mankind the generous principle on which those mighty actions had been performed.

But while these authorities and these considerations may be expected, in due time, to overcome that pardonable dislike to continental liberty which arises from ignorance or natural prejudices, we will confess that we by no means reckon on the total disappearance of this illiberal jealousy. There is, and we fear there will always be, among us, a set of persons who conceive it to be for their interest to decry every thing that is favourable to liberty,—and who are guided only by a regard to their interest. In a government constituted like ours, the Court must almost always be more or less jealous, and perhaps justly, of the encroachment of popular principles, and disposed to show favour to those who would diminish the influence and authority of such principles. Without intending or wishing to render the British crown altogether arbitrary, it still seems to them to be in favour of its constitutional privileges, that arbitrary monarchies should, to a certain extent, be defended; and an artful apology for tyranny is gratefully received as an argument *à fortiori* in support of a vigorous prerogative. The leaders of the party, therefore, lean that way; and their baser followers rush clamorously along it—to the very brink of servile sedition, and treason against the constitution.

Such men no arguments will silence, and no authorities convert. It is their *profession* to discredit and oppose all that tends to promote the freedom of mankind; and in that vocation they will infallibly labour, so long as it yields them a profit. At the present moment, too, we have no doubt that their zeal is quickened by their alarm; since, independent of the

general damage which the cause of arbitrary government must sustain from the events of which we have been speaking, their immediate consequences in this country are likely to be eminently favourable to the interests of regulated liberty and temperate reform. Next to the actual cessation of bloodshed and suffering, indeed, we consider *this* to be the greatest domestic benefit that we are likely to reap from the peace,—and the circumstance, in our new situation, which calls the loudest for our congratulation. We are perfectly aware, that it is a subject of regret to many patriotic individuals, that the brilliant successes at which we all rejoice, should have occurred under an administration which has not manifested any extraordinary dislike to abuses, nor any very cordial attachment to the rights and liberties of the people; and we know, that it has been an opinion pretty current, both with them and their antagonists, that those successes will fix them so firmly in power, that they will be enabled, if they should be so inclined, to deal more largely in abuses, and to press more closely on our liberties, than any of their predecessors. For our own part, however, we have never been able to see things in this inauspicious light; — and having no personal or factious quarrel with our present ministers, are easily comforted for the increased chance of their continuance in office, by a consideration of those circumstances that must infallibly, and under any ministry, operate to facilitate reform, to diminish the power of the Crown, and to consolidate the liberties of the nation. If our readers agree with us in our estimate of the importance of these circumstances, we can scarcely doubt that they will concur in our general conclusion.

In the *first* place, then, it is obvious, that the direct patronage and indirect influence of the Crown must be most seriously and effectually abridged by the reduction of our army and navy, the diminution of our taxes, and, generally speaking, of all our establishments, upon the ratification of peace. We have thought it a great deal gained for the constitution of late years, when we could strike off a few hundred thousand pounds of offices in the gift of the Crown, that had become useless or might be consolidated; — and now the peace will, at one blow, strike off probably thirty or forty millions of government expenditure, ordinary or extraordinary. This alone might restore the balance of the constitution.

In the *next* place, a continuance of peace and prosperity will naturally produce a greater diffusion of wealth, and consequently a greater spirit of independence in the body of the people; which, co-operating with the diminished power of the government to provide for its baser adherents, must speedily thin the ranks of its regular supporters, and expose it far more effectually to the control of a weightier and more impartial public opinion.

In the *third* place, the events to which we have alluded, and the situation in which they will leave us, will take away almost all those pretexts for resisting inquiry into abuses, and proposals for reform, by the help of which, rather than of any serious dispute on the principle, these important discussions have been waved for these last twenty years. We shall no longer be stopped with the plea of its being no fit time to quarrel about the little faults of our constitution, when we are struggling with a ferocious enemy for its very existence. It will not now do to tell us, that it is both dangerous and disgraceful to show ourselves disunited in a season of such imminent peril — or that all great and patriotic minds should be entirely engrossed with the care of our safety, and can have neither leisure nor energy to bestow upon concerns less urgent or vital. The restoration of peace, on the contrary, will soon leave us little else to do: — and when we have no invasions nor expeditions — nor coalitions nor campaigns — nor even any loans and budgets to fill the minds of our statesmen, and the ears of our idle politicians, we think it almost certain that questions of reform will rise into paramount importance, and the redress of abuses become the most interesting of public pursuits. We shall be once more entitled, too, to make a fair and natural appeal to the analogous acts or institutions of other nations, without being met with the cry of revolution and democracy, or the imputation of abetting the proceedings of a sanguinary despot. We shall again see the abuses of old hereditary power, and the evils of maladministration in legitimate hands: and be permitted to argue from them, without the reproach of disaffection to the general cause of mankind.

Men and things, in short, we trust, will again receive their true names on a fair consideration of their merits; and our notions of political desert be no longer confounded by indiscriminate praise of all who are with us, and intolerant abuse of all who are against us, in a struggle that touches the sources of so many passions. When we plead for the emancipation of the Catholics of Ireland, we shall no longer be told that the Pope is a mere puppet in the hands of an inveterate foe, — nor be deterred from protesting against the conflagration of a friendly capital, by the suggestion, that no other means were left to prevent that same foe from possessing himself of its fleet. Exceptions and extreme cases, in short, will no longer furnish the ordinary rules of our conduct; and it will be impossible, by extraneous arguments, to baffle every attempt at a fair estimate of our public principles and proceedings.

These, we think, are among the necessary consequences of a peace concluded in such circumstances as we have now been considering; and they are but a specimen of the kindred consequences to which it must infallibly lead. If these ensue, however, and are allowed to produce their natural effects, it is a matter of indifference to us whether Lord Castlereagh and Lord Liverpool, or Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, are at the head of the government. The former, indeed, may probably be a little uneasy in so new a posture of affairs; but they will either conform to it, or abandon their posts in despair. To control or alter it will assuredly be beyond their power.

With these pleasing anticipations, we would willingly close this long review of the State and Prospects of the European Commonwealth, in its present great crisis, of restoration, or of new revolutions. But, cheering and beautiful as it is, and disposed as we think we have shown ourselves to look hopefully upon it, it is impossible to shut our eyes on two dark stains that appear on the bright horizon, and seem already to tarnish the glories with which they are so sadly contrasted. One is of longer standing, and perhaps of deeper dye. — But both are most painful deformities on the face of so fair a prospect; and may be mentioned with less scruple and greater hope, from the consideration, that those who have now the power of effacing them can scarcely be charged with the guilt of their production, and have given strong indications of dispositions that must lead them to wish for their removal. We need scarcely give the key to these observations by naming the names of *Poland* and of *Norway*. Nor do we propose, on the present occasion, to do much more than to name them. Of the latter, we shall probably contrive to speak fully on a future occasion. Of the former, many of our readers may think we have, on former occasions, said at least enough. Our zeal in that cause, we know, has been made matter of wonder, and even of derision, among certain persons who value themselves on the character of *practical* politicians and men of the world; and we have had the satisfaction of listening to various witty sneers on the mixed simplicity and extravagance of supposing, that the kingdom of the Poles was to be re-established by a dissertation in an English journal. It would perhaps be enough to state, that, independent of any view to an immediate or practical result in other regions, it is of some consequence to keep the observation of England alive, and its feelings awake, upon a subject of this importance: but we must beg leave to add, that such dissertations are humbly conceived to be among the legitimate means by which the English public both instructs and expresses itself; and that the opinion of the English public is still allowed to have weight with its government; which again cannot well be supposed to be altogether without influence in the councils of its allies.

Whatever becomes of Poland, it is most material, we think, that the people of this country should judge soundly, and feel rightly, on a matter that touches on principles of such general application. But every thing that has passed since the publication of our former remarks, combines to justify what we then stated; and to encourage us to make louder and more energetic appeals to the justice and prudence and magnanimity of the parties concerned in this transaction. The words and the deeds of Alexander that have, since that period, passed into the page of history — the principles he has solemnly professed, and the acts by which he has sealed that profession — entitle us to expect from him a strain of justice and generosity, which vulgar politicians may call ro-

mantic if they please, but which all men of high principles and enlarged understandings will feel to be not more heroic than judicious. While Poland remains oppressed and discontented, the peace of Europe will always be at the mercy of any ambitious or intriguing power that may think fit to rouse its vast and warlike population with the vain promise of independence; while it is perfectly manifest that those, by whom alone that promise could be effectually kept, would gain prodigiously, both in security and in substantial influence, by its faithful performance. It is not, however, for the mere name of independence, nor for the lost glories of an ancient and honorable existence, that the people of Poland are thus eager to array themselves in any desperate strife of which this may be proclaimed as the prize. We have shown in our last number, the substantial and intolerable evils which this extinction of their national dignity — this sore and unmerited wound to their national pride, has necessarily occasioned: and thinking, as we do, that a people without the feelings of national pride and public duty must be a people without energy and without enjoyments, we apprehend it to be at any rate indisputable, in the present instance, that the circumstances which have dissolved their political being, have struck also at the root of their individual happiness and prosperity; and that it is not merely the unjust destruction of an ancient kingdom that we lament, but the condemnation of fifteen millions of human beings to unprofitable and unparalleled misery.

But though these are the considerations by which the feelings of private individuals are most naturally affected, it should never be forgotten, that all the principles on which the great fabric of national independence confessedly rests in Europe, are involved in the decision of this question; and that no one nation can be secure in its separate existence, if all the rest do not concur in disavowing the maxims which were acted upon in the partition of Poland. It is not only mournful to see the scattered and bleeding members of that unhappy state still palpitating and agonizing on the spot where it lately stood erect in youthful vigour and beauty; but it is unsafe to breathe the noxious vapours which this melancholy spectacle exhales. The wholesome neighbourhood is poisoned by their diffusion; and every independence within their range, sickens and is endangered by the contagion.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

(February, 1811.)

Speech of the Right Hon. William Windham, in the House of Commons, May 26, 1809, on Mr. Curwen's Bill, "for better securing the Independence and Purity of Parliament, by preventing the procuring or obtaining of Seats by corrupt Practices." 8vo. Pp. 43. London: 1810.*

Mr. Windham, the most high-minded and incorruptible of living men, can see no harm in selling seats in parliament openly to the highest bidder, or for excluding public trusts generally from the money market; and is of opinion that political influence arising from property should be disposed of like other property. It will be readily supposed that we do not assent to any part of this doctrine; and indeed we must beg leave to say, that to us it is no sort of argument for the sale of seats, to contend that such a transference is no worse than the possession of the property transferred; and to remind us, that he who objects to men selling their influence, must be against their having it to sell. We *are* decidedly against their having it — *to sell!* and, as to what is here considered as the *necessary* influence of property over elections, we should think there could be no great difficulty in drawing the line between the legitimate, harmless, and even beneficial use of property, even as connected with elections; and its direct employment for the purchase of parliamentary influence. Almost all men — indeed, we think, all men — admit, that *some* line is to be drawn; — that the political influence of property should be confined to that which is essential to its use and enjoyment; —

* The passing of the Reform Bill has *antiquated* much of the discussion in this article, as originally written; and a considerable portion of it is now, for this reason, omitted. But it also contains answers to the systematic apologists of corruption, and opponents of reform principles — which are applicable to all times, and all conditions of society; and of which recent events and discussions seem to show that the present generation may still need to be reminded.

and that penalties should be inflicted, when it is directly applied to the purchase of votes; though that is perhaps the only case in which the law can interfere vindictively, without introducing far greater evils than those which it seeks to remedy.

To those who are already familiar with the facts and the reasonings that bear upon this great question, these brief suggestions will probably be sufficient; but there are many to whom the subject will require a little more explanation; and for whose use, at all events, the argument must be a little more opened up and expanded.

If men were perfectly wise and virtuous, they would stand in no need either of Government or of Representatives; and, therefore, if they do need them, it is quite certain that their choice will not be influenced by considerations of duty or wisdom alone. We may assume it as an axiom, therefore, however the purists may be scandalized, that, even in political elections, some other feelings will necessarily have play; and that passions, and prejudices, and personal interests will always interfere, to a greater or less extent, with the higher dictates of patriotism and philanthropy. Of these sinister motives, individual interest, of course, is the strongest and most steady; and wealth being its most common and appropriate object, it is natural to expect that the possession of property should bestow some political influence. The question, therefore, is, whether this influence can ever be safe or tolerable—or whether it be possible to mark the limits at which it becomes so pernicious as to justify legislative coercion. Now, we are so far from thinking, with Mr. Windham, that there is no room for any distinction in this matter, that we are inclined, on the whole, to be of opinion, that what we would term the natural and inevitable influence of property in elections, is not only safe, but salutary; while its artificial and corrupt influence is among the most pernicious and reprehensible of all political abuses.

The natural influence of property is that which results spontaneously from its ordinary use and expenditure, and cannot well be misunderstood. That a man who spends a large income in the place of his residence — who subscribes handsomely for building bridges, hospitals, and assembly-rooms, and generally to all works of public charity or accommodation in the neighbourhood — and who, moreover, keeps the best table for the gentry, and has the largest accounts with the tradesmen — will, without thinking or caring about the matter, acquire more influence, and find more people ready to oblige him, than a poorer man, of equal virtue and talents — is a fact, which we are as little inclined to deplore, as to call in question. Neither does it cost us any pang to reflect, that, if such a man was desirous of representing the borough in which he resided, or of having it represented by his son or his brother, or some dear and intimate friend, his recommendation would go much farther with the electors than a respectable certificate of extraordinary worth and abilities in an opposing candidate.

Such an influence as this, it would evidently be quite absurd for any legislature to think of interdicting, or even for any reformer to attempt to discredit. In the *first* place, because it is founded in the very nature of men and of human affairs, and could not possibly be prevented, or considerably weakened, by any thing short of an universal regeneration; *secondly*, because, though originating from property, it does by no means imply either the baseness of venality, or the guilt of corruption; but rests infinitely more upon feelings of vanity, and social instinctive sympathy, than upon any consciousness of dependence, or paltry expectations of personal emolument; and *thirdly*, because, taking men as they actually are, this mixed feeling is, upon the whole, both a safer and a better feeling than the greater part of those, to the influence of which they would be abandoned, if this should be destroyed. If the question were always, whether a man of wealth and family, or a man of sense and virtue, should have the greatest influence, it would no doubt be desirable that the preponderance should be given to moral and intellectual merit. But this is by no means the true state of the contest: — and when the question is between the influence of property and the influence of intriguing ambition and turbulent popularity, we own that we are glad to find the former most frequently prevalent. In ordinary life, and in common affairs, this natural and indirect influence of property is vast and infallible, even upon the best and most enlightened part of the

community; and nothing can conduce so surely to the stability and excellence of a political constitution, as to make it rest upon the general principles that regulate the conduct of the better part of the individuals who live under it, and to attach them to their government by the same feelings which ensure their affection or submission in their private capacity. There could be no security, in short, either for property, or for any thing else, in a country where the possession of property did not bestow some political influence.

This, then, is the natural influence of property; which we would not only tolerate, but encourage. We must now endeavour to explain that corrupt or artificial influence, which we conceive it to be our duty by all means to resist and repress. Under this name, we would comprehend all wilful and direct employment of property to purchase or obtain political power, in whatever form the transaction might be embodied: but, with reference to the more common cases, we shall exemplify only in the instances of purchasing votes by bribery, or holding the property of those votes distinct from any other property, and selling and transferring *this* for a price, like any other marketable commodity. All such practices are stigmatized, in common language and in common feelings, as corrupt and discreditable; and the slightest reflection upon their principles and their consequences, will show, that while they tend to debase the character of all who are concerned in them, they lead directly to the subversion of all that is valuable in a representative system of government. That they may, in some cases, be combined with that indirect and legitimate influence of property of which we have just been speaking, and, in others, be insidiously engrafted upon it, it is impossible to deny; but that they are clearly distinguishable from the genuine fruits of that influence, both in their moral character and their political effects, we conceive to be equally indisputable.

Upon the subject of direct bribery to individual voters, indeed, we do not think it necessary to say any thing. The law, and the feeling of all mankind, have marked that practice with reprobation; and even Mr. Windham, in the wantonness of his controversial scepticism, does not pretend to say, that the law or the feeling is erroneous, or that it would not be better that both should, if possible, be made still stronger than they are.

Setting this aside, however, the great practical evils that are supposed to result from the influence of property in the elections of this country, are, 1st, that the representation of certain boroughs is entirely, necessarily and perpetually, at the disposal of certain families, so as to be familiarly considered as a part of their rightful property; and 2ndly, that certain other boroughs are held and managed by corrupt agents and jobbers, for the express purpose of being sold for a price in ready money, either through the intervention of the Treasury, or directly to the candidate. That both these are evils and deformities in our system of representation, we readily admit; though by no means to the same extent, leading to the same effects, or produced by the operation of the same causes.

With regard to the boroughs that are permanently in possession of certain great proprietors, these are, for the most part, such small or decayed places as have fallen, almost insensibly, under their control, in consequence of the extension of their possessions, and the decline of the population. Considered in this light, it does not appear that they can, with any propriety, be regarded either as scenes of criminal corruption, or as examples of the reprehensible influence of property. If a place which still retains (however absurdly) the right of sending members to parliament, comes to be entirely depopulated, like Old Sarum, it is impossible to suppose that the nomination of its members should vest in any one but the *proprietor* of the spot to which the right is attached: and, even where the decay is less complete than in this instance, still, if any great family has gradually acquired the greater part of the property from which the right of voting is derived, it is equally impossible to hold, that there is any thing corrupt or reprehensible in its availing itself of this influence. Cases of this sort, therefore, we are inclined to consider as cases of the fair influence of property; and though we admit them to be both contradictory to the general scheme of the Constitution, and subversive of some of its most important principles, we think they are to be regarded as flaws and irregularities brought on by time

and the course of events, rather than as abuses introduced by the vices and corruptions of men. The remedy — and we certainly think a very obvious and proper remedy — would be, to take the right of election from all places so small and insignificant as to have thus become, in a great measure, the property of an individual — not to rail at the individual who avails himself of the influence *inseparable* from such property — or to dream of restraining him in its exercise, by unjust penalties and impossible regulations.

The great evil, however, is in the other description of boroughs — those that are held by agents or jobbers, by a very different tenure from that of great proprietors and benefactors, and are regularly disposed of by them, at every election, for a price paid down, either through the mediation of the ministry, or without any such mediation: a part of this price being notoriously applied by such agents in direct bribes to individual voters — and the remainder taken to themselves as the lawful profits of the transaction. Now, without going into any sort of detail, we think we might at once venture to ask, whether it be possible for any man to shut his eyes upon the individual infamy and the public hazard that are involved in these last-mentioned proceedings, or for one moment to confound them, even in his imagination, with the innocent and salutary influence that is inseparable from the possession and expenditure of large property? The difference between them, is not less than between the influence which youth and manly beauty, aided by acts of generosity and proofs of honourable intentions, may attain over an object of affection, and the control that may be acquired by the arts of a hateful procuress, and by her transferred to an object of natural disgust and aversion. The one is founded upon principles which, if they are not the most lofty or infallible, are still among the most amiable that belong to our imperfect nature, and leads to consequences eminently favourable to the harmony and stability of our social institutions; while the other can only be obtained by working with the basest instruments on the basest passions; and tends directly to sap the foundations of private honour and public freedom, and to dissolve the kindly cement by which nature herself has knit society together, in the bonds of human sympathy, and mutual trust and dependence. To say that both sorts of influence are derived from property, and are therefore to be considered as identical, is a sophism scarcely more ingenious, than that which would confound the occupations of the highwayman and the honourable merchant, because the object of both was gain; or which should assume the philosophical principle, that all voluntary actions are dictated by a view to ultimate gratification, in order to prove that there was no distinction between vice and virtue; and that the felon, who was led to execution amidst the execrations of an indignant multitude, was truly as meritorious as the patriot, to whom his grateful country decreed unenvied honours for its deliverance from tyranny. The truth is, that there is nothing more dangerous than those metaphysical inquiries into the ultimate constituents of merit or delinquency; and that, in every thing that is connected with practice, and especially with public conduct, no wise man will ever employ such an analytical process to counteract the plain intimations of conscience and common sense, unless for the purpose of confounding an antagonist, or perplexing a discussion, to the natural result of which he is unfriendly on other principles.

But if the practices to which we are alluding be clearly base and unworthy in the eyes of all upright and honourable men, and most pregnant with public danger in the eyes of all thinking and intelligent men, it must appear still more strange to find them defended on the score of their antiquity, than on that of their supposed affinity to practices that are held to be innocent. Yet the old cry of Innovation! has been raised, with more than usual vehemence, against those who offer the most cautious hints for their correction; and even Mr. Windham has not disdained to seek some aid to his argument from a misapplication of the sorry commonplaces about the antiquity and beauty of our constitution, and the hazard of meddling at all with that under which we have so long enjoyed so much glory and happiness. Of the many good answers that may be made to all arguments of this character, we shall content ourselves with one, which seems sufficiently conclusive and simple.

The abuses of which we complain are *not*

old, but recent; and those who seek to correct them, are not innovating upon the constitution, but seeking to prevent innovation. The practice of jobbing in boroughs was scarcely known at all in the beginning of the last century; and was not systematized, nor carried to any very formidable extent, till within the last forty years. At all events, it most certainly was not in the contemplation of those by whom the frame of our constitution was laid; and it is confessedly a perversion and abuse of a system, devised and established for very opposite purposes. Let any man ask himself, whether such a scheme of representation, as is now actually in practice in many parts of this country, can be supposed to have been intended by those who laid the foundations of our free constitution, or reared upon them the proud fabric of our liberties? Or let him ask himself, whether, if we were now devising a system of representation for such a country as England, there is any human being who would recommend the adoption of the system that is practically established among us at this moment,—a system under which fifty or sixty members should be returned by twenty or thirty paltry and beggarly hamlets, dignified with the name of boroughs; while twenty or thirty great and opulent towns had no representation;—and where upwards of a hundred more publicly bought their seats, partly by a promise of indiscriminate support to the minister, and partly by a sum paid down to persons who had no natural influence over the electors, and controlled them notoriously, either by direct bribery, or as the agents of ministerial corruption? If it be clear, however, that such a state of things is in itself indefensible, it is still clearer that it is not the state of things which is required by the true principles of the constitution; that, in point of fact, it neither did nor could exist at the time when that constitution was established; and that its correction would be no innovation on that constitution, but a beneficial restoration of it, both in principle and in practice.

If some of the main pillars of our mansion have been thrown down, is it a dangerous innovation to rear them up again? If the roof has grown too heavy for the building, by recent and injudicious superstructures, is it an innovation, if we either take them down, or strengthen the supports upon which they depend? If the waste of time, and the elements, have crumbled away a part of the foundation, does it show a disregard to the safety of the whole pile, if we widen the basis upon which it rests, and endeavour to place it upon deeper and firmer materials? If the rats have eaten a way into the stores and the cellars; or if knavish servants have opened private and unauthorised communications in the lower parts of the fabric, does it indeed indicate a disposition to impair the comfort and security of the abode, that we are anxious to stop up those holes, and to build across those new and suspicious approaches?—Is it not obvious, in short, in all such cases, that the only true innovators are Guilt and Time; and that they who seek to repair what time has wasted, and to restore what guilt has destroyed, are still more unequivocally the enemies of innovation, than of abuse? Those who are most aware of the importance of reform, are also most aware of the hazards of any theoretical or untried change; and, while they strictly confine their efforts to the *restitution* of what all admit to have been in the original plan of our representation, and to have formed a most essential part of that plan, may reasonably hope, whatever other charges they may encounter, to escape that of a love of innovation.

There is another topic, on which Mr. Windham has dwelt at very great length, which appears to us to bear even less on the merits of the question, than this of the antiquity of our constitution. The abuses and corruptions which Mr. Curwin aimed at correcting, ought not, he says, to be charged to the account of ministers or members of parliament alone. The greater part of them both originate and end with the people themselves,—are suggested by *their* baseness and self-interest, and terminate in their corrupt gain, with very little voluntary sin, and frequently with very little advantage of any sort to ministers or candidates. Now, though it is impossible to forget what Mr. Windham has himself said, of the disgraceful abuses of patronage committed by men in power, for their own individual emolument *, yet we are inclined, upon the

* "With respect to the abuse of patronage, one of those by which the interests of countries do, in reality,

whole, to admit the truth of this statement. It is what we have always thought it our duty to point out to the notice of those who can see no guilt but in the envied possessors of dignity and power; and forms, indeed, the very basis of the answer we have repeatedly attempted to give to those Utopian or factious reformers, whose intemperance has done more injury to the cause of reform, than all the sophistry and all the corruption of their opponents. But though we admit the premises of Mr. Windham's argument, we must utterly deny his conclusions. When we admit that a part of the people is venal and corrupt, as well as its rulers, we really cannot see that we admit any thing in defence, or even in palliation, of venality and corruption: — nor can we imagine, how that melancholy and most humiliating fact can help in the least to make out that corruption is not an immoral and pernicious practice;—not a *malum in se*, as Mr. Windham has been pleased to assert, nor even a practice which it would be just and expedient, if it were practicable, to repress and abolish! The only just inference from the fact is, that ministers and members of parliament are not the only guilty persons in the traffic; — and that all remedies will be inefficient, which are not capable of being applied through the whole range of the malady. It may be a very good retort from the gentlemen within doors to the gentlemen without; and when they are reproached with not having clean hands, it may be very natural for them to ask a sight of those of their accusers. But is this any answer at all to those who insist upon the infamy and the dangers of corruption in *both* quarters? Or, is the evil really supposed to be less formidable, because it appears to be very widely extended, and to be the fair subject, not only of reproach, but of recrimination? The seat of the malady, and its extent, may indeed vary our opinion as to the nature of the remedy which ought to be administered; but the knowledge that it has pervaded more vital parts than one, certainly should not lead us to think that no remedy whatever is needed—or to consider the symptoms as too slight to require any particular attention.

But though we differ thus radically from Mr. Windham in our estimate of the nature and magnitude of this evil, we have already said, that we are disposed to concur with him in disapproving of the measures which have been lately proposed for their correction. The bill of Mr. Curwen, and all bills that aim only at repressing the ultimate traffic in seats, by pains and penalties to be imposed on those immediately concerned in the transaction, appears to us to begin at the wrong end,—and to aim at repressing a result which may be regarded as necessary, so long as the causes which led to it are allowed to subsist in undiminished vigour. It is like trying to save a valley from being flooded, by building a paltry dam across the gathered torrents that flow into it. The only effect is, that they will ultimately make their way, by a more destructive channel, to worse devastation. The true policy is to drain the feeding rills at their fountains, or to provide another vent for the stream before it reaches the declivity by which the flat is commanded. While the spirit of corruption is unchecked, and even fostered in the bosom of the country, the interdiction of the common market will only throw the trade into the hands of the more profligate and daring, — or give a monopoly to the privileged and protected dealings of Administration; and the evil will in both ways be aggravated, instead of being relieved.

We cannot now stop to point out the actual evils to which this corruption gives rise: or even to dwell on the means by which we think it might be made more difficult; though among these we conceive the most efficacious would obviously be, to multiply the numbers, and, in some cases, to raise the qualification of voters — to take away the right of election from decayed, inconsiderable, and *rotten* boroughs;

most suffer, I perfectly agree, that it is likewise one, of which the government, properly so called, that is to say, persons in the highest offices, are as likely to be guilty, and, from their opportunities, more likely to be guilty, than any others. And nothing, in point of fact, can exceed the greediness, the selfishness, the insatiable voracity, the profligate disregard of all claims from merit or services, that we often see in persons in high official stations, when providing for themselves, their relations or dependants. I am as little disposed as any one to defend them in this conduct. Let it be reprobated in terms as harsh as any one pleases, and much more so than it commonly is." —*Speech*, p. 28.

and to bestow it on large towns possessing various and divided wealth. But, though the increased number of voters will make it more difficult to bribe them, and their greater opulence render them less liable to be bribed; still, we confess that the chief benefit which we expect from any provisions of this sort, is the security which we think they will afford for the improvement, maintenance, and propagation of a Free Spirit among the people — a feeling of a political right, and of individual interest, among so great a number of persons, as will make it not only discreditable, but *unsafe*, to invade their liberties, or trespass upon their rights. It is never to be forgotten, that the great and ultimate barrier against oppression and arbitrary power, must always be raised on public opinion — and on opinion, so valued and so asserted, as to point resolutely to *resistance*, if it be permanently insulted, or openly set at defiance. In order to have this public opinion, however, either sufficiently strong, or sufficiently enlightened, to afford such a security, it is quite necessary that a very large body of the people be taught to set a value upon the rights which it is qualified to protect, — that their reason, their moral principles, their pride, and habitual feelings, should all be engaged on the side of their political independence — that their attention should be frequently directed to their rights and their duties, as free citizens of a free state, — and their eyes, ears, hearts, and affections familiarized with the spectacles, and themes, and occasions that remind them of those rights and duties. In a commercial country like England, the pursuit of wealth, or of personal comfort, is apt to engross the whole care of the body of the people; and if property be tolerably secured by law, and a vigilant police repress actual outrage and disorder, they are likely enough to fall into a general forgetfulness of their political rights; and even to regard as burdensome those political functions, without the due exercise of which the whole frame of our liberties would soon dissolve and fall to pieces. It is of infinite and incalculable importance, therefore, to spread as widely as possible among the people, the feelings and the love of their political blessings — to exercise them unceasingly in the evolutions of a free constitution — and to train them to those sentiments of pride, and jealousy, and self-esteem which arise naturally from their experience of their own value and importance, in the great order of society, and upon which alone the fabric of a free government can ever be safely erected.

We indicate all these things very briefly; both because we cannot now afford room for a more full exposition of them, and because it is not our intention to exhaust this great subject on the present occasion, but rather to place before our readers a few of the leading principles upon which we shall think it our duty to expatiate at other opportunities. We cannot, however, bring even these preliminary and miscellaneous observations to a close, without taking some notice of a topic which seems at present peculiarly in favour with the reasoning enemies of reform; and to which we cannot reply, without developing, in a more striking manner than we have yet done, the nature of our apprehensions from the influence of the Crown, and the holders of large properties, and of our expectations of good from the increased spirit and intelligence of the people.

The argument to which we allude, proceeds upon the concession, that the patronage of government, and the wealth employed to obtain political influence, have increased very greatly within the last fifty years; and consists almost entirely in the assertion, that this increase, great as it undoubtedly is, yet has not kept pace with the general increase which has taken place, in the same period, in the wealth, weight, and influence of the people; so that, in point of fact, the power of the Crown and Borough proprietors, although *absolutely* greater, is *proportionally* less than it was at the commencement of the present reign; and ought to be augmented, rather than diminished, if our object be to preserve the ancient balance of the constitution! We must do Mr. Windham the justice to say, that he does not make much use of this argument; but it forms the grand reserve of Mr. Rose's battle; and, we think, is more frequently and triumphantly brought forward than any other, by those who now affect to justify abuses by argumentation.

The first answer we make to it, consists in denying the fact upon which it proceeds; at least in the sense in which it must be asserted, in order to afford any shadow of colour to the

conclusion. There is, undoubtedly, far more wealth in the country than there was fifty years ago: but there is not more independence. There are not more men whose incomes exceed what they conceive to be their necessary expenditure; — not nearly so many who consider themselves as nearly rich enough, and who would therefore look on themselves as without apology for doing any thing against their duty or their opinions for the sake of profit to themselves: on the contrary, it is notorious, and not to be disputed, that our luxury and habits of expense, have increased considerably faster than the riches by which they should be supported — that men, in general, have now far less to spare than they had when their incomes were smaller — and that if our condition may, in one sense, be said to be a condition of opulence, it is still more indisputably a condition of needy opulence. It is perfectly plain, however, that it is not the absolute amount of wealth existing in a nation, that can ever contribute to render it politically independent of patronage, or intractable to the persuasive voice of a munificent and discerning ruler, but the general state of content and satisfaction which results from its wealth being proportioned to its occasions of expense. It neither is, accordingly, nor ever was, among the poor, but among the expensive and extravagant, that corruption looks for her surest and most profitable game; nor can her influence ever be anywhere so great, as in a country where almost all those to whom she can think it important to address herself, are straitened for money, and eager for preferment — dissatisfied with their condition as to fortune — and, whatever may be the amount of their possessions, practically needy, and impatient of their embarrassments. This is the case with the greater part even of those who actually possess the riches for which this country is so distinguished. But the effect of their prosperity has been, to draw a far greater proportion of the people within the sphere of selfish ambition — to diffuse those habits of expense which give corruption her chief hold and purchase, among multitudes who are spectators only of the splendour in which they cannot participate, and are infected with the cravings and aspirations of the objects of their envy, even before they come to be placed in their circumstances. Such needy adventurers are constantly generated by the rapid progress of wealth and luxury; and are sure to seek and court that corruption which is obliged to seek and court, though with too great a probability of success, those whose condition they miscalculate, and labour to attain. Such a state of things, therefore, is far more favourable to the exercise of the corrupt influence of government and wealthy ambition, than a state of greater poverty and moderation; and the same limited means of seduction will go infinitely farther among a people in the one situation than in the other. The same temptations that were repelled by the simple poverty of Fabricius, would, in all probability, have bought half the golden satraps of the Persian monarch, or swayed the counsels of wealthy and venal Rome, in the splendid days of Catiline and Cæsar.

This, therefore, is our first answer; and it is so complete, we think, as not to require any other, for the mere purpose of confutation. But the argument is founded upon so strange and so dangerous a misapprehension of the true state of the case, that we think it our duty to unfold the whole fallacy upon which it proceeds; and to show what very opposite consequences are really to be drawn from the circumstances that have been so imperfectly conceived, or so perversely viewed, by those who contend for increasing the patronage of the Government as a balance to the increasing consequence of the People.

There is a foundation, in fact, for some part of this proposition; but a foundation that has been strangely misunderstood by those who have sought to build upon it so revolting a conclusion. The people *has* increased in consequence, in power, and in political importance. Over all Europe, we verily believe, that they are everywhere growing too strong for their governments; and that, if these governments are to be preserved, *some* measures must be taken to accommodate them to this great change in the condition and interior structure of society. But this increase of consequence is not owing to their having grown *richer;* and still less is it to be provided against, by increasing the means of corruption in the hands of their rulers. This requires, and really deserves, a little more explanation

All political societies may be considered as divided into three great classes, or orders. In the first place, the governors, or those who are employed, or hope to be employed, by the governors,—and who therefore either have, or expect to have, profit or advantage of some sort from the government, or from subordinate patrons. In the second place, those who are in opposition to the government, who feel the burdens and restraints which it imposes, are jealous of the honours and emoluments it enjoys or distributes, and grudge the expense and submission which it requires, under an apprehension, that the good it accomplishes is not worth so great a sacrifice. And, thirdly and finally, those who may be counted for nothing in all political arrangements — who are ignorant, indifferent, and quiescent — who submit to all things without grumbling or satisfaction — and are contented to consider all existing institutions as a part of the order of nature to which it is their duty to accommodate themselves.

In rude and early ages, this last division includes by far the greater part of the people; but as society advances, and intellect begins to develope itself, a greater and a greater proportion is withdrawn from it, and joined to the two other divisions. These drafts, however, are not made indiscriminately, or in equal numbers, to the two remaining orders; but tend to throw a preponderating weight, either into the scale of the government, or into that of its opponents, according to the character of that government, and the nature of the circumstances by which they have been roused from their neutrality. The diffusion of knowledge, the improvements of education, and the gradual descent and expansion of those maxims of individual or political wisdom that are successively established by reflection and experience, necessarily raise up more and more of the mass of the population from that state of brutish acquiescence and incurious ignorance in which they originally slumbered. They begin to feel their relation to the government under which they live; and, guided by those feelings, and the analogies of their private interests and affections, they begin to form, or to borrow, *Opinions* upon the merit or demerit of the institutions and administration, to the effects of which they are subjected; and to conceive *Sentiments* either hostile or friendly to such institutions and administration. If the government be mild and equitable — if its undertakings are prosperous, its impositions easy, and its patronage just and impartial — the greater part of those who are thus successively awakened into a state of political capacity will be enrolled among its supporters; and strengthen it against the factious, ambitious, and disappointed persons, who alone will be found in opposition to it. But if, on the other hand, this disclosure of intellectual and political sensibility occur at a period when the government is capricious or oppressive — when its plans are disastrous — its exactions burdensome — its tone repulsive — and its distribution of favours most corrupt and unjust; — it will infallibly happen, that the greater part of those who are thus called into political existence, will take part against it, and be disposed to exert themselves for its correction, or utter subversion.

The last supposition, we think, is that which has been realized in the history of Europe for the last thirty years: and when we say that the people has almost every where grown too strong for their rulers, we mean only to say, that, in that period, there has been a prodigious development in the understanding and intelligence of the great mass of the population; and that this makes them much less willing than formerly to submit to the folly and corruption of most of their ancient governments. The old instinctive feelings of loyalty and implicit obedience have pretty generally given way to shrewd calculations as to their own interests, their own powers, and the rights which arise out of these powers. They see now, pretty quickly, both the weaknesses and the vices of their rulers; and, having learned to refer their own sufferings or privations, with considerable sagacity, to *their* blunders and injustice; they begin tacitly to inquire, what right they have to a sovereignty, of which they make so bad a use — and how they could protect themselves, if all who hate and despise them were to unite to take it from them. Sentiments of this sort, we are well assured, have been prevalent over all the enlightened parts of Europe for the last thirty years, and are every day gaining strength and popularity. Kings, and nobles, and ministers, and agents

of government, are no longer looked upon with veneration and awe, — but rather with a mixture of contempt and jealousy. Their errors and vices are canvassed, among all ranks of persons, with extreme freedom and severity. The corruptions by which they seek to fortify themselves are regarded with indignation and vindictive abhorrence; and the excuses with which they palliate them, with disgust and derision. Their deceptions are almost universally seen through, and their incapacity detected and despised, by an unprecedented portion of the whole population which they govern.

It is in this sense, as we conceive it, that the people throughout civilized Europe have grown too strong for their rulers; and that *some* alteration in the balance or administration of their governments, has become necessary for their preservation. They have become too strong, — not in wealth — but in *intellect*, activity, and available numbers; and the tranquillity of their governments has been endangered, not from their want of pecuniary influence, but from their want of moral respectability and intellectual vigour.

Such is the true state of the evil; and the cure, according to the English opponents of reform, is to increase the patronage of the Crown! The remote and original cause of the danger, is the improved intelligence and more perfect intercourse with the people, — a cause which it is not lawful to wish removed, and which, at any rate, the proposed remedy has no tendency to remove. The immediate and proximate cause is the abuse of patronage and the corruptions practised by the government and their wealthy supporters: — and the cure that is seriously recommended, is to increase that corruption! — to add to the weight of the burdens under which the people is sinking, — and to multiply the examples of partiality, profusion, and profligacy, by which they are revolted!

An absurdity so extravagant, however, could not have suggested itself, even to the persons by whom it has been so triumphantly recommended, unless it had been palliated by some colour of plausibility: and their error (which really does not seem very unnatural for men of their description) seems to have consisted merely in supposing that *all* those who were discontented in the country, were disappointed candidates for place and profit; and that the whole clamour which had been raised against the misgovernment of the modern world originated in a violent desire to participate in the emoluments of that misgovernment. Upon this supposition, it must no doubt be admitted that their remedy was most judiciously devised. All the discontent was among those who wished to be bribed — all the clamour among those who were impatient for preferment. Increase the patronage of the Crown therefore — make more sinecures, more jobs, more nominal and real posts of emolument and honour, — and you will allay the discontent, and still the clamour, which are now "frighting our isle from her propriety!"

This, to be sure, is very plausible and ingenious — as well as highly creditable to the honour of the nation, and the moral *experience* of its contrivers. But the fact, unfortunately, is not as it is here assumed. There are *two* sets of persons to be managed and appeased; and the misfortune is, that what might gratify the one would only exasperate the discontents of the other. The one wants unmerited honours, and unearned emoluments — a further abuse of patronage — a more shameful misapplication of the means of the nation. The other wants a correction of abuses — an abridgment of patronage — a diminution of the public burdens — a more just distribution of its trusts, dignities, and rewards. This last party is still, we are happy to think, by far the strongest, and the most formidable: for it is daily recruited out of the mass of the population, over which reason is daily extending her dominion; and depends, for its ultimate success, upon nothing less than the irresistible progress of intelligence — of a true and enlightened sense of interest — and a feeling of inherent right, united to undoubted power. It is difficult, then, to doubt of its ultimate triumph; and it must appear to be infinitely foolish to think of opposing its progress, by measures which are so obviously calculated to add to its strength. By increasing the patronage or influence of the Crown, a few more venal spirits may be attracted, by the precarious tie of a dishonest interest, to withstand all attempts at reform, and to clamour in behalf of all existing practices and institutions. But, for

every worthless auxiliary that is thus recruited for the defence of established abuses, is it not evident that there will be a thousand new enemies called forth, by the additional abuse exemplified in the new patronage that is created, and the new scene of corruption that is exhibited, in exchanging this patronage for this dishonourable support? — For a nation to endeavour to strengthen itself against the attempts of reformers by a deliberate augmentation of its corruptions, is not more politic, than for a spendthrift to think of relieving himself of his debts, by borrowing at usurious interest to pay what is demanded, and thus increasing the burden which he affects to be throwing off.

The only formidable discontent, in short, that now subsists in the country, is that of those who are *reasonably discontented;* and the only part of the people whose growing strength really looks menacingly on the government, is that which has been alienated by what it believes to be its corruptions, and enabled, by its own improving intelligence, to unmask its deceptions, and to discover the secret of its selfishness and incapacity. The great object of its jealousy is the enormous influence of the Crown, and the monstrous abuses of patronage to which that influence gives occasion. It is, therefore, of all infatuations, the wildest and most desperate, to hold out that the progress of this discontent makes it proper to give the Crown more influence, and that it can only be effectually conciliated, by putting more patronage in the way of abuse!

In stating the evils and dangers of corruption and profligacy in a government, we must always keep it in view, that such a system can never be *universally* palatable, even among the basest and most depraved people of which history has preserved any memorial. If this were otherwise indeed — if a whole nation were utterly and entirely venal and corrupt, and each willing to wait his time of dishonourable promotion, things might go on with sufficient smoothness at least; and as such a nation would not be worth mending, on the one hand, so there would, in fact, be much less need, on the other, for that untoward operation. The supposition, however, is obviously impossible; and, in such a country at least as England, it may perhaps be truly stated, as the most alarming consequence of corruption, that, if allowed to go on without any effectual check, it will infallibly generate such a spirit of discontent, as necessarily to bring on some dreadful convulsion, and overturn the very foundations of the Constitution. It is thus fraught with a *double* evil to a country enjoying a free government. In the first place, it gradually corrodes and destroys much that is truly valuable in its Constitution; and, secondly, it ensures its ultimate subversion by the tremendous crash of an insurrection or revolution. It first makes the government oppressive and intolerable; and then it oversets it altogether by a necessary, but dreadful calamity.

These two evils may appear to be opposite to each other; and it is certain, that, though brought on by the same course of conduct, they cannot be inflicted by the same set of persons. Those who are the slaves and the ministers of corruption, assuredly are not those who are minded to crush it, with a visiting vengeance, under the ruins of the social order; and it is in forgetting that there are two sets of persons to be conciliated in all such questions, that the portentous fallacy which we are considering mainly consists. The government may be very corrupt, and a very considerable part of the nation may be debased and venal, while there is still spirit and virtue enough left, when the measure of provocation is full, to inflict a signal and sanguinary vengeance, and utterly to overthrow the fabric which has been defiled by this traffic of iniquity. And there may be great spirit, and strength, and capacity of heroic resentment in a nation, which will yet allow its institutions to be, for a long time, perverted, its legislature to be polluted, and the baser part of its population to be corrupted, before it be roused to that desperate effort, in which its peace and happiness are sure to suffer along with the guilt which brings down the thunder. In such an age of the world as the present, however, it may be looked upon as absolutely certain, that if the guilt be persisted in, the vengeance will follow; and that all *reasonable* discontent will accumulate and gain strength, as reason and experience advance; till, at the last, it works its own reparation, and sweeps the offence from the earth, with the force and the fury of a whirlwind.

In such a view of the moral destiny of nations, there is something elevating as well as terrible. Yet, the terror preponderates, for those who are to witness the catastrophe: and all reason, as well as all humanity, urges us to use every effort to avoid the crisis and the shock, by a timely reformation, and an earnest and sincere attempt to conciliate the hostile elements of our society, by mutual concession and indulgence.—It is for this reason, chiefly, that we feel such extreme solicitude for a legislative reform of our system of representation,—in some degree as a pledge of the willingness of the government to admit of reform where it is requisite; but chiefly, no doubt, as in itself most likely to stay the flood of venality and corruption,—to reclaim a part of those who had begun to yield to its seductions,—and to reconcile those to the government and constitution of their country, who had begun to look upon it with a mingled feeling of contempt, hostility, and despair. That such a reform as we have contemplated would go far to produce those happy effects, we think must appear evident to all who agree with us as to the nature and origin of the evils from which we suffer, and the dangers to which we are exposed. One of its immediate, and therefore chief advantages, however, will consist in its relieving and abating the spirit of discontent which is generated by the spectacle of our present condition; both by giving it scope and vent, and by the vast facilities it must afford to future labours of regeneration. By the extension of the elective franchise, many of those who are most hostile to the existing system, because, under it, they are excluded from all share of power or political importance, will have a part assigned them, both more safe, more honourable, and more active, than merely murmuring, or meditating vengeance against such a scheme of exclusion. The influence of such men will be usefully exerted in exciting a popular spirit, and in exposing the base and dishonest practices that may still interfere with the freedom of election. By some alteration in the borough qualifications, the body of electors in general will be invested with a more respectable character, and feel a greater jealousy of every thing that may tend to degrade or dishonour them: but, above all, a rigid system of economy, and a farther exclusion of placemen from the legislature, by cutting off a great part of the minister's most profitable harvest of corruption, will force his party also to have recourse to more honourable means of popularity, and to appeal to principles that must ultimately promote the cause of independence.

By the introduction, in short, of a system of reform, even more moderate and cautious than that which we have ventured to indicate, we think that a wholesome and legitimate play will be given to those principles of opposition to corruption, monopoly, and abuse, which, by the denial of all reform, are in danger of being fomented into a decided spirit of hostility to the government and the institutions of the country. Instead of brooding, in sullen and helpless silence, over the vices and errors which are ripening into intolerable evil, and seeing, with a stern and vindictive joy, wrong accumulated to wrong, and corruption heaped up to corruption, the spirit of reform will be continually interfering, with active and successful zeal, to correct, restrain, and deter. Instead of being the avenger of our murdered liberties, it will be their living protector; and the censor, not the executioner, of the Constitution. It will not descend, only at long intervals, like the Avatar of the Indian mythology, to expiate, with terrible vengeance, a series of consummated crimes; but, like the Providence of a better faith, will keep watch perpetually over the actions of corrigible men, and bring them back from their aberrations, by merciful chastisement, timely admonition, and the blessed experience of purer principles of action.

Such, according to our conviction of the fact, is the true state of the case as to the increasing weight and consequence of the people; and such the nature of the policy which we think this change in the structure of our society calls upon us to adopt. The people are grown strong, in intellect, resolution, and mutual reliance,—quick in the detection of the abuses by which they are wronged,—and confident in the powers by which they may be compelled ultimately to seek their redress. Against *this* strength, it is something more wild than madness, and more contemptible than folly, to think of arraying an additional phalanx of abuses, and drawing out a wider range of corruptions. In *that* contest, the issue cannot be

doubtful, nor the conflict long; and, deplorable as the victory will be, which is gained over order, as well as over guilt, the blame will rest heaviest upon those whose offences first provoked, what may very probably turn out a sanguinary and an unjustifiable vengeance.

The conclusions, then, which we would draw from the facts that have been relied on by the enemies of reform, are indeed of a very opposite description from theirs; and the course which is pointed out by these new circumstances in our situation, appears to us no less obvious than it is safe and promising. If the people have risen into greater consequence, let them have greater power. If a greater proportion of our population be now capable and desirous of exercising the functions of free citizens, let a greater number be admitted to the exercise of these functions. If the quantity of mind and of will, that must now be represented in our legislature, be prodigiously increased since the frame of that legislature was adjusted, let its basis be widened, so as to rest on all that intellect and will. If there be a new power and energy generated in the nation, for the due application of which there is no contrivance in the original plan of the Constitution, let it flow into those channels through which all similar powers were ordained to act by the principles of that plan. The power itself you can neither repress nor annihilate; and, if it be not assimilated to the system of the Constitution, you seem to be aware that it will ultimately overwhelm and destroy it. To set up against it the power of influence and corruption, is to set up that by which its strength is recruited, and its safe application rendered infinitely more difficult: it is to defend your establishments, by loading them with a weight which of itself makes them totter under its pressure, and, at the same time, affords a safe and inviting approach to the assailant.

In our own case, too, nothing fortunately is easier, than to reduce this growing power of the people within the legitimate bounds and cantonments of the constitution: and nothing more obvious, than that, when so legalized and provided for, it can tend only to the exaltation and improvement of our condition, and must add strength and stability to the throne, as well as to the other branches of the legislature. It seems a strange doctrine to be held by any one in this land, and, above all, by the chief votaries and advocates of royal power, that its legal security consists in its means of corruption, or can be endangered by the utmost freedom and intelligence in the body of the people, and the utmost purity and popularity of our elections. Under an arbitrary government, where the powers of the monarch are confessedly unjust and oppressive, and are claimed, and openly asserted, not as the instruments of public benefit, but as the means of individual gratification, such a jealousy of popular independence is sufficiently intelligible: but, in a government like ours, where all the powers of the Crown are universally acknowledged to exist for the good of the people, it is evidently quite extravagant to fear, that any increase of union and intelligence — any growing love of freedom and justice in the people— should endanger, or should fail to confirm, all those powers and prerogatives.

We have not left ourselves room to enter more at large into this interesting question; but we feel perfectly assured, and ready to maintain, that, as the institution of a limited, hereditary monarchy, must always appear the wisest and most reasonable of all human institutions, and that to which increasing reflection and experience will infallibly attach men more and more as the world advances; so the prerogatives of such a monarch will always be safer and more inviolate, the more the sentiment of liberty, and the love of their political rights, is diffused and encouraged among his people. A legitimate sovereign, in short, who reigns by the fair exercise of his prerogative, can have no enemies among the lovers of regulated freedom; and the hostility of such men— by far the most terrible of all internal hostility — can only be directed towards him, when his throne is enveloped, by treacherous advisers, with the hosts of corruption; and disguised, for their ends, in the borrowed colours of tyranny.

STATE OF PARTIES IN 1810.

(JANUARY, 1810.)

Short Remarks on the State of Parties at the Close of the Year 1809. 8vo. Pp. 30. London: 1809.*

THE parties of which we now wish to speak, are not the parties in the Cabinet, — nor even the parties in Parliament, — but the Parties in the Nation; — that nation, whose opinions and whose spirit ought to admonish and control both Cabinet and Parliament, but which now seems to us to be itself breaking rapidly into two furious and irreconcileable parties; by whose collision, if it be not prevented, our constitution and independence must be ultimately destroyed. We have said before, that the root of all our misfortunes was in the state of the people, and not in the constitution of the legislature; and the more we see and reflect, the more we are satisfied of this truth. It is in vain to cleanse the conduits and reservoirs, if the fountain itself be tainted and impure. If the body of the people be infatuated, or corrupt or depraved, it is vain to talk of improving their representation.

The dangers, and the corruptions, and the prodigies of the times, have very nearly put an end to all neutrality and moderation in politics; and the great body of the nation appears to us to be divided into two violent and most pernicious factions; — the courtiers, who are almost for arbitrary power, — and the democrats, who are almost for revolution and republicanism. Between these stand a small, but most respectable band — the friends of liberty and of order — the Old Constitutional Whigs of England, — with the best talents and the best intentions, but without present power or popularity, — calumniated and suspected by both parties, and looking on both with too visible a resentment, aversion, and alarm. The two great divisions, in the mean time, are daily provoking each other to greater excesses, and recruiting their hostile ranks, as they advance, from the diminishing mass of the calm and the neutral. Every hour the rising tides are eating away the narrow isthmus upon which the adherents of the Constitution now appear to be stationed; and every hour it becomes more necessary for them to oppose some barrier to their encroachments.

If the two extreme parties are once permitted to shock together in open conflict, there is an end to the freedom, and almost to the existence of the nation, — whatever be the result, — although that is not doubtful: and the only human means of preventing a consummation to which things seem so obviously tending, is for the remaining friends of the constitution to unbend from their cold and repulsive neutrality, and to join themselves to the more respectable members of the party to which they have the greatest affinity; and thus, by the weight of their character, and the force of their talents, to temper its violence and moderate its excesses, till it can be guided in safety to the defence, and not to the destruction, of our liberties. In the present crisis, we have no hesitation in saying, that it is to the popular side that the friends of the constitution must turn themselves; and that, if the Whig leaders do not first conciliate, and then restrain the people, — if they do not save them from the leaders they are already choosing in their own body, and become themselves their leaders, by becoming their patrons, and their cordial, though authoritative, advisers; they will in no long time sweep away the Constitution itself, the Monarchy of England, and the Whig aristocracy, by which that Monarchy is controlled and confirmed, and exalted above all other forms of polity.

This is the sum of our doctrine; though we are aware that, to most readers, it will require more development than we can now afford,

* This, I fear, is too much in the style of a sage and solemn rebuke to the madness of contending factions. Yet it is not *all* rhetorical or assuming: and the observations on the vast importance and high and difficult duties of a *middle party*, in all great national contentions, seem to me as universally true, and as applicable to the present position of our affairs, as most of the other things I have ventured, for this reason, now to produce. It may be right to mention, that it was written at a time when the recent failure of that wretched expedition to Walcheren, and certain antipopular declarations in Parliament, had excited a deeper feeling of discontent in the country, and a greater apprehension for its consequences, than had been witnessed since the first great panic and excitement of the French revolution. The spirit of such a time may, perhaps, be detected in some of the following pages.

and be exposed to more objections than we have left ourselves room to answer. To many, we are sensible, our fears will appear altogether chimerical and fantastic. We have always had these two parties, it will be said — always some for carrying things with a high hand against the people — and some for subjecting everything to their nod; but the conflict has hitherto afforded nothing more than a wholesome and invigorating exercise; and the Constitution, so far from being endangered by it, has hitherto been found to flourish, in proportion as it became more animated. Why, then, should we anticipate such tragical effects from its continuance?

Now, to this, and to all such questions, we must answer, that we can conceive them to proceed only from that fatal ignorance or inattention to the signs of the times, which has been the cause of so many of our errors and misfortunes. It is quite true, that there have always been in this country persons who leaned towards arbitrary power, and persons who leaned towards too popular a government. In all mixed governments, there must be such men and such parties: some will admire the monarchical, and some the democratical part of the constitution; and, speaking very generally, the rich, and the timid, and the indolent, as well as the base and the servile, will have a natural tendency to the one side; and the poor, the enthusiastic, and enterprising, as well as the envious and the discontented, will be inclined to range themselves on the other. These things have been always; and always must be. They have been hitherto, too, without mischief or hazard; and might be fairly considered as symptoms at least, if not as causes, of the soundness and vigour of our political organization. But this has been the case, only because the bulk of the nation has hitherto, or till very lately, belonged to no party at all. Factions existed only among a small number of irritable and ambitious individuals; and, for want of partizans, necessarily vented themselves in a few speeches and pamphlets — in an election riot, or a treasury prosecution. The partizans of Mr. Wilkes, and the partizans of Lord Bute, formed but a very inconsiderable part of the population. If they had divided the whole nation among them, the little breaches of the peace and of the law at Westminster, would have been changed into civil war and mutual proscriptions; and the Constitution of the country might have perished in the conflict. In those times, therefore, the advocates of arbitrary power and of popular license were restrained, not merely by the constitutional principles of so many men of weight and authority, but by the absolute neutrality and indifference of the great body of the people. They fought like champions in a ring of impartial spectators; and the multitude who looked on, and thought it sport, had little other interest than to see that each had fair play.

Now, however, the case is lamentably different; and it will not be difficult, we think, to point out the causes which have spread abroad this spirit of contention, and changed so great a proportion of those calm spectators into fierce and impetuous combatants. We have formerly endeavoured, on more than one occasion, to explain the nature of that great and gradual change in the condition of European society, by which the lower and middling orders have been insensibly raised into greater importance than they enjoyed when their place in the political scale was originally settled; and attempted to show in what way the revolution in France, and the revolutionary movements of other countries, might be referred partly to the progress, and partly to the neglect of that great movement. We cannot stop now to resume any part of that general discussion; but shall merely observe, that the events of the last twenty years are of themselves sufficient to account for the state to which this country has been reduced, and for the increased number and increased acrimony of the parties that divide it.

The success of a plebeian insurrection — the splendid situations to which low-bred men have been exalted, in consequence of that success — the comparative weakness and inefficiency of the sovereigns and nobles who opposed it, and the contempt and ridicule which has been thrown by the victors upon their order, have all tended to excite and aggravate the *bad* principles that lead men to despise existing authorities, and to give into wild and extravagant schemes of innovation. On the other hand, the long-continued ill success of our antijacobin councils — the sickening uniformity of our boastings and failures — the gross and

palpable mismanagement of our government — the growing and intolerable burthen of our taxes — and, above all, the imminent and tremendous peril into which the whole nation has been brought, have made a powerful appeal to the *good* principles that lead men into similar feelings; and roused those who were lately unwilling to disturb themselves with political considerations, to cry out in vast numbers for reformation and redress. The number of those who have been startled out of their neutrality by such feelings, very greatly exceeds, we believe, that of those who have been tempted from it by the stirrings of an irregular ambition: but both are alike disposed to look with jealousy upon the advocates of power and prerogative — to suspect falsehood and corruption in everything that is not clearly explained — to resent every appearance of haughtiness or reserve — to listen with eager credulity to every tale of detraction against public characters — and to believe with implicit rashness whatever is said of the advantages of popular control.

Such are the natural and original causes of the increase of that popular discontent which has of late assumed so formidable an aspect, and is, in fact, far more widely spread and more deeply rooted in the nation, than the sanguine and contemptuous will believe. The enumeration, however, would be quite incomplete, if we were not to add, that it has been prodigiously helped by the contempt, and aversion, and defiance which has been so loudly and unwisely expressed by the opposite party. Instead of endeavouring to avoid the occasions of dissatisfaction, and to soothe and conciliate those whom it could never be creditable to have for enemies, it has been but too often the policy of the advocates for strong government to exasperate them by menaces and abuse; — to defend, with insolence, every thing that was attacked, however obviously indefensible; — and to insult and defy their opponents by a needless ostentation of their own present power, and their resolution to use it in support of their most offensive and unjustifiable measures. This unfortunate tone, which was first adopted in the time of Mr. Pitt, has been pretty well maintained by most of his successors; and has done more, we are persuaded, to revolt and alienate the hearts of independent and brave men, than all the errors and inconsistencies of which they have been guilty.

In running thus rapidly over the causes which have raised the pretensions and aggravated the discontents of the People, we have, in fact, stated also the sources of the increased acrimony and pretensions of the advocates for power. The same spectacle of popular excess and popular triumph which excited the dangerous passions of the turbulent and daring, in the way of sympathy, struck a corresponding alarm into the breasts of the timid and prosperous, — and excited a furious antipathy in those of the proud and domineering. As fear and hatred lead equally to severity, and are neither of them very far-sighted in their councils, they naturally attempted to bear down this rising spirit by menaces and abuse. All hot-headed and shallow-headed persons of rank, with their parasites and dependants — and indeed almost all rich persons, of quiet tempers and weak intellects, started up into furious anti-jacobins; and took at once a most violent part in those political contentions, as to which they had, in former times, been confessedly ignorant and indifferent. When this tone was once given, from passion and mistaken principle among the actual possessors of power, it was readily taken up by mere servile venality. The vast multiplication of offices and occupations in the gift of the government, and the enormous patronage and expectancy, of which it has recently become the centre, has drawn a still greater number, and of baser natures, out of the political neutrality in which they would otherwise have remained, and led them to counterfeit, for hire, that unfortunate violence which necessarily produces a corresponding violence in its objects.

Thus has the nation been set on fire at the four corners! and thus has an incredible and most alarming share of its population been separated into two hostile and irritated parties, neither of which can now subdue the other without a civil war; and the triumph of either of which would be equally fatal to the Constitution.

The force and extent of these parties is but imperfectly known, we believe, even to those who have been respectively most active in arraying them; and the extent of the adverse

party is rarely ever suspected by those who are zealously opposed to it. There must be least error, however, in the estimate of the partizans of arbitrary government. They are in power, and show themselves: — but for this very reason, their real force is probably a great deal less than it appears to be. Many wear their livery, out of necessity or convenience, whose hearts are with their adversaries: and many clamour loudly in their cause, who would clamour more loudly against them, the moment they thought that cause was going back in the world. The democratical party, on the other hand, is scattered, and obscurely visible. It can hardly be for the immediate interest of any one to acknowledge it; and scarcely any one is, as yet, proud of its badge or denomination. It lurks, however, in private dwellings, — it gathers strength at homely firesides, — it is confirmed in conferences of friends, — it breaks out in pamphlets and journals of every description, — and shows its head now and then in the more tumultuous assemblies of populous cities. In the metropolis especially, where the concentration of numbers gives them confidence and importance, it exhibits itself very nearly, though not altogether, in its actual force. How that force now stands in comparison with what is opposed to it, it would not perhaps be very easy to calculate. Taking the whole nation over head, we should conjecture that, as things now are, they would be pretty equally balanced; but if any great calamity should give a shock to the stability of government, or call imperiously for more vigorous councils, we are convinced that the partisans of popular government would be found to outnumber their opponents in the proportion of three to two. When the one party, indeed, had failed so fatally, it must seem to be a natural resource to make a trial of the other; and, if civil war or foreign conquest should really fall on us, it would be a movement almost of instinctive wisdom to displace and to punish those under whose direction they had been brought on. Upon any such serious alarm, too, all the venal and unprincipled adherents of the prerogative would inevitably desert their colours, and go over to the enemy — while the Throne would be left to be defended only by its regular forces and its immediate dependents, — reinforced by a few bands of devoted Tories, mingled with some generous, but downcast spirits, under the banner of the Whig aristocracy.

But, without pretending to settle the numerical or relative force of the two opposing parties, we wish only to press it upon our readers, that they are both so strong and so numerous, as to render it quite impossible that the one should now crush or overcome the other, without a ruinous contention; and that they are so exasperated, and so sanguine and presumptuous, that they will push forward to such a contention in no long time, unless they be separated or appeased by some powerful interference. That the number of the democrats is vast, and is daily increasing with a visible and dangerous rapidity, any man may satisfy himself, by the common and obvious means of information. It is a fact which he may read legibly in the prodigious sale, and still more prodigious circulation, of Cobbett's Register, and other weekly papers of the same general description: he may learn it in every street of all the manufacturing and populous towns in the heart of the country; and may, and must hear it most audibly, in the public and private talk of the citizens of the metropolis. All these afford direct and palpable proofs of the actual increase of this formidable party. But no man who understands any thing of human nature, or knows any thing of our recent history, can need direct evidence to convince him, that it must have experienced a prodigious increase. In a country where more than a million of men take some interest in politics, and are daily accustomed (right or wrong) to refer the blessings or the evils of their condition to the conduct of their rulers, is it possible to conceive, that a third part at least of every man's income should be taken from him in the shape of taxes, — and that, after twenty years of boastful hostility, we should be left without a single ally, and in imminent hazard of being invaded by a revolutionary foe, without producing a very general feeling of disaffection and discontent, and spreading through the body of the nation, not only a great disposition to despise and distrust their governors, but to judge unfavourably of the form of government itself which could admit of such gross ignorance or imposition?

The great increase of the opposite party, again, is but too visible, we are sorry to say, in the votes of Parliament, in *the existence* of the present administration, and in the sale and the tenor of the treasury journals. But, independent of such proof, this too might have been safely inferred from the known circumstances of the times. In a nation abounding with wealth and loyalty, enamoured of its old institutions, and originally indebted for its freedom, in a great degree, to the spirit of its landed aristocracy, it was impossible that the excesses of a plebeian insurrection should not have excited a great aversion to every thing that had a similar tendency: and in any nation, alas! that had recently multiplied its taxes, and increased the patronage of its government to three times their original extent, it could not but happen, that multitudes would be found to barter their independence for their interest; and to exchange the language of free men for that which was most agreeable to the party upon whose favour they depended.

If the numbers of the opposed factions, however, be formidable to the peace of the country, the acrimony of their mutual hostility is still more alarming. If the whole nation were divided into the followers of Mr. Cobbett and Sir Francis Burdett, and the followers of Mr. John Gifford and Mr. John Bowles, does not every man see that a civil war and a revolution would be inevitable? Now, we say, that the factions into which the country *is* divided, are not very different from the followers of Mr. Cobbett and Mr. Gifford; or, at all events, that if they are allowed to defy and provoke each other into new extravagance and increased hostility, as they have been doing lately, we do not see how that most tremendous of all calamities is to be avoided. If those who have influence with the people go on a little longer to excite in them a contempt and distrust of all public characters, and of all institutions of authority, while many among our public men go on to justify, by their conduct, that contempt and distrust; — if the people are taught by all who now take the trouble to win their confidence, that Parliament is a mere assemblage of unprincipled place-hunters, and that *ins* and *outs* are equally determined to defend corruption and peculation; and if Parliament continues to busy itself with personalities, — to decline the investigation of corruptions, — and to approve, by its votes, what no sane man in the kingdom can consider as admitting of apology; — if those to whom their natural leaders have given up the guidance of the people, shall continue to tell them that they may easily be relieved of half their taxes, and placed in a situation of triumphant security, while the government continues to multiply its impositions, and to waste their blood and treasure in expeditions which make us hateful and ridiculous in the eyes of many of our neighbours, while they bring the danger nearer to our own door; — if, finally, the people are a little more persuaded, that, without a radical change in the constitution of the Legislature, they must continue in the condition of slaves to a junto of boroughmongers, while Parliament rejects with disdain every proposal to correct the most palpable defects of that constitution; — then we say that the wholesome days of England are numbered, — that she is gliding to the verge of the most dreadful of all calamities, — and that all the freedom and happiness which we undoubtedly still enjoy, and all the morality and intelligence, and the long habits of sober thinking and kindly affection which adorn and exalt our people, will not long protect us from the horrors of a civil war.

In such an unhallowed conflict it is scarcely necessary to say, that the triumph of either party would be the ruin of English liberty, and of her peace, happiness, and prosperity. Those who have merely lived in our times, must have seen, and they who have read of other times, or reflected on what Man is at all times, must know, independent of that lesson, how much *Chance*, and how much *Time*, must concur with genius and patriotism, to form a good or a stable government. We have the frame and the materials of such a government in the Constitution of England; but if we rend asunder that frame, and scatter these materials — if we "put out the light" of our living polity,

> "We know not where is that Promethean fire
> That may its flame relumine."

The stability of the English Constitution depends upon its monarchy and aristocracy; and their stability, again, depends very much

on the circumstance of their having grown naturally out of the frame and inward structure of our society — upon their having struck their roots deep through every stratum of the political soil, and having been moulded and impressed, during a long course of ages, by the usages, institutions, habits, and affections of the community. A popular revolution would overthrow the monarchy and the aristocracy; and, even if it were not true that revolution propagates revolution, as waves give rise to waves, till the agitation is stopped by the iron boundary of despotism, it would still require ages of anxious discomfort before we could build up again that magnificent fabric, which now requires purification rather than repair; or secure that permanency to our new establishments, without which they could have no other good quality.

Such we humbly conceive to be the course, and the causes, of the evils which we believe to be impending. It is time now to inquire whether there be no remedy. If the whole nation were actually divided into revolutionists and high-monarchy men, we do not see how they could be prevented from fighting, and giving us the miserable choice of a despotism or a tumultuary democracy. Fortunately, however, this is not the case. There is a third party in the nation — small, indeed, in point of numbers, compared with either of the others — and, for this very reason, low, we fear, in present popularity — but essentially powerful from talents and reputation, and calculated to become both popular and authoritative, by the fairness and the firmness of its principles. This is composed of the Whig Royalists of England, — men who, without forgetting that all government is from the people, and for the people, are satisfied that the rights and liberties of the people are best maintained by a regulated hereditary monarchy, and a large, open aristocracy; and who are as much averse, therefore, from every attempt to undermine the throne, or to discredit the nobles, as they are indignant at every project to insult or enslave the people. In the better days of the Constitution, this party formed almost the whole ordinary opposition, and bore no inconsiderable proportion to that of the courtiers. It might be said too, to have with it, not only the greater part of those who were jealous of the prerogative, but all that great mass of the population which was apparently neutral and indifferent to the issue of the contest. The new-sprung factions, however, have swallowed up almost all this disposable body; and have drawn largely from the ranks of the old constitutionalists themselves. In consequence of this change of circumstances, they can no longer act with effect, as a separate party; and are far too weak to make head, at the same time, against the overbearing influence of the Crown, and the rising pretensions of the people. It is necessary, therefore, that they should now leave this attitude of stern and defying mediation; and if they would escape being crushed along with the Constitution on the collision of the two hostile bodies, they must identify themselves cordially with the better part of one of them, and thus soothe, ennoble, and control it, by the infusion of their own spirit, and the authority of their own wisdom and experience. Like faithful generals, whose troops have mutinied, they must join the march, and mix with the ranks of the offenders, that they may be enabled to reclaim and repress them, and save both them and themselves from a sure and shameful destruction. They have no longer strength to overawe or repel either party by a direct and forcible attack; and must work, therefore, by gentle and conciliatory means, upon that which is most dangerous, most flexible, and most capable of being guided to noble exertions. Like the Sabine women of old, they must throw themselves between the kindred combatants; and stay the fatal feud, by praises and embraces, and dissuasives of kindness and flattery.

Even those who do not much love or care for the people, are now called upon to pacify them, by granting, at least, all that can reasonably be granted; and not only to redress their grievances, but to comply with their desires; in so far as they can be complied with, with less hazard than must evidently arise from disregarding them.

We do not say, therefore, that a thorough reconciliation between the Whig royalists and the great body of the people is desirable merely — but that it is indispensable: since it is a dream — a gross solecism and absurdity, to suppose, that such a party should exist, unless supported by the affections and appro-

bation of the people. The advocates of prerogative have the support of prerogative; and they who rule by corruption and the direct agency of wealth, have wealth and the means of corruption in their hands: — but the friends of national freedom must be recognized by the nation. If the Whigs are not supported by the people, they can have no support; and, therefore, if the people are seduced away from them, they must just go after them and bring them back: and are no more to be excused for leaving them to be corrupted by demagogues, than they would be for leaving them to be oppressed by tyrants. If a party is to exist at all, therefore, friendly at once to the liberties of the people and the integrity of the monarchy, and holding that liberty is best secured by a monarchical establishment, it is absolutely necessary that it should possess the confidence and attachment of the people; and if it appear at any time to have lost it, the first of all its duties, and the necessary prelude to the discharge of all the rest, is to regain it, by every effort consistent with probity and honour.

Now, it may be true, that the present alienation of the body of the people from the old constitutional champions of their freedom, originated in the excesses and delusion of the people themselves; but it is not less true, that the Whig royalists have increased that alienation by the haughtiness of their deportment —by the marked displeasure with which they have disavowed most of the popular proceedings—and the tone of needless and imprudent distrust and reprobation with which they have treated pretensions that were *only partly* inadmissible. They have given too much way to the offence which they naturally received from the rudeness and irreverence of the terms in which their grievances were frequently stated; and have felt too proud an indignation when they saw vulgar and turbulent men presume to lay their unpurged hands upon the sacred ark of the Constitution. They have disdained too much to be associated with coarse coadjutors, even in the good work of resistance and reformation; and have hated too virulently the demagogues who have inflamed the people, and despised too heartily the people who have yielded to so gross a delusion. All this feeling, however, though it may be natural, is undoubtedly both misplaced and imprudent. The people are, upon the whole, both more moral and more intelligent than they ever were in any former period; and therefore, if they are discontented, we may be sure they have cause for discontent: if they have been deluded, we may be satisfied that there is a mixture of reason in the sophistry by which they have been perverted. All their demands may not be reasonable: and with many, which may be just in principle, it may, as yet, be impracticable to comply. But all are not in either of these predicaments; though we can only now afford to make particular mention of one; and one, we are concerned to say, on which, though of the greatest possible importance, the people have of late found but few abettors among the old friends of the Constitution, we mean that of a reform in the representation. Upon this point, we have spoken largely on former occasions; and have only to add that, though we can neither approve of *such* a reform as some very popular persons have suggested, nor bring ourselves to believe that any reform would accomplish all the objects that have been held out by its most zealous advocates, we have always been of opinion that a large and liberal reform should be granted. The reasons of policy which have led us to this conviction, we have stated on former occasions. But the chief and the leading reasons for supporting the proposal at present is, that the people are zealous for its adoption; and are entitled to this gratification at the hands of their representatives. We laugh at the idea of there being any danger in disfranchising the whole mass of rotten and decayed boroughs, or communicating the elective franchise to a great number of respectable citizens: and as to the supposed danger of the mere example of yielding to the desires of the people, we can only say, that we are far more strongly impressed with the danger of thwarting them. The people have far more wealth and far more intelligence now, than they had in former times; and therefore they ought to have, and *they must have*, more political power. The danger is not in yielding to this swell, but in endeavouring to resist it. If properly watched and managed, it will only bear the vessel of the state more proudly and steadily along;—if neglected, or rashly op-

posed, it will dash her on the rocks and shoals of a sanguinary revolution.

We, in short, are for the monarchy and the aristocracy of England, as the only sure supports of a permanent and regulated freedom: but we do not see how either is now to be preserved, except by surrounding them with the affection of the people. The admirers of arbitrary power, blind to the great lesson which all Europe is now holding out to them, have attempted to dispense with this protection; and the demagogues have taken advantage of their folly to excite the people to withdraw it altogether. The true friends of the Constitution must now bring it back; and must reconcile the people to the old monarchy and the old Parliament of their land, by restraining the prerogative within its legitimate bounds, and bringing back Parliament to its natural habits of sympathy and concord with its constituents. The people, therefore, though it may be deluded, must be reclaimed by gentleness, and treated with respect and indulgence. All indications, and all feelings of jealousy or contempt, must be abjured. Whatever is to be granted, should be granted with cordial alacrity; and all denials should be softened with words and with acts of kindness. The wounds that are curable, should be cured; those that have festered more deeply should be cleansed and anointed; and, into such as it may be impossible to close, the patient should be allowed to pour any innocent balsam, in the virtues of which he believes. The irritable state of the body politic will admit of no other treatment.—Incisions and cauteries would infallibly bring on convulsions and insanity.

We had much more to say; but we must close here: nor indeed could warning avail those who are not aware already. He must have gazed with idle eyes on the recent course of events, both at home and abroad, who does not see that no government can now subsist long in England, that is not bottomed in the affection of the great body of the people; and who does not see, still more clearly, that the party of the people is every day gaining strength, from the want of judgment and of feeling in those who have defied and insulted it, and from the coldness and alienation of those who used to be their patrons and defenders. If something is not done to conciliate, these heartburnings must break out into deadly strife; and impartial history will assign to each of the parties their share of the great guilt that will be incurred. The first and the greatest outrages will probably proceed from the people themselves; but a deeper curse will fall on the corrupt and supercilious government that provoked them: nor will *they* be held blameless, who, when they might have repressed or moderated the popular impulse, by attempting to direct it, chose rather to take counsel of their pride, and to stand by, and see the Constitution torn to pieces, because they could not approve entirely of either of the combatants!

IRELAND.

(October, 1827.)

The History of Ireland. By John O'Driscol. In two vols. 8vo. Pp. 815. London: 1827.*

A good History of Ireland is still a *desideratum* in our literature;—and would not only be interesting, we think, but invaluable. There are accessible materials in abundance for such a history; and the task of arranging them really seems no less inviting than important. It abounds with striking events, and with strange

* It may be thought that this should rather have been brought in under the title of History: but the truth is, that I have now omitted all that is properly historical, and retain only what relates to the necessity of maintaining the legislative and incorporating union of the two countries; a topic that is purely political; and falls, I think, correctly enough under the title of General Politics, since it is at this day of still more absorbing interest than when these observations were first published in 1827. If at that time I thought a separation, or a dissolution of the union, (for they are the same thing,) a measure not to be contemplated but with horror, it may be supposed that I should not look more charitably on the proposition, now that Catholic emancipation and Parliamentary reform have taken away some, at least, of the motives or apologies of those by whom it was then maintained. The example of Scotland, I still think, is well put for the argument: and among the many who must now consider this question, it may be gratifying to some to see upon what grounds, and how decidedly, an opinion was then formed upon it, by one certainly not too much disposed to think favourably of the conduct or the pretensions of England.

revolutions and turns of fortune—brought on, sometimes by the agency of enterprising men,—but more frequently by the silent progress of time, unwatched and unsuspected, alike by those who were to suffer, and those who were to gain by the result. In this respect, as well as in many others, it is as full of instruction as of interest,—and to the people of this country especially, and of this age, it holds out lessons far more precious, far more forcible, and far more immediately applicable, than all that is elsewhere recorded in the annals of mankind. It is the very greatness of this interest, however, and the dread, and the encouragement of these applications, that have hitherto defaced and even falsified the record—that have made impartiality almost hopeless, and led alternately to the suppression and the exaggeration of sufferings and atrocities too monstrous, it might appear, in themselves, to be either exaggerated or disguised. Party rancour and religious animosity have hitherto contrived to convert what should have been their antidote into their aliment,—and, by the simple expedient of giving only *one* side of the picture, have pretty generally succeeded in making the history of past enormities, not a warning against, but an incitement to, their repetition. In telling the story of those lamentable dissensions, each party has enhanced the guilt of the adversary, and withheld all notice of their own;—and seems to have had it far more at heart to irritate and defy each other, than to leave even a partial memorial of the truth. That truth is, no doubt, for the most part, at once revolting and pitiable;—not easily at first to be credited, and to the last difficult to be told with calmness. Yet it is thus only that it can be told with advantage—and so told, it is pregnant with admonitions and suggestions, as precious in their tenor, as irresistible in their evidence, when once fairly received.

Unquestionably, in the main, England has been the oppressor, and Ireland the victim;—not always a guiltless victim,—and it may be, often an offender: but even when the guilt may have been nearly balanced, the weight of suffering has always fallen on the weakest. This comparative weakness, indeed, was the first cause of Ireland's misery—the second, her long separation. She had been too long a weak neighbour, to be easily admitted to the rights of an equal ally. Pretensions which the growing strength and intelligence of the one country began to feel intolerable, were sanctioned in the eyes of the other by long usage and prescription;—and injustice, which never could have been first inflicted when it was first complained of, was yet long persisted in, because it had been long submitted to with but little complaint. No misgovernment is ever so bad as provincial misgovernment—and no provincial misgovernment, it would seem, as that which is exercised by a free people,—whether arising from a jealous reluctance to extend that proud distinction to a race of inferiors, or from that inherent love of absolute power, which gives all rulers a tendency to be despotic, and seeks, when restrained at home, for vent and indemnification abroad.

The actual outline of the story is as clear as it is painful. Its most remarkable and most disgusting feature is, that while Religion has been made the pretext of its most sanguinary and atrocious contentions, it has been, from first to last, little else than a cover for the basest cupidity, and the meanest and most unprincipled ambition. The history which concerns the present times, need not be traced farther back than to the days of Henry VIII. and Queen Mary. Up to that period, the petty and tyrannical Parliaments of the Pale had, indeed, pretty uniformly insulted and despised the great native chiefs among whom the bulk of the island was divided — but they had also feared them, and mostly let them alone. At that era, however, the growing strength and population of England inspired it with a bolder ambition; and the rage of proselytism which followed the Reformation, gave it both occasion and excuse. The passions, which led naturally enough to hostilities in such circumstances, were industriously fostered by the cold-blooded selfishness of those who were to profit by the result. Insurrections were now regularly followed by forfeitures; and there were by this time men and enterprise enough in England to meditate the occupancy of the vast domains from which the rebel chieftains were thus first to be driven. From this period, accordingly, to that of the Restoration, the bloodiest and most atrocious in her unhappy annals, the history of Ireland may be sum-

marily described as that of a series of sanguinary wars, fomented for purposes of Confiscation. After the Restoration, and down till the Revolution, this was succeeded by a contest equally unprincipled and mercenary, between the settlers under Cromwell and the old or middle occupants whom they had displaced. By the final success of King William, a strong military government was once more imposed on this unhappy land; under which, its spirit seemed at last to be broken, and even its turbulent activity repressed. As it slowly revived, the Protestant antipathies of the English government seem to have been reinforced, or replaced, by a more extended and still more unworthy National Jealousy — first on the subject of trade, and then on that of political rights: — and since a more enlightened view of her own interests, aided by the arms of the volunteers of 1780, have put down those causes of oppression, — the system of misgovernment has been maintained, for little other end, that we can discern, but to keep a small junto of arrogant individuals in power, and to preserve the supremacy of a faction, long after the actual cessation of the causes that lifted them into authority.

This is "the abstract and brief chronicle" of the political or external history of the sister island. But it has been complicated of late, and all its symptoms aggravated by the singularity of its economical relations. The marvellous multiplication of its people, and the growing difficulty of supplying them with food or employment, presenting, at the present moment, a new and most urgent cause of dissatisfaction and alarm. For this last class of evils, a mere change in the policy of the government would indeed furnish no effectual remedy: and to find one in any degree available, might well task the ingenuity of the most enlightened and beneficent. But for the greater part of her past sufferings, as well as her actual degradation, disunion, and most dangerous discontent, it is impossible to deny that the successive Governments of England have been chiefly responsible. Without pretending to enumerate, or even to class, the several charges which might be brought against them, or to determine what weight should be allowed to the temptations or provocations by which they might be palliated, we think it easier and far more important to remark, that the only secure preventive would have been an early, an equal, and complete incorporating union of the two countries: — and that the only effective cure for the misery occasioned by its having been so long delayed, is to labour, heartily and in earnest, still to render it equal and complete. It is in vain to hope that a provincial government should not be oppressive — that a delegated power should not be abused — that of two separate countries, allied only, but not incorporated, the weaker should not be degraded, and the stronger unjust. The only remedy is to identify and amalgamate them throughout — to mix up the oppressors and the oppressed — to take away all privileges and distinctions, by fully communicating them, — and to render abuses impossible, by confounding their victims with their authors.

If any one doubts of the wretchedness of an unequal and unincorporating alliance, of the degradation of being subject to a provincial parliament and a distant king, and of the efficacy of a substantial union in curing all these evils, he is invited to look to the obvious example of Scotland. While the crowns only were united, and the governments continued separate, the weaker country was the scene of the most atrocious cruelties, the most violent injustice, the most degrading oppressions. The prevailing religion of the people was proscribed and persecuted with a ferocity greater than has ever been systematically exercised, even in Ireland; her industry was crippled and depressed by unjust and intolerable restrictions; her parliaments corrupted and overawed into the degraded instruments of a distant court, and her nobility and gentry, cut off from all hope of distinction by vindicating the rights or promoting the interests of their country at home, were led to look up to the favour of her oppressors as the only remaining avenue to power, and degenerated, for the most part, into a band of mercenary adventurers; — the more considerable aspiring to the wretched honour of executing the tyrannical orders which were dictated from the South, and the rest acquiring gradually those habits of subserviency and selfish submission, the traces of which are by some supposed to be yet discernible in their descendants. The Revolution, which rested almost entirely on the prevailing

antipathy to Popery, required, of course, the co-operation of all classes of Protestants; and, by its success, the Scottish Presbyterians were relieved, for a time, from their Episcopalian persecutions. But it was not till after the Union that the nation was truly emancipated; or lifted up from the abject condition of a dependant, at once suspected and despised. The effects of that happy consolidation were not indeed *immediately* apparent; for the vices which had been generated by a century of provincial misgovernment, the meanness that had become habitual, the animosities that had so long been fostered, could not be cured at once, by the mere removal of their cause. The generation they had degraded, must first be allowed to die out — and more, perhaps, than one generation; but the poison tree was cut down — the fountain of bitter waters was sealed up, and symptoms of returning vigour and happiness were perceived. Vestiges may still be traced, perhaps, of our long degradation; but for, at least, forty years back, the provinces of Scotland have been, on the whole, but the Northern provinces of Great Britain. There are no local oppressions, no national animosities. Life, and liberty, and property are as secure in Caithness as they are in Middlesex — industry as much encouraged, and wealth still more rapidly progressive; while not only different religious opinions, but different religious establishments, subsist in the two ends of the same island in unbroken harmony, and only excite each other, by a friendly emulation, to greater purity of life and greater zeal for Christianity.

If this happy Union, however, had been delayed for another century — if Scotland had been doomed to submit for a hundred years more to the provincial tyranny of the Lauderdales, Rotheses, and Middletons, and to meet the cruel persecutions which gratified the ferocity of her Dalzells and Drummonds, and tarnished the glories of such men as Montrose and Dundee, with her armed conventicles and covenanted saints militant — to see her patriots exiled, or bleeding on the scaffold — her only trusted teachers silenced in her churches and schools, and her Courts of Justice degraded or overawed into the instruments of a cowardly oppression, can any man doubt, not only that she would have presented, at this day, a scene of even greater misery and discord than Ireland did in 1800; but that the corruptions and animosities by which she had been desolated would have been found to have struck so deep root as still to encumber the land, long after their seed had ceased to be scattered abroad on its surface, and only to hold out the hope of their eradication, after many years of patient and painful exertion?

Such, however, is truly the condition of Ireland, and such are the grounds, and such the aspect of our hopes for *her* regeneration. So far from tracing any substantive part of her miseries to the Union of 1800, we think they are to be ascribed mainly to its long delay, and its ultimate incompleteness. It is not by a dissolution of the Union with England, then, that any good can be done, but by its improvement and consolidation. Some injury it may have produced to the shopkeepers of Dublin, and some inconsiderable increase in the number of the absentees. But it has shut up the main fountain of corruption and dishonour; and palsied the arm and broken the heart of local insolence and oppression. It has substituted, at least potentially and in prospect, the wisdom and honour of the British Government and the British people, to the passions and sordid interests of a junto of Irish boroughmongers, — and not only enabled, but compelled, all parties to appeal directly to the great tribunal of the British public. While the countries remained apart, the actual depositaries of power were almost unavoidably relied on by the general government for information, and employed as the delegates of its authority — and, as unavoidably, abused the trust, and misled and imposed on their employers. Having come into power at the time when the Catholic party, by its support of the House of Stuart, had excited against it all the fears and antipathies of the friends of liberty, they felt that they could only maintain themselves in possession of it, by keeping up that distrust and animosity, after its causes had expired. They contrived, therefore, by false representations and unjust laws, to foster those prejudices, which would otherwise have gradually disappeared — and, unluckily, succeeded but too well. As their own comparative numbers and natural consequence diminished, they clung still closer to their artificial holds

on authority; and, exasperated by feeling their dignity menaced, and their monopolies endangered by the growing wealth, population, and intelligence of the country at large, they redoubled their efforts, by clamour and activity, intimidation and deceit, to preserve the unnatural advantages they had accidentally gained, and to keep down that springtide of general reason and substantial power which they felt rising and swelling all around them.

Their pretence was, that they were the champions of the *Protestant Ascendancy*—and that whenever that was endangered, there was an end of the *English connexion.* While the alliance of the two countries was indeed no more than a *connexion*, there might be some truth in the assertion—or at least it was easy for an Irish Parliament to make it appear to be true. But the moment they came to be *incorporated*, its falsehood and absurdity should at once have become apparent. Unluckily, however, the incorporation was not so complete, or the union so entire, as it should have been. There still was need, or was thought to be need, of a provincial management, a domestic government of Ireland;—and the old wretched parliamentary machinery, though broken up and disabled for its original work, naturally supplied the materials for its construction. The men still survived who had long been the exclusive channels of communication with the supreme authority; and though other and wider channels were now opened, the habit of employing the former, aided by the eagerness with which they sought for continued employment, left with them an undue share of its support. Still more unluckily, the ancient practice of misgovernment had left its usual traces on the character, not only of its authors, but its victims. Habitual oppression had produced habitual disaffection; and a long course of wrong and contumely, had ended in a desperate indignation, and an eager thirst for revenge.

The natural and necessary consequences of the Union did not, therefore, immediately follow its enactment—and are likely indeed to be longer obstructed, and run greater hazard of being fatally intercepted, than in the case of Scotland. Not only is the mutual exasperation greater, and the wounds more deeply rankled, but the Union itself is more incomplete, and leaves greater room for complaints of inequality and unfairness. The numerical strength, too, of the Irish people is far greater, and their causes of discontent more uniform, than they ever were in Scotland; and, above all, the temper of the race is infinitely more eager, sanguine, and reckless of consequences, than that of the sober and calculating tribes of the north. The greatest and most urgent hazard, therefore, is that which arises from their impatience;—and this unhappily is such, that unless some early measure of conciliation is adopted, it would no longer be matter of surprise to any one, if, upon the first occasion of a war with any of the great powers of Europe, *or America*, the great body of the nation should rise in final and implacable hostility, and endeavour to throw off all connexion with, or dependence on Great Britain, and to erect itself into an independent state!

To us it certainly appears that this would be a most desperate, wild, and impracticable enterprise. But it is *not* upon this account the less likely to be attempted by such a nation as the Irish;—and it cannot be dissembled that the mere attempt would almost unavoidably plunge both countries in the most frightful and interminable ruin. Though the separation even of distant and mature dependencies is almost always attended with terrible convulsions, separation, in such circumstances, is unquestionably an ultimate good;—and if Ireland were a mere dependency, and were distant enough and strong enough to subsist and flourish as an independent community, we might console ourselves, even for the infinite misery of the struggle attending on the separation, by the prospect of the great increase of happiness that might be the final result. But it is impossible, we think, for any one but an exasperated and unthinking Irishman, not to see and feel that this neither is, nor ever can be, the condition of Ireland. Peopled by the same race, speaking the same language, associated in the same pursuits, bound together and amalgamated by continual intermarriages, joint adventures in trade, and every sort of social relation, and, above all, lying within sight and reach of each other's shores, they are in truth as intimately and inseparably connected as most of the internal

provinces of each are with one another; and we might as well expect to see two independent kingdoms established in friendly neighbourhood, in Yorkshire and Lancashire, as to witness a similar spectacle on the two sides of the Irish Channel. Two such countries, if of equal strength, and exasperated by previous contentions, never could maintain the relations of peace and amity with each other, as separate and independent states;—but *must* either mingle into one—or desolate each other in fierce and exterminating hostility, till one sinks in total exhaustion at the feet of the bleeding and exhausted victor. In the actual circumstances of the two countries, however, the attempt would be attended with still more deplorable consequences. Ireland, with whom alone it can originate, is decidedly the weakest, in wealth, population, and all effective resources—and probably never will venture on the experiment *without foreign assistance*. But it must be at once apparent how the introduction of this unhallowed element darkens all the horrors of the prospect. We are far from making light of the advantages it might give in the outset. By the help of a French army and an American fleet, we think it by no means improbable that the separation might be accomplished. The English armies might be defeated or driven from its shores—English capitalists might be slaughtered—the English religion extirpated—and an Irish Catholic republic installed with due ceremony in Dublin, and adopted with acclamation in most of the provinces of the land. Under the protection of their foreign deliverers this state of triumph might even be for some time maintained. But how long would this last? or how can it be imagined that it would end? Would the foreign allies remain for ever, on their own charges, and without interfering with the independence or the policy of the new state which they had thus been the means of creating? If they did, it would, after all, be but *a vassal republic*—a dependency on a more distant and still more imperious master—an outlying province of France—a military station from which to watch and to harass England, and on which the first burst of her hostilities must always be broken—and exposed, of course, in the mean time, to all the licence, the insolence, the rigour, of a military occupancy by a foreign and alien soldiery.

But this, it is plain, could never be more than a temporary measure. The defenders and keepers of the Hibernian republic would, in no long time, make peace with England, and quarrel, both with their new subjects and with each other—and then would come the renovated, the embittered, the unequal struggle with that exasperated power. Weakened as England might be by the separation, it would be absurd to suppose that she would not still be a tremendous overmatch for Ireland, single-handed;—or that this new state, wasted and exhausted by the war of her independence, could supply the means of making and equipping a fleet, or appointing an army, such as would be required to make head agianst this formidable antagonist. Though the numerical majority of her people, too, might be zealous for maintaining her independence, it is obvious that England would still have in her bosom a body of most formidable allies. The most intelligent, the most wealthy, the most politic and sagacious of her inhabitants, are at this moment in the English interest;—and, however sweeping and bloody the proscription by which they might have been overthrown, multitudes would still remain, with means and influence sufficient to render their co-operation most perilous, in a contest for its restoration. Even if left to her own resources, we have little doubt that the country would soon be a prey to civil wars, plots, and insurrections, which the want of skill and experience in the new rulers, as well as the state of their finances, would aggravate into universal disorder. It is no easy thing to settle a new government amicably, even where there is no foreign interference:—and, in Ireland, from the temper of the people, and the circumstances which would leave less than an ordinary proportion of men of rank, education, and personal authority in the bands of the successful party, the difficulty would probably be insurmountable. It is impossible, however, not to suppose that England would eagerly avail herself of those dissensions, both by intrigue, corruption, and force; and equally impossible to doubt that she would succeed, if not in regaining her supremacy, at least in embroiling the unhappy country which was the subject

of it, in the most miserable and interminable disorders.

The sum of the matter then is, that there could be no peace, and consequently no prosperity or happiness, for Ireland, as a separate and independent neighbour to England. Two such countries, after all that has passed between them, could no more live in quiet and comfort beside each other, than a wife who had deserted her husband's house could live again in his society and that of his family, as a friend or visitor—having her expenses supplied, and her solitude enlivened, by the frequent visits of professing admirers: nor can any lesson of prudence be addressed to the fiery and impatient spirits who may now meditate in Ireland the casting off of their ties with the sister island, more precisely applicable to their prospects and condition, than the warnings which a friendly adviser would address to an exasperated matron, whose domestic grievances had led her to contemplate such a fatal step. And can any one doubt that the counsel which any faithful and even partial friend would give her, must be, to bear much from her husband, rather than venture on so desperate a remedy; to turn her thoughts rather to conciliation than recrimination or revenge; to avoid as much as possible all causes of reasonable or unreasonable offence—and, above all, firmly and temperately to assert the interests secured by the provisions of her marriage articles, and to stimulate and insist on the resolute interference of the trustees appointed to enforce them.

Such are the warnings which we would address to the offended and exasperated party, in whose vindictive and rash proceedings the catastrophe we have been contemplating must originate. But, though we certainly think they must appear convincing to any calm spectator, it is not the less probable that they would be of little avail with the inflamed and excited party, unless they were seconded by conciliatory and gentle measures on the part of the supposed offender. Nor are there wanting motives sufficiently urgent and imperious to make such measures, in all sound reason, indispensable. In the event of a war for independence, Ireland would probably be the scene of the greatest carnage, havoc, and devastation—and, in the end, we think, her lot would be by far the most deplorable. But to England also, it is obvious that such a contest would be the source of unspeakable calamity; and the signal, indeed, of her permanent weakness, insecurity, and degradation. That she is bound, therefore, for her own sake to avert it, by every possible precaution and every possible sacrifice, no one will be hardy enough to deny—far less that she is bound, in the first instance, to diminish the tremendous hazard, *by simply "doing Justice and showing Mercy"* to those whom it is, in all other respects, her interest, as well as her duty, to cherish and protect.

One thing we take to be evident, and it is the substance of all that can be said on the subject, that things are fast verging to a crisis, and cannot, in all probability, remain long as they are. The Union, in short, must either be made *equal* and *complete* on the part of England—or it will be broken in pieces and thrown in her face by Ireland. That country must either be delivered from the domination of an Orange faction, or we must expect, in spite of all our warnings and remonstrances, to see her seek her own deliverance by the fatal and bloody career to which we have already alluded—and from which we hold it to be the height of guilt and of folly to hesitate about withholding her, by the sacrifice of that miserable faction.

Little, however, as we rely, without such co-operation, on the effect of our warnings, we cannot end without again lifting our feeble voice to repeat them—without conjuring the lovers of Ireland to consider how hopeless and how wretched any scheme of a permanent separation from England must necessarily be, and how certainly their condition must be ameliorated by the course of events, the gradual extinction of the generation in whom the last life-use of antiquated oppressions is now centered, and the spread of those mild and liberal sentiments, to which nothing can so much contribute as a spirit of moderation and patience in those who have so long suffered from the want of them. By the Union, such as it is, we think the axe has been laid to the root of the old system of oppression and misgovernment in Ireland—and though its branches may still look green, and still afford shelter to the unclean birds who were bred

and have so long nestled in their covert, the sap ascends in them no longer, and the whole will soon cease to cumber the ground, or obstruct the sight of the sky. In these circumstances, the only wise and safe course is to watch, and gently to assist the progress of their natural decay. If, in some fit of impatience, the brands are thrown into the mouldering mass, and an attempt made to subject the land at once to the fatal purgation of fire, the risk is, not only that the authors will perish in the conflagration, but that another and a ranker crop of abominations will spring from its ashes, to poison the dwellings of many future generations.

We may seem to have forgotten Mr. O'Driscol in these general observations; and yet they are not so foreign to his merits, as they may at first sight appear. His book certainly does not supply the *desideratum* of which we spoke at the outset, and will not pass to posterity as a complete or satisfactory History of Ireland. But it is written at least in a good spirit; and we do not know that we could better describe its general scope and tendency, than by saying, that they coincide almost entirely with the sentiments we have just been expressing. The author, we have recently understood, is a Catholic: but we had really read through his work without discovering it, — and can testify that he not only gives that party their full share of blame in all the transactions which deserve it, but speaks of the besetting sins of their system, with a freedom and severity which no Protestant, not absolutely Orange, could easily improve on. We needed no extrinsical lights, indeed, to discover that he was an Irishman, — for, independent of the pretty distinct intimation conveyed in his name, we speedily discovered a spirit of nationality about him, that could leave no doubt on the subject. It is the only kind of partiality, however, which we can detect in his performance; and it really detracts less from his credit than might be imagined — partly because it is so little disguised as to lead to no misconceptions, and chiefly because it is mostly confined to those parts of the story in which it can do little harm. It breaks out most conspicuously in the earlier and most problematical portion of the narrative; as to which truth is now most difficult to be come at, and of least value when ascertained. He is clear, for example, that the Irish were, for many centuries before the conquest of Henry II., a very polished, learned, and magnificent people — that they had colleges at Lismore and Armagh, where thousands upon thousands of studious youth imbibed all the learning of the times — that they worked beautifully in gold and silver, and manufactured exquisite fabrics both in flax and wool — and, finally, that the country was not only more prosperous and civilized, but greatly more populous, in those early ages, than in any succeeding time.

We have no wish to enter into an idle antiquarian controversy — but we must say that no sober Saxon can adopt these legends without very large allowances. It is indubitable that the Irish, or some of them, did very anciently fabricate linen, and probably also some ornaments of gold; and it would appear, from certain ecclesiastical writers of no great credit, that they had among them large seminaries for priests — a body possessing, in those ages, no very extraordinary learning, even in more favoured localities. But it is at least equally certain, that they were entirely a pastoral people, unacquainted with agriculture, holding their herds as the common property of the clan, dwelling in rude huts or wigwams, for the most part deplorably ignorant, and, in spite of their priests, generally practising polygamy and other savage vices. But what chiefly demonstrates the bias under which our author considers those early times, is his firm belief in the great populousness of ancient Ireland, and the undoubting confidence with which he rejects all the English accounts of their barbarism, even in the times of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. But a pastoral country never can be populous — and one overrun with unreclaimed bogs and unbroken forests, still less than any other. More than two thirds of the present population of Ireland undoubtedly owe their existence to the potato; and men alive can still point out large districts, now producing the food of more than a million of new inhabitants, which they remember in their primitive state of sterile and lonely morasses. Without potatoes, without corn, turnips, or cultivated grasses — with few sheep, and with nothing, in short, but roving herds of black cattle, if

Ireland had a full million of inhabitants in the 10th or 12th century, she had a great deal; and in spite of her theological colleges, and her traditionary churches, we doubt whether she had as many.* But whatever may have been the number or condition of her people in those remote ages, of which we have no statistical memorial and no authentic account, it is a little bold in Mr. O'Driscol to persuade us, that in the time of Elizabeth they were by no means an uncultivated or barbarous people. To the testimony afforded by all the official documents, and the full and graphic accounts of Spenser, Davis, and the writers referred to by Camden, long resident in the country, and eye-witnesses of all they describe, we really do not know what Mr. O'Driscol has to oppose, but his own patriotic prejudices, and his deep-rooted conviction, that no English testimony is to be trusted on such a subject. We must be forgiven for not sharing his generous incredulity.

As to the more modern parts of the history, though he never fails to manifest an amiable anxiety to apologize for Irish excesses, and to do justice to Irish bravery and kindness, we really are not aware that this propensity has led him into any misrepresentation of facts: and are happy to find that it never points, in the remotest degree, to anything so absurd as either a separation from England, or a vindictive wish for her distress or humiliation. He is too wise, indeed, not to be aware of that important truth, which so few of his zealous countrymen seem, however, able to comprehend — that there are no longer any of those injured Irish in existence, upon whom the English executed such flagrant oppressions two hundred years ago! and that nine tenths of the intelligent Irish, who now burn with desire to avenge the wrongs of their predecessors, are truly as much akin to those who did, as to those who suffered, the injury. We doubt whether even the O'Driscols have not, by this time, nearly as much English as Irish blood in their veins; and are quite sure, that if the lands pillaged from their original Celtic owners, in the days of Elizabeth and Cromwell, were to be given back to the true heirs, scarcely one of those who now reprobate the spoliation in good English, would profit by the restitution. The living Irishmen of the present day may have wrongs to complain of, and injuries to redress, on the part of the English government: but it is absurd to imagine that they are entitled to resent the wrongs and injuries of those who suffered in the same place centuries ago. They are most of them half English, by blood and lineage — and much more than half English, in speech, training, character, and habits. If they are to punish the descendants of the individual English who usurped Irish possessions, and displaced true Irish possessors, in former days, they must punish themselves; —for undoubtedly they are far more nearly connected with those spoilers than any of the hated English, whose ancestors never adventured to the neighbouring island. Mr. O'Driscol's partiality for the *ancient* Irish, therefore, is truly a mere peculiarity of taste or feeling — or at best but an historical predilection! and in reality has no influence, as it ought to have none, on his views as to what constitutes the actual grievances, or is likely to work the deliverance, of the existing generation.

* If we remember rightly, the forces actually engaged in the conquest or defence of Ireland in the time of Henry II. were most insignificant in point of numbers. Less than a hundred men-at-arms easily took possession of a whole district; and even after the invaded had time to prepare for resistance, an army of three or four hundred was found quite sufficient to bear down all opposition.

MIDDLE AND EXTREME PARTIES.

(December, 1826.)

Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honourable Richard Brinsley Sheridan. By Thomas Moore. Fourth Edition. 2 vols. 8vo. London: Longman and Co. 1826.*

We have frequently had occasion to speak of the dangers to which the conflict of two extreme parties must always expose the peace and the liberties of such a country as England,

* What is here given forms but a small part of the article originally published under this title, in 1826. But it exhibits nearly the whole of the General Politics contained in that article; and having been, as I believe, among the last political discussions I contributed to the Review, I have been tempted to close, with it, this most anxious and perilous division of the present publication.

and of the hostility with which both are apt to regard those who still continue to stand neutral between them. The charges against this middle party — which we take to be now represented by the old constitutional Whigs of 1688—used formerly to be much the same, though somewhat mitigated in tone, with those which each was in the habit of addressing to their adversaries in the opposite extreme. When the high Tories wanted to abuse the Whigs, they said they were nearly as bad as the Radicals; and when these wished in their turn to lessen the credit of the same unfortunate party, the established form of reproach was, that they were little better than the Tories! Of late years, however, a change seems to have come over the spirit, or the practical tactics at least, of these gallant belligerents. They have now discovered that there are vices and incapacities *peculiar* to the Whigs, and inseparable indeed from their middle position: and that, before settling their fundamental differences with each other, it is most wise and fitting that they should unite to bear down this common enemy, by making good against them these heavy imputations. It has now become necessary, therefore, for those against whom they are directed, to inquire a little into the nature and proofs of these alleged enormities; the horror of which has thus suspended the conflict of old hereditary enemies, and led them to proclaim a truce, till the field, by their joint efforts, can be cleared for fair hostilities, by the destruction of these hated intruders.

Now, the topics of reproach, which these two opposite parties have recently joined in directing against those who would mediate between them, seem to be chiefly two: — *First*, that their doctrines are timid, vacillating, compromising, and inconsistent; and, *secondly*, that the party which holds them is small, weak, despised, and unpopular. These are the favourite texts, we think, of those whose vocation it has lately become to preach against us, from the pulpits at once of servility and of democratical reform. But it is necessary to open them up a little farther, before we enter on our defence.

The *first* charge then is, That the Whigs are essentially an inefficient, trimming, half-way sort of party — too captious, penurious, and disrespectful to authority, to be useful servants in a Monarchy, and too aristocratical, cautious, and tenacious of old institutions, to deserve the confidence, or excite the sympathies, of a generous and enlightened People. Their advocates, accordingly — and we ourselves in an especial manner — are accused of dealing in contradictory and equivocating doctrines; of practising a continual see-saw of admissions and retractations; of saying now a word for the people — now one for the aristocracy — now one for the Crown; of paralysing all our liberal propositions by some timid and paltry reservation, and never being betrayed into a truly popular sentiment without instantly chilling and neutralizing it by some cold warning against excess, some cautious saving of the privileges of rank and establishment. And so far has this system of inculpation been lately carried, that a liberal Journal, of great and increasing celebrity, has actually done us the honour, quarter after quarter, of quoting long passages from our humble pages, in evidence of this sad infirmity in our party and principles.

Now, while we reject of course the epithets which are here applied to us, we admit, at once, the facts on which our adversaries profess to justify them. We acknowledge that we are fairly chargeable with a fear of opposite excesses — a desire to compromise and reconcile the claims of all the great parties in the State — an anxiety to temper and qualify whatever may be said in favour of one, with a steady reservation of whatever may be justly due to the rest. To this sort of trimming, to *this* inconsistency, to this timidity, we distinctly plead guilty. We plead guilty to a love for the British Constitution — and to all and every one of its branches. We *are* for King, Lords, and Commons; and though not perhaps exactly in that order, we are proud to have it said that we have a word for each in its turn; and that, in asserting the rights of one, we would not willingly forget those of the others. Our jealousy, we confess, is greatest of those who have the readiest means of persuasion; and therefore, we are generally far more afraid of the encroachments of arbitrary power, under cover of its patronage, and the general love of peace, security and distinction, which attract so strongly to the region of the Court, than of the usurpations of popular violence. But we are for authority, as well as for freedom. We

are for the natural and wholesome influence of wealth and rank, and the veneration which belongs to old institutions, without which no government has ever had either stability or respect; as well as for that vigilance of popular control and that supremacy of public opinion, without which none could be long protected from abuse. We know that, when pushed to their ultimate extremes, those principles may be said to be in contradiction. But the escape from inconsistency is secured by the very obvious precaution of stopping short of such extremes. It was to prevent this, in fact, that the English Constitution, and indeed all good government everywhere, was established. Every thing that we know that is valuable in the ordinances of men, or admirable in the arrangements of Providence, seems to depend on a compromise, a balance; or, if the expression is thought better, on a conflict and struggle, of opposite and irreconcileable principles. Virtue — society — life itself, and, in so far as we can see, the grand movements and whole order of the universe, are maintained only by such a balance or contention.

These, we are afraid, will appear but idle truisms, and shallow pretexts for foolish self-commendation. No one, it will be said, is for any thing but the British Constitution; and nobody denies that it depends on a balance of opposite principles. The only question is, whether that balance is now rightly adjusted; and whether the Whigs are in the proper central position for correcting its obliquities. Now, if the attacks to which we are alluding had been reducible to such a principle as this — if we had been merely accused, by our brethren of the Westminster, for not going far enough on the popular side, and by our brethren of the Quarterly, for going too far, — we should have had nothing to complain of, beyond what is inseparable from all party contentions; and must have done our best to answer those opposite charges, on their separate and specific merits, — taking advantage, of course, as against each, of the authority of the other, as a proof, *à fortiori*, of the safety of our own intermediate position. But the peculiarity of our present case, and the hardship which alone induces us to complain of it is, that *this is not* the course that has been lately followed with regard to us, — that our adversaries have effected, or rather pretended, an unnatural union against us, — and, deserting not only the old rules of political hostility, but, as it humbly appears to us, their own fundamental principles, have combined to attack us on the new and distinct ground of *our moderation*, — not because we are opposed to their extreme doctrines respectively, but, because we are *not extremely* opposed to them! — and, affecting a generous indulgence and respect for those who are diametrically against them, seem actually to have agreed to join forces with them, to run down those who stand peacefully between, and would gladly effect their reconcilement. We understand very well the feelings which lead to such a course of proceeding; but we are not the less convinced of their injustice — and, in spite of all that may be said of neutrals in civil war, or interlopers in matrimonial quarrels, we still believe that the Peacemakers are Blessed, — and that they who seek conscientiously to moderate the pretensions of contending factions, are more likely to be right than either of their opponents.

The natural, and, in our humble judgment, the very important function of a middle party is, not only to be a check, but a bulwark to both those that are more decidedly opposed; and though liable not to be very well looked on by either, it should only be very obnoxious, we should think, to the stronger, or those who are disposed to act on the offensive. To them it naturally enough presents the appearance of an advanced post, that must be carried before the main battle can be joined, — and for the assault of which they have neither the same weapons, the same advantages of position, nor the same motives of action. To the weaker party, however, or those who stand on their defence, it must, or at least should always be felt to be a protection, — though received probably with grudging and ill grace, as a sort of half-faced fellowship, yielded with no cordiality, and ready enough to be withdrawn if separate terms can be made with the adversary. With this scheme of tactics we have long been familiar; and for those feelings we were prepared. But it is rather too much, we think, when those who are irreconcileably hostile, and whose only quarrel with us is, that we go half the length of their hated opponents, — have the face to pretend that we are more justly

hateful to them, than those who go the whole length, — that they have really no particular quarrel with those who are beyond us, and that we, in fact, and our unhappy mid-way position, are the only obstacles to a cordial union of those whom it is, in truth, our main object to reconcile and unite!

Nothing, we take it, can be so plain as that this is a hollow, and, in truth, very flimsy pretext: and that the real reason of the animosity with which we are honoured by the more eager individuals in both the extreme parties is, that we afford a covering and a shelter to each — impede the assault they are impatient mutually to make on each other, and take away from them the means of that direct onset, by which the sanguine in both hosts imagine they might at once achieve a decisive victory. If there were indeed no belligerents, it is plain enough that there could be no neutrals and no mediators. If there was no natural war between Democracy and Monarchy, no true ground of discord between Tories and Radical Reformers — we admit there would be no vocation for Whigs; for the true definition of that party, as matters now stand in England, is, that it is a middle party, between the two extremes of high monarchical principles on the one hand, and extremely popular principles on the other. It holds no peculiar opinions, that we are aware of, on any other points of policy, — and no man of common sense can doubt, and no man of common candour deny, that it differs from each of the other parties on the very grounds on which they differ from each other, — the only distinction being that it does not differ so widely.

Can any thing, then, be so preposterous as a pretended truce between two belligerents, in order that they may fall jointly upon those who are substantially neutral? — a dallying and coquetting with mortal enemies, for the purpose of gaining a supposed advantage over those who are to a great extent friends? Yet this is the course that has recently been followed, and seems still to be pursued. It is now some time since the Thorough Reformers began to make awkward love to the Royalists, by pretending to bewail the obscuration which the Throne had suffered from the usurpations of Parliamentary influence, — the curtailment of the Prerogative by a junto of ignoble boroughmongers, — and the thraldom in which the Sovereign was held by those who were truly his creatures. Since that time, the more prevailing tone has been, to sneer at the Whig aristocracy, and to declaim, with all the bitterness of real fear and affected contempt, on the practical insignificance of men of fortune and talents, who are neither loyal nor popular — and, at the same time, to lose no opportunity of complimenting the Tory possessors of power, for every act of liberality, which had been really forced upon them by those very Whigs whom they refuse to acknowledge as even co-operating in the cause! The high Tory or Court party have, in substance, played the same game. They have not indeed affected, so barefacedly, an entire sympathy, or very tender regard for their Radical allies; but they have acted on the same principle. They have echoed and adopted the absurd fiction of the *unpopularity* of the Whigs, — and, speaking with affected indulgence of the excesses into which a generous love of liberty may occasionally hurry the ignorant and unthinking, have reserved all their severity, unfairness, and intolerance, for the more moderate opponents with whose reasonings they find it more difficult to cope, and whose motives and true position in the country, they are therefore so eager to misrepresent.

Now, though all this may be natural enough in exasperated disputants, who are apt to wreak their vengeance on whatever is most within their reach, it is not the less unfair and unworthy in itself, nor the less shortsighted and ungrateful in the parties who are guilty of it. For we do not hesitate to say, that it is substantially to this calumniated and mutually reviled Whig party, or to those who act on its principles, that the country is truly indebted for its peace and its Constitution, — and one, at least, if not both of the extreme parties, for *their very existence!* If there were no such middle body, who saw faults and merits in both, and could not consent to the unqualified triumph or unqualified extirpation of either, — if the whole population of the country was composed of intolerant Tories and fiery reformers, — of such spirits, in short, to bring the matter to a plain practical bearing, as the two hostile parties have actually chosen, and now support as their leaders and spokesmen, does any man imagine

that its peace or its Constitution could be maintained for a single year? On such a supposition, it is plain that they must enter immediately on an active, uncompromising, relentless contention; and, after a short defying parley, must, by force or fear, effect the entire subversion of one or the other; and in either case, a complete revolution and dissolution of the present Constitution and principle of government. Compromise, upon that supposition, we conceive, must be utterly out of the question; as well as the limitation of the contest to *words*, either of reasoning or of abuse. *They would be at each other's throats, before the end of the year!* or, if there was any compromise, what *could* it be, but a compromise on the middle ground of Whiggism? — a virtual conversion of a majority of those very combatants, who are now supposed so to hate and disdain them, to the creed of that moderate and liberal party?

What is it, then, that prevents such a mortal conflict from taking place, at the present moment, between those who represent themselves respectively, as engrossing all the principle and all the force of the country? what, but the fact, that a very large portion of the population do *not* in reality belong to either; but adhere, and are known to adhere, to those moderate opinions, for the profession of which the Whigs and their advocates are not only covered with the obloquy of those whom they save from the perils of such frightful extremities, but are preposterously supposed to have incurred the dislike of those with whom in fact they are identified, and to whom they belong?

And this leads us to say a few words on the second grand position of the Holy Allies, against whom we are now called to defend ourselves, that the Whigs are not only inconsistent and vacillating in their doctrines, but, in consequence of that vice or error, are, in fact, weak, unpopular, and despised in the country. The very circumstance of their being felt to be so formidable as to require this strange alliance to make head against them, and to force their opponents to intermit all other contests, and expend on them exclusively the whole treasures of their sophistry and abuse, might go far, we think, to refute this desperate allegation. But a very short resumption of the principles we have just been unfolding will show that it cannot possibly be true.

We reckon as Whigs, in this question, all those who are not disposed to go the length of either of the extreme parties who would now divide the country between them, — all, in other words, who wish the Government to be substantially more popular than it is, or is tending to be — but, at the same time, to retain more aristocratical influence, and more deference to authority, than the Radical Reformers will tolerate: — and, we do not hesitate to say, that so far from being weak or inconsiderable in the country, we are perfectly convinced that, among the educated classes, which now embrace a very large proportion of the whole, it greatly outnumbers both the others put together. It should always be recollected, that a middle party like this is invariably much stronger, as well as more determined and formidable, than it appears. Extreme doctrines always make the most noise. They lead most to vehemence, passion, and display, — they are inculcated with most clamour and exaggeration, and excite the greatest alarm. In this way we hear of them most frequently and loudly. But they are not, upon that account, the most widely spread or generally adopted; — and, in an enlightened country, where there are two *opposite* kinds of extravagance thus trumpeted abroad together, they serve in a good degree as correctives to each other; and the great body of the people will almost inevitably settle into a middle or moderate opinion. The champions, to be sure, and ambitious leaders on each side, will probably only be exasperated into greater bitterness and greater confidence, by the excitement of their contention. But the greater part of the lookers-on can scarcely fail to perceive that mutual wounds have been inflicted, and mutual infirmities revealed, — and the continuance and very fierceness of the combat is apt to breed a general opinion, that neither party is right, to the height of their respective pretensions; and that truth and justice can only be satisfied by large and *mutual* concessions.

Of the two parties — the Thorough Reformers are most indebted for an appearance of greater strength than they actually possess, to their own boldness and activity, and the

mere curiosity it excites among the idle, co-operating with the sounding alarms of their opponents, — while the high Tories owe the same advantage in a greater degree to the quiet effect of their influence and wealth, and to that prudence which leads so many, who in their hearts are against them, to keep their opinions to themselves, till some opportunity can be found of declaring them with effect. Both, however, are conscious that they owe much to such an illusion, — and neither, accordingly, has courage to venture on those measures to which they would infallibly resort, if they trusted to their apparent, as an actual or available strength. The Tories, who have the administration in some measure in their hands, would be glad enough to put down all popular interference, whether by assemblies, by speech, or by writing; and, in fact, only allow the law to be as indulgent as it is, and its administration to be so much more indulgent, from a conviction that they would not be supported in more severe measures, either by public opinion without, or even by their own majorities within the walls of the Legislature. They know very well that a great part of their adherents are attached to them by no other tie than that of their own immediate interest, — and that, even among them as they now stand, they could command at least as large a following for Whig measures as for Tory measures, if only proposed by an administration of as much apparent stability. It is not necessary, indeed, to go farther than to the common conversation of the more open or careless of those who vote and act among the Tories, to be satisfied, that a very large proportion, indeed, of those who pass under that title, are what we should call really Whigs in heart and conviction, and are ready to declare themselves such, on the first convenient opportunity. With regard to the Radical Reformers, again, very little more, we think, can be necessary to show their real weakness in the country, than to observe how very few votes they ever obtain at an election, even in the most open boroughs, and the most populous and independent counties. We count for nothing, in this question, the mere physical force which may seem to be arrayed on their side in the manufacturing districts, on occasions of distress and suffering; though, if they felt that they had even this *permanently* at their command, it is impossible that they should not have more nominations of parliamentary attorneys, and more steady and imposing exhibitions of their strength and union.

At the present moment, then, we are persuaded that the proper Whig party is in reality by much the largest and the steadiest in the country; and we are also convinced, that it is in a course of rapid increase. The effect of all long-continued discussion is to disclose flaws in all sweeping arguments, and to multiply exceptions to all general propositions — to discountenance extravagance, in short to abate confidence and intolerance, and thus to lay the foundations for liberal compromise and mutual concession. Even those who continue to think that all the reason is exclusively on their side, can scarcely hope to convert their opponents, except by degrees. Some few rash and fiery spirits may contrive to pass from one extreme to the other, without going through the middle. But the common course undoubtedly is different; and therefore we are entitled to reckon, that every one who is detached from the Tory or the Radical faction, will make a stage at least, or half-way house, of Whiggism; and may probably be induced, by the comfort and respectability of the establishment, to remain: as the temperate regions of the earth are found to detain the greater part of those who have been induced to fly from the heats of the Equator, or the rigours of the Pole.

Though it is natural enough, therefore, for those who hold extreme opinions, to depreciate the weight and power of those who take their station between them, it seems sufficiently certain, not only that their position must at all times be the safest and best, but that it is destined ultimately to draw to itself all that is truly of any considerable weight upon either hand; and that it is the feeling of the constant and growing force of this central attraction, that inflames the animosity of those whose importance would be lost by the convergence. For our own part, at least, we are satisfied, and we believe the party to which we belong is satisfied, both with the degree of influence and respect which we possess in the country, and with the prospects which, we think, upon rea-

sonable grounds, we may entertain of its increase. In assuming to ourselves the character of a middle party, we conceive that we are merely stating a fact, which cannot well be disputed on the present occasion, as *it is assumed* by both those who are now opposed to us, as the main ground of their common attack; and almost all that we have said follows as a necessary consequence of this assumption. From the very nature of the thing, we cannot go to either of the extreme parties; and neither of them can make any movement to increase their popularity and substantial power, without coming nearer to us. It is but fair, however, before concluding, to state, that though we do occupy a position between the intolerant Tories and the Thorough Reformers, we conceive that we are considerably nearer to the latter than to the former. In our principles, indeed, and the ends at which we aim, we do not materially differ from what is *professed* by the more sober among them; though we require more caution, more securities, more exceptions, more temper, and more time.

That is the difference of our theories. In practice, we have no doubt, we shall all have time enough:—for it is the lot of England, we have little doubt, to be ruled in the main by what will be called a Tory party, for as long a period as we can now look forward to with any great distinctness—by a Tory party, however, restrained more and more in its propensities, by the growing influence of Whig principles, and the enlightened vigilance of that party, both in Parliament and out of it; and now and then admonished, by a temporary expulsion, of the necessity of a still greater conformity with the progress of liberal opinions, than could be spontaneously obtained. The inherent spirit, however, of monarchy, and the natural effect of long possession of power, will secure, we apprehend, for a considerable time, the general sway of men professing Tory principles; and their speedy restoration, when driven for a season from their places by disaster or general discontent: and the Whigs, during the same period, must content themselves with preventing a great deal of evil, and seeing the good which they had suggested tardily and imperfectly effected, by those who will take the credit of originating what they had long opposed, and only at last adopted with reluctance and on compulsion. It is not a very brilliant prospect, perhaps, nor a very enviable lot. But we believe it to be what awaits us; and we embrace it, not only cheerfully, but with thankfulness and pride—thankfulness, that we are enabled to do even so much for the good and the liberties of our country—and pride, that in *thus* seeking her service, we cannot well be suspected of selfish or mercenary views.

The Thorough Reformers never can be in power in this country, but by means of an actual revolution. The Whigs may, and occasionally will, without any disturbance to its peace. But these occasions might be multiplied, and the good that must attend them accelerated and increased, if the Reformers, aware of the hopelessness of their separate cause, would throw their weight into the scale of the Whigs, and so far modify their pretensions as to make it safe or practicable to support them. The Whigs, we have already said, cannot come to them; both because they hold some of their principles, and their modes of asserting them, to be not merely unreasonable, but actually dangerous; and because, by their adoption, they would at once hazard much mischief, and unfit themselves for the good service they now perform. But the Reformers may very well come to the Whigs; both because they can practically do nothing (peaceably) for themselves, and because the measures which they might occasionally enable the Whigs to carry, though not in their eyes unexceptionable or sufficient, must yet appear to them better than those of the Tories—which is the only attainable alternative. This accordingly, we are persuaded, will ultimately be the result; and is already, we have no doubt, in the course of accomplishment;—and, taken along with the gradual abandonment of all that is offensive in Tory pretensions, and the silent adoption of most of the Whig principles, even by those who continue to disclaim the name, will effect almost all that sober lovers of their country can expect, for the security of her liberties, and the final extinction of all extreme parties, in the liberal moderation of Whiggism.

MISCELLANEOUS.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

(MAY, 1820.)

An Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain respecting the United States of America. Part First. Containing an Historical Outline of their Merits and Wrongs as Colonies, and Strictures on the Calumnies of British Writers. By ROBERT WALSH, Esq. 8vo. Pp. 505. Philadelphia and London: 1819.*

ONE great staple of this book is a vehement, and, we really think, a singularly unjust attack, on the principles of this Journal. Yet we take part, on the whole, with the author:—and heartily wish him success in the great object of vindicating his country from unmerited aspersions, and trying to make us, in England, ashamed of the vices and defects which he has taken the trouble to point out in our national character and institutions. In this part of his design we cordially concur—and shall at all times be glad to co-operate. But there is another part of it, and we are sorry to say a principal and avowed part, of which we cannot speak in terms of too strong regret and reprobation—and that is, a design to excite and propagate among his countrymen, a general animosity to the British name, by way of counteracting, or rather revenging, the animosity which he very erroneously supposes to be generally entertained by the English against them

That this is, in itself, and under any circumstances, an unworthy, an unwise, and even a criminal object, we think we could demonstrate to the satisfaction of Mr. Walsh himself, and all his reasonable adherents; but it is better, perhaps, to endeavour, in the first place, to correct the misapprehensions, and dispel the delusions in which this disposition has its foundation, and, at all events, to set them the example of perfect good humour and fairness, in a discussion where the parties perhaps will never be entirely agreed; and where those who are now to be heard have the strongest conviction of having been injuriously misrepresented. If we felt any soreness, indeed, on the score of this author's imputations, or had any desire to lessen the just effect of his representations, it would have been enough for us, we believe, to have let them alone. For, without some such help as ours, the work really does not seem calculated to make any great impression in this quarter of the world. It is not only, as the author has himself ingenuously observed of it, a very "clumsy book," heavily written and abominably printed,—but the only material part of it—the only part about which any body can now be supposed to care much, either here or in America—is overlaid and buried under a huge mass of historical compilation, which would have little chance of attracting readers at the present moment, even if much better digested than it is in the volume before us.

The substantial question is, What has been the true character and condition of the United States since they became an independent nation,—and what is likely to be their condition in future? And to elucidate this ques-

---

* There is no one feeling — having public concerns for its object — with which I have been so long and so deeply impressed, as that of the vast importance of our maintaining friendly, and even cordial relations, with the free, powerful, moral, and industrious States of America: — a condition upon which I cannot help thinking that not only our own freedom and prosperity, but that of the better part of the world, will ultimately be found to be more and more dependent. I give the first place, therefore, in this concluding division of the work, to an earnest and somewhat importunate exhortation to this effect — which I believe produced some impression at the time, and I trust may still help forward the good end to which it was directed.

tion, the learned author has thought fit to premise about two hundred very close-printed pages, upon their merits as colonies, and the harsh treatment they then received from the mother country! Of this large historical sketch, we cannot say, either that it is very correctly drawn, or very faithfully coloured. It presents us with no connected narrative, or interesting deduction of events — but is, in truth, a mere heap of indigested quotations from common books, of good and of bad authority — inartificially cemented together by a loose and angry commentary. We are not aware, indeed, that there are in this part of the work either any new statements, or any new views or opinions; the facts being mostly taken from Chalmers's Annals, and Burke's European Settlements; and the authorities for the good conduct and ill treatment of the colonies, being chiefly the Parliamentary Debates and Brougham's Colonial Policy.

But, in good truth, these historical recollections will go but a little way in determining that great practical and most important question, which it is Mr. W.'s intention, as well as ours, to discuss — What are, and what ought to be, the dispositions of England and America towards each other? And the general facts as to the first settlements and colonial history of the latter, in so far as they bear upon this question, really do not admit of much dispute. The most important of those settlements were unquestionably founded by the friends of civil and religious liberty — who, though somewhat precise and puritanical, and, we must add, not a little intolerant, were, in the main, a sturdy and sagacious race of people, not readily to be cajoled out of the blessings they had sought through so many sacrifices; and ready at all times manfully and resolutely to assert them against all invaders. As to the mother country, again, without claiming for her any romantic tenderness or generosity towards those hardy offsets, we think we may say, that she oppressed and domineered over them much less than any other modern nation has done over any such settlements — that she allowed them, for the most part, liberal charters and constitutions, and was kind enough to leave them very much to themselves; and although she did manifest, now and then, a disposition to encroach on their privileges, their rights were, on the whole, very tolerably respected — so that they grew up undoubtedly to a state of much prosperity, and a familiarity with freedom in all its divisions, which was not only without parallel in any similar establishment, but probably would not have been attained had they been earlier left to their own guidance and protection. This is all that we ask for England, on a review of her colonial policy, and her conduct before the war; and this, we think, no candid and well-informed person can reasonably refuse her.

As to the war itself, the motives in which it originated, and the spirit in which it was carried on, it cannot now be necessary to say any thing — or, at least, when we say that, having once been begun, we think that it terminated as the friends of Justice and Liberty must have wished it to terminate, we conceive that Mr. Walsh can require no other explanation. That this result, however, should have left a soreness upon both sides, and especially on that which had *not* been soothed by success, is what all men must have expected. But, upon the whole, we firmly believe that this was far slighter and less durable than has generally been imagined; and was likely very speedily to have been entirely effaced, by those ancient recollections of kindness and kindred which could not fail to recur, and by that still more powerful feeling, to which every day was likely to add strength, of their common interests, as *free* and as *commercial* countries, and of the substantial conformity of their national character, and of their sentiments upon most topics of public and of private right. The healing operation, however, of these causes was unfortunately thwarted and retarded by the heats that rose out of the French revolution, and the new interests and new relations which it appeared for a time to create; — and the hostilities in which we were at last involved with America herself — though the opinions of her people, as well as our own, were deeply divided upon both questions — served still further to embitter the general feeling, and to keep alive the memory of animosities that ought not to have been so long remembered. At last came peace, — and the spirit, we verily believe, but unfortunately not the prosperity of peace; and the distresses and commercial embarrassments of both countries

threw both into bad humour; and unfortunately hurried both into a system of jealous and illiberal policy, by which that bad humour was aggravated, and received an unfortunate direction.

In this exasperated state of the national temper, and, we do think, too much under its influence, Mr. Walsh has now thought himself called upon to vindicate his country from the aspersions of English writers; and after arraigning them, generally, of the most incredible ignorance, and atrocious malignity, he proceeds to state, that the EDINBURGH and QUARTERLY Reviews, in particular, have been incessantly labouring to traduce the character of America, and have lately broken out into such "excesses of obloquy," as can no longer be endured; and, in particular, that the prospect of a large emigration to the United States has thrown us all into such "paroxysms of spite and jealousy," that we have engaged in a scheme of systematic defamation that sets truth and consistency alike at defiance. To counteract this nefarious scheme, Mr. W. has taken the field — not so much to refute as to retort — not for the purpose of pointing out our errors, or exposing our unfairness, but, rather, if we understand him aright, of retaliating on us the *unjust abuse* we have been so long pouring on others. In his preface, accordingly, he fairly avows it to be his intention to act on the offensive — to carry the war into the enemy's quarters, and to make reprisals upon the honour and character of England, in revenge for the insults which, he will have it, her writers have heaped on his country. He therefore proposes to point out, — not the natural complexion, or genuine features, but "the sores and blotches of the British nation," to the scorn and detestation of his countrymen; and having assumed, that it is the "intention of Great Britain to educate her youth in sentiments of the most rancorous hostility to America," he assures us, that this design *will, and must be met with corresponding sentiments*, on his side of the water!

Now, though we cannot applaud the generosity, or even the common humanity of these sentiments — though we think that the American government, if at all deserving of the eulogy which Mr. W. has here bestowed upon them, might, like Cromwell, have felt themselves too strong to care about paper shot — and though we cannot but feel that a more temperate and candid tone would have carried more weight, as well as more magnanimity with it, we must yet begin by admitting, that America *has* cause of complaint; — and that nothing can be more despicable and disgusting than the scurrility with which she has been assailed by a portion of the press of this country — and that, disgraceful as these publications are, they speak the sense, if not of a considerable, at least of a conspicuous and active party in the nation.* All this, and more than this, we have no wish, and no intention, to deny. But we do wish most anxiously to impress upon Mr. W. and his adherents, to beware how they believe that this party speaks the sense of the British nation — or that their sentiments on this, or on many other occasions, are in any degree in accordance with those of the great body of our people. On the contrary, we are firmly persuaded that a very large majority of the nation, numerically considered, and a still larger majority of the intelligent and enlightened persons whose influence and authority cannot fail in the long run to govern her councils, would disclaim all sympathy with any part of these opinions; and actually look on the miserable libels in question, not only with the scorn and disgust to which Mr. W. would consign them, but with a sense of shame from which his situation fortunately exempts him, and a sorrow and regret, of which unfortunately he seems too little susceptible.

It is a fact which can require no proof, even in America, that there is a party in this country not friendly to political liberty, and decidedly hostile to all extension of popular rights, — which, if it does not grudge to its own

* Things are much mended in this respect since 1820; persons of rank and influence in this country now speaking of America, in private as well as in public, with infinitely greater respect and friendliness than was then common; and evincing, I think, a more general desire to be courteous to individuals of that nation, than to foreigners of any other description. There are still, however, publications among us, and some proceeding from quarters where I should not have looked for them, that continue to keep up the tone alluded to in the text, and consequently to do mischief, which it is still a duty therefore to endeavour to counteract.

people the powers and privileges which are bestowed on them by the Constitution, is at least for confining their exercise within the narrowest limits — which never thinks the peace and well-being of society in danger from any thing but popular encroachments, and holds the only safe or desirable government to be that of a pretty pure and unincumbered Monarchy, supported by a vast revenue and a powerful army, and obeyed by a people just enlightened enough to be orderly and industrious, but no way curious as to questions of right — and never presuming to judge of the conduct of their superiors.

Now, it is quite true that *this Party* dislikes America, and is apt enough to decry and insult her. Its adherents never have forgiven the success of her war of independence — the loss of a nominal sovereignty, or perhaps of a real power of vexing and oppressing — her supposed rivalry in trade — and, above all, the happiness and tranquillity which she now enjoys under a republican form of government. Such a spectacle of democratical prosperity is unspeakably mortifying to their high monarchical principles, and is easily imagined to be dangerous to their security. Their first wish, and, for a time, their darling hope, was, that the infant states would quarrel among themselves, and be thankful to be again received under our protection, as a refuge from military despotism. Since that hope was lost, it would have satisfied them to find that their republican institutions had made them poor, and turbulent, and depraved — incapable of civil wisdom, regardless of national honour, and as intractable to their own elected rulers as they had been to their hereditary sovereign. To those who were capable of such wishes and such expectations, it is easy to conceive that the happiness and good order of the United States — the wisdom and authority of their government — and the unparalleled rapidity of their progress in wealth, population, and refinement, must have been but an ungrateful spectacle; and most especially, that the splendid and steady success of by far the most truly democratical government that ever was established in the world, must have struck the most lively alarm into the hearts of all those who were anxious to have it believed that the People could never interfere in politics but to their ruin, and that the smallest addition to the democratical influence, recognized in the theory at least of the British Constitution, must lead to the immediate destruction of peace and property, morality and religion.

That there are journals in this country, and journals too of great and deserved reputation in other respects, who have spoken the language of the party we have now described, and that in a tone of singular intemperance and offence, we most readily admit. But need we tell Mr. W., or any ordinarily well-informed individual of his countrymen, that neither this party nor their journalists can be allowed to stand for the People of England? — that it is notorious that there is among that people another and a far more numerous party, whose sentiments are at all points opposed to those of the former, and who are, by necessary consequence, friends to America, and to all that Americans most value in their character and institutions — who, as Englishmen, are more proud to have great and glorious nations descended from them, than to have discontented colonies uselessly subjected to their caprice — who, as freemen, rejoice to see freedom advancing, with giant footsteps, over the fairest regions of the earth, and nations flourishing exactly in proportion as they are free — and to know that when the drivelling advocates of hierarchy and legitimacy vent their paltry sophistries with some shadow of plausibility on the history of the Old World, they can now turn with decisive triumph to the unequivocal example of the New — and demonstrate the unspeakable advantages of free government, by the unprecedented prosperity of America? Such persons, too, can be as little suspected of entertaining any jealousy of the commercial prosperity of the Americans as of their political freedom; since it requires but a very moderate share of understanding to see, that the advantages of trade must always be mutual and reciprocal — that one great trading country is of necessity the best customer to another — and that the trade of America, consisting chiefly in the exportation of raw produce and the importation of manufactured commodities, is, of all others, the most beneficial to a country like England.

That such sentiments were naturally to be expected in a country circumstanced like Eng-

land, no thinking man will deny. But Mr. Walsh has been himself among us; and was, we have reason to believe, no idle or incurious observer of our men and cities; and we appeal with confidence to him, whether these were not the prevailing sentiments among the intelligent and well educated of every degree? If he thinks as we do, as to their soundness and importance, he cannot well doubt that they must sooner or later influence the conduct even of our Court and Cabinet. But, in the mean time, the fact is certain, that the opposite sentiments are confined to a very small portion of the people of Great Britain — and that the course of events, as well as the force of reason, is every day bringing them more and more into discredit. Where then, we would ask, is the justice or the policy of seeking to render a quarrel national, when the cause of quarrel is only with an inconsiderable and declining party of the nation? — and why labour to excite animosity against a whole people, the majority of whom are, and *must* be, your sincere friends, merely because some prejudiced or interested persons among them have disgusted the great body of their own countrymen, by the senselessness and scurrility of their attacks upon yours?

The Americans are extremely mistaken, too, if they suppose that they are the only persons who are abused by the only party that does abuse them. They have merely their share of that abuse along with all the friends and advocates of Liberty in every part of the world. The Constitutionalists of France, including the King and many of his ministers, meet with no better treatment; — and those who hold liberal opinions in this country are assailed with still greater acrimony and fierceness. Let Mr. Walsh only look to the language held by our ministerial journals for the last twelvemonth, on the subjects of Reform and Alarm — and observe in what way, not only the whole class of our own reformers and conciliators, but the names and persons of such men as Lords Lansdowne, Grey, Fitzwilliam, and Erskine, Sir James Mackintosh, and Messrs. Brougham, Lambton, Tierney, and others, are dealt with by these national oracles, — and he will be satisfied that his countrymen neither stand alone in the misfortune of which he complains so bitterly, nor are subjected to it in very bad company. We, too, he may probably be aware, have had our portion of the abuse which he seems to think reserved for America — and, what is a little remarkable, for being too much her advocate. For what we have said of her present power and future greatness — her wisdom in peace and her valour in war — and of all the invaluable advantages of her representative system — her freedom from taxes, sinecures, and standing armies — we have been subjected to far more virulent attacks than any of which he now complains for his country — and that from the same party scribblers, with whom we are here, somewhat absurdly, confounded and supposed to be leagued. It is really, we think, some little presumption of our fairness, that the accusations against us should be thus contradictory — and that for one and the same set of writings, we should be denounced by the ultra-royalists of England as little better than American republicans, and by the ultra-patriots of America as the jealous defamers of her freedom.

This, however, is of very little consequence. What we wish to impress on Mr. W. is, that they who daily traduce the largest and ablest part of the English nation, cannot possibly be supposed to speak the sense of that nation — and that *their* offences ought not, in reason, to be imputed to her. If there be any reliance on the principles of human nature, the friends of liberty in England must rejoice in the prosperity of America. Every selfish, concurs with every generous motive, to add strength to this sympathy; and if any thing is certain in our late internal history, it is that the friends of liberty are rapidly increasing among us; — partly from increased intelligence — partly from increased suffering and impatience — partly from mature conviction, and instinctive prudence and fear.

There is another consideration, also arising from the aspect of the times before us, which should go far, we think, at the present moment, to strengthen these bonds of affinity. It is impossible to look to the state of the Old World, without seeing, or rather feeling, that there is a greater and more momentous contest impending, than ever before agitated human society. In Germany — in Spain — in France — in Italy, the principles of Reform

and Liberty are visibly arraying themselves for a final struggle with the principles of Established Abuse, — Legitimacy, or Tyranny — or whatever else it is called, by its friends or enemies. Even in England, the more modified elements of the same principles are stirring and heaving, around, above, and beneath us, with unprecedented force, activity, and terror: and every thing betokens an approaching crisis in the great European commonwealth, by the result of which the future character of its governments, and the structure and condition of its society, will in all probability be determined. The ultimate result, or the course of events that are to lead to it, we have not the presumption to predict. The struggle may be long or transitory — sanguinary or bloodless; and it may end in a great and signal amelioration of all existing institutions, or in the establishment of one vast federation of military despots, domineering as usual in the midst of sensuality, barbarism, and gloom. The issues of all these things are in the hand of Providence and the womb of time! and no human eye can yet foresee the fashion of their accomplishment. But great changes are evidently preparing; and in fifty years — most probably in a far shorter time — some material alterations must have taken place in most of the established governments of Europe, and the rights of the European nations been established on a surer and more durable basis. Half a century cannot pass away in growing discontents on the part of the people, and growing fears and precautions on that of their rulers. Their pretensions *must* at last be put clearly in issue; and abide the settlement of force, or fear, or reason.

Looking back to what has already happened in the world, both recently and in ancient times, we can scarcely doubt that the cause of liberty will be ultimately triumphant. But through what trials and sufferings — what martyrdoms and persecutions it is doomed to work out its triumph — we profess ourselves unable to conjecture. The disunion of the lower and the higher classes, which was gradually disappearing with the increasing intelligence of the former, but has lately been renewed by circumstances which we cannot now stop to examine, leads, we must confess, to gloomy auguries as to the character of this contest; and fills us with apprehensions, that it may neither be peaceful nor brief. But in this, and in every other respect, we conceive that much will depend on the part that is taken by America; and on the dispositions which she may have cultivated towards the different parties concerned. Her great and growing wealth and population — her universal commercial relations — her own impregnable security — and her remoteness from the scene of dissension — must give her prodigious power and influence in such a crisis, either as a mediator or umpire, or, if she take a part, as an auxiliary and ally. That she must wish well to the cause of freedom, it would be indecent, and indeed impious, to doubt — and that she should take an active part against it, is a thing not even to be imagined: — but she may stand aloof, a cold and disdainful spectator; and, counterfeiting a prudent indifference to scenes that neither can nor ought to be indifferent to her, may see, unmoved, the prolongation of a lamentable contest, which her interference might either have prevented, or brought to a speedy and a happy termination. And this course she will most probably follow, if she allows herself to conceive antipathies to nations for the faults of a few calumnious individuals: and especially if, upon grounds so trivial, she should nourish such an animosity towards England, as to feel a repugnance to make common cause with her, even in behalf of their common inheritance of freedom.

Assuredly, there is yet no other country in Europe where the principles of liberty, and the rights and duties of nations, are so well understood as with us — or in which so great a number of men, qualified to write, speak, and act with authority, are at all times ready to take a reasonable, liberal, and practical view of those principles and duties. The Government, indeed, has not always been either wise or generous, to its own or to other countries; but it has partaken, or at least has been controlled by the general spirit of freedom; and we have no hesitation in saying, that the free Constitution of England has been a blessing and protection to the remotest nations of Europe for the last two hundred years. Had England not been free, the worst despotism in Europe would have been far worse than it is, at this moment. If our world had been parcelled out

among arbitrary monarchs, they would have run a race of oppression, and encouraged each other in all sorts of abuses. But the existence of one powerful and flourishing state, where juster maxims were admitted, has shamed them out of their worst enormities, given countenance and encouragement to the claims of their oppressed subjects, and gradually taught their rulers to understand, that a certain measure of liberty was not only compatible with national greatness and splendour, but essential to its support. In the days of Queen Elizabeth, England was the champion and asylum of Religious Freedom — in those of King William, of National Independence. If a less generous spirit has prevailed in her Cabinet since the settled predominance of Tory principles in her councils, still, the effects of her Parliamentary Opposition — the artillery of her Free Press — the voice, in short, of her people, which Mr. W. has so strangely mistaken, have not been without their effects; and, though some flagrant acts of injustice have stained her recent annals, we still venture to hope that the dread of the British public is felt as far as Petersburg and Vienna; and would fain indulge ourselves with the belief, that it may yet scare some Imperial spoiler from a part of his prey, and lighten, if not break, the chains of many distant captives.

It is in aid of this generous, though perhaps decaying influence — it is as an associate or successor in the noble office of patronizing and protecting General Liberty, that we now call upon America to throw from her the memory of all petty differences and nice offences, and to unite herself cordially with the liberal and enlightened part of the English nation, at a season when their joint efforts may be all little enough to crown the good cause with success, and when their disunion will give dreadful advantages to the enemies of improvement and reform. The *example* of America has already done much for that cause; and the very existence of such a country, under such a government, is a tower of strength, and a standard of encouragement, for all who may hereafter have to struggle for the restoration or the extension of their rights. It shows within what wide limits popular institutions are safe and practicable; and what a large infusion of democracy is consistent with the authority of government and the good order of society. But her *influence*, as well as her example, will be wanted in the crisis which seems to be approaching: — and that influence must be paralyzed and inoperative, if she shall think it a duty to divide herself from England; to look with jealousy upon her proceedings, and to judge unfavourably of all the parties she contains. We do not ask her to think well of *that* party, whether in power or out of it, which has always insulted and reviled her, because she is free and independent, and democratic and prosperous: — but we do confidently lay claim to her favourable opinion for that great majority of the nation which has always been opposed to this party — which has partaken with her in the honour of its reproaches, and is bound, by every consideration of interest and duty, consistency and common sense, to maintain her rights and her reputation, and to promote and proclaim her prosperity.

To which of these parties *we* belong, and to which our pen has been devoted, we suppose it is unnecessary for us to announce, even in America; and therefore, without recapitulating any part of what has just been said, we think we may assume, in the outset, that the charge exhibited against us by Mr. W. is, at least, and on its face, a very unlikely and improbable one — that we are actuated by jealousy and spite towards America, and have joined in a scheme of systematic defamation, in order to diffuse among our countrymen a general sentiment of hostility and dislike to her! Grievous as this charge is, we should scarcely have thought it necessary to reply to it, had not the question appeared to us to relate to something of far higher importance than the character of our Journal, or the justice or injustice of an imputation on the principles of a few anonymous writers. In that case, we should have left the matter, as all the world knows we have uniformly left it in other cases, to be determined by our readers upon the evidence before them. But Mr. W. has been pleased to do us the honour of identifying us with the great Whig party of this country, or, rather, of considering us as the exponents of those who support the principles of liberty, as it is understood in England: — and to think his case sufficiently made out against the nation at large, if he

can prove that both the EDINBURGH and the QUARTERLY REVIEW had given proof of deliberate malice and shameful unfairness on the subject of America. Now *this*, it must be admitted, gives the question a magnitude that would not otherwise belong to it; and makes what might in itself be a mere personal or literary altercation, a matter of national moment and concernment. If a sweeping conviction of mean jealousy and rancorous hostility is to be entered up against the whole British nation, and a corresponding spirit to be conjured up in the breast of America, because it is alleged that the Edinburgh Review, as well as the Quarterly, has given proof of such dispositions,—then it becomes a question of no mean or ordinary importance, to determine whether this charge has been justly brought against that unfortunate journal, and whether its accuser has made out enough to entitle him to a verdict leading to such consequences.

It will be understood, that we deny altogether the justice of the charge:—but we wish distinctly to say in the beginning. that if it should appear to any one that, in the course of a great deal of hasty writing, by a variety of hands, in the course of twenty long years, some rash or petulant expressions had been admitted, at which the national pride of our Transatlantic brethren might be justly offended, we shall most certainly feel no anxiety to justify these expressions,—nor any fear that, with the liberal and reasonable part of the nation to which they relate, our avowal of regret for having employed them will not be received as a sufficient atonement. Even in private life, and without the provocation of public controversy, there are not many men who, in half the time we have mentioned, do not say some things to the slight or disparagement of their best friends; which, if all "set in a note-book, conned and got by rote," it might be hard to answer:—and yet, among people of ordinary sense or temper, such things never break any squares—and the dispositions are judged of by the general tenor of one's life and conduct, and not by a set of peevish phrases, curiously culled and selected out of his whole conversation. But we really do not think that we shall very much need the benefit of this plain consideration, and shall proceed straightway to our answer.

The sum of it is this—That, in point of fact, we have spoken far more good of America than ill—that in nine instances out of ten, where we have mentioned her, it has been for praise—and that in almost all that is essential or of serious importance, we have spoken *nothing but good;*—while our censures have been wholly confined to matters of inferior note, and generally accompanied with an apology for their existence, and a prediction of their speedy disappearance.

Whatever we have written seriously and with earnestness of America, has been with a view to conciliate towards her the respect and esteem of our own country; and we have scarcely named her, in any deliberate manner, except for the purpose of impressing upon our readers the signal prosperity she has enjoyed—the magical rapidity of her advances in wealth and population—and the extraordinary power and greatness to which she is evidently destined. On these subjects we have held but one language, and one tenor of sentiment; and have never missed an opportunity of enforcing our views on our readers—and that not feebly, coldly, or reluctantly, but with all the earnestness and energy of which we were capable; and we do accordingly take upon us to say, that in no European publication have those views been urged with the same force or frequency, or resumed at every season, and under every change of circumstances, with such steadiness and uniformity. We have been equally consistent and equally explicit, in pointing out the advantages which that country has derived from the extent of her elective system—the lightness of her public burdens—the freedom of her press—and the independent spirit of her people. The praise of the Government is implied in the praise of these institutions; but we have not omitted upon every occasion to testify, in express terms, to its general wisdom, equity, and prudence. Of the character of the people, too, in all its more serious aspects, we have spoken with the same undeviating favour; and have always represented them as brave, enterprising, acute, industrious, and patriotic. We need not load our pages with quotations to prove the accuracy of this representation—our whole work is full of them; and Mr. W. himself has quoted enough, both in the outset of his book

and in the body of it, to satisfy even such as may take their information from him, that such have always been our opinions. Mr. W. indeed seems to imagine, that other passages, which he has cited, import a contradiction or retractation of these; and that we are thus involved, not only in the guilt of malice, but the awkwardness of inconsistency. Now this, as we take it, is one of the radical and almost unaccountable errors with which the work before us is chargeable. There is no such retractation, and no contradiction. We can of course do no more, on a point like this, than make a distinct asseveration; but, after having perused Mr. W.'s book, and with a pretty correct knowledge of the Review, we do say distinctly that there is not to be found in either a single passage inconsistent, or at all at variance with the sentiments to which we have just alluded. We have never spoken but in one way of the prosperity and future greatness of America, and of the importance of cultivating amicable relations with her — never but in one way of the freedom, cheapness, and general wisdom of her government — never but in one way of the bravery, intelligence, activity, the patriotism of her people. The points on which Mr. W. accuses us of malice and unfairness, all relate, as we shall see immediately, to other and far less considerable matters.

Assuming, then, as we must now do, that upon the subjects that have been specified, our testimony has been eminently and exclusively favourable to America, and that we have never ceased earnestly to recommend the most cordial and friendly relations with her, how, it may be asked, is it *possible* that we should have deserved to be classed among the chief and most malignant of her calumniators, or accused of a design to excite hostility to her in the body of our nation? and even represented as making reciprocal hostility a point of duty in her, by the excesses of our obloquy? For ourselves, we profess to be as little able to answer this question, as the most ignorant of our readers; — but we shall lay before them some account of the proofs on which Mr. W. relies for our condemnation; and cheerfully submit to any sentence which these may seem to justify. There are a variety of counts in our indictment; but, in so far as we have been able to collect, the heads of our offending are as follows. 1st, That we have noticed, with uncharitable and undue severity, the admitted want of indigenous literature in America, and the scarcity of men of genius; 2d, as an illustration of that charge, That we have laughed too ill-naturedly at the affectations of Joel Barlow's Columbiad, made an unfair estimate of the merits of Marshall's History, and Adams's Letters, and spoken illiberally of the insignificance of certain American Philosophical Transactions; 3dly, That we have represented the manners of the fashionable society of America as less polished and agreeable than those of Europe,— the lower orders as impertinently inquisitive, and the whole as too vain of their country; 4th, and finally, That we have reproached them too bitterly with their negro slavery.

These, we think, are the whole, and certainly they are the chief, of the charges against us; and, before saying any thing as to the particulars, we should just like to ask, whether, if they were all admitted to be true, they would afford any sufficient grounds, especially when set by the side of the favourable representations we have made with so much more earnestness on points of much more importance, for imputing to their authors, and to the whole body of their countrymen, a systematic design to make America odious and despicable in the eyes of the rest of the world? This charge, we will confess, appears to us most extravagant — and, when the facts already stated are taken into view, altogether ridiculous. Though we are the friends and well-wishers of the Americans — though we think favourably, and even highly, of many things in their institutions, government, and character, — we are not their stipendiary Laureates or blind adulators; and must insist on our right to take notice of what we conceive to be their errors and defects, with the same freedom which we use to our own and to all other nations. It has already been shown, that we have by no means confined ourselves to this privilege of censure; and the complaint seems to be, that we should ever have presumed to use it at all. We really do not understand this. We have spoken much more favourably of their government and institutions than we have done of our own. We have criticized their authors with at least as much indulgence, and spoken of their national character in terms of equal

respect: but because we have pointed out certain *undeniable* defects, and laughed at some *indefensible* absurdities, we are accused of the most partial and unfair nationality, and represented as engaged in a conspiracy to bring the whole nation into disrepute! Even if we had the misfortune to differ in opinion with Mr. W., or the majority of his countrymen, on most of the points to which our censure has been directed, instead of having his substantial admission of their justice in most instances, this, it humbly appears to us, would neither be a good ground for questioning our good faith, nor a reasonable occasion for denouncing general hostility against the country to which we belong. Men may differ conscientiously in their taste in literature and manners, and in their opinions as to the injustice or sinfulness of domestic slavery; and may express their opinions in public — or so at least we have fancied — without being actuated by spite or malignity. But a very slight examination of each of the articles of charge will show still more clearly upon what slight grounds they have been hazarded, and how much more of spleen than of reason there is in the accusation.

1. Upon the *first* head, Mr. W. neither does, nor can deny, that our statements are perfectly correct. The Americans have scarcely any literature of their own growth — and scarcely any authors of celebrity.* The fact is too remarkable not to have been noticed by all who have had occasion to speak of them; — and we have only to add, that, so far from bringing it forward in an insulting or invidious manner, we have never, we believe, alluded to it without adding such explanations as in candour we thought due, and as were calculated to take from it all shadow of offence. So early as in our third Number (printed in 1802), we observed that "Literature was one of those *finer Manufactures* which a new country will always find it better to import than to raise;" — and, after showing that the want of leisure and hereditary wealth naturally led to this arrangement, we added, that "the Americans had shown abundance of talent, wherever inducements had been held out for its exertion; that their party-pamphlets were written with great keenness and spirit; and that their orators frequently displayed a vehemence, correctness, and animation, that would command the admiration of any European audience." Mr. W. has himself quoted the warm testimony we bore, in our 12th Volume, to the merits of the papers published under the title of The Federalist: and in our 16th, we observe, that when America once turned her attention to letters, "we had no doubt that her authors would improve and multiply, to a degree that would make all our exertions necessary to keep the start we have of them." In a subsequent Number, we add the important remark, that "among them, the men who *write* bear no proportion to those who *read;*" and that, though they have as yet but few native authors, "the individuals are innumerable who make use of literature to improve their understandings, and add to their happiness." The very same ideas are expressed in a late article, which seems to have given Mr. W. very great offence — though we can discover nothing in the passage in question, except the liveliness of the style, that can afford room for misconstruction. "Native literature," says the Reviewer, "the Americans have none: it is all imported. And why should they write books, when a six weeks' passage brings them, in their own tongue, our sense, science, and genius, in bales and hogsheads?" — Now, what is the true meaning of this, but the following — "the Americans do not write books; but it must not be inferred, from this, that they are ignorant or indifferent about literature. — The true reason is, that they get books enough from us in their own language; and are, in this respect, just in the condition of any of our great trading or manufacturing districts at home, within the locality of which there is no encouragement for *authors* to settle, though there is at least as much reading and thinking as in other places." This has all along been our meaning — and we think it has been clearly enough expressed. The Americans, in fact, are at least as great readers as the English, and take off immense editions of all our popular works; — and while we have repeatedly stated the causes that have probably withheld them from becoming authors

* This might require more qualification now, than in 1820, when it was written — or rather, than in 1810, before which almost all the reviews containing the assertion had appeared.

in great numbers themselves, we confidently deny that we have ever represented them as illiterate, or negligent of learning.

2. As to our particular criticisms on American works, we cannot help feeling that our justification will be altogether as easy as in the case of our general remarks on their rarity. Nothing, indeed, can more strikingly illustrate the unfortunate prejudice or irritation under which Mr. W. has composed this part of his work, than the morose and angry remarks he has made on our very innocent and good-natured critique of Barlow's Columbiad. It is very true that we have laughed at his strange neologisms, and pointed out some of its other manifold faults. But is it possible for any one seriously to believe, that this gentle castigation was dictated by national animosity? — or does Mr. W. really believe that, if the same work had been published in England, it would have met with a milder treatment? If the book was so bad, however, he insinuates, why take any notice of it, if not to indulge your malignity? To this we answer, *first*, That a handsome quarto of verse from a country which produces so few, necessarily attracted our attention more strongly than if it had appeared among ourselves; *secondly*, That its faults were of so peculiar and amusing a kind, as to call for animadversion rather than neglect; and, *thirdly*, what no reader of Mr. W.'s remarks would indeed anticipate, That, in spite of these faults, the book actually had merits that entitled it to notice; and that a very considerable part of our article is accordingly employed in bringing those merits into view. In common candour, we must say, Mr. W. should have acknowledged this, when complaining of the illiberal severity with which Mr. Barlow's work had been treated. For, the truth is, that we have given it fully as much praise as he, or any other intelligent American, can say it deserves; and have been at some pains in vindicating the author's sentiments from misconstruction, as well as rescuing his beauties from neglect. Yet Mr. W. is pleased to inform his reader, that the work " seems to have been committed to the Momus of the fraternity for especial diversion;" and is very surly and austere at " the exquisite jokes" of which he says it consists. We certainly do not mean to dispute with him about the quality of our jokes: — though we take leave to appeal to a gayer critic — or to himself in better humour — from his present sentence of reprobation. But he should have recollected, that, besides stating, in distinct terms, that "his versification was generally both soft and sonorous, and that there were many passages of rich and vigorous description, and some that might lay claim even to the praise of magnificence," the critics had summed up their observations by saying, " that the author's talents were evidently respectable; and that, severely as they had been obliged to speak of his taste and his diction, in a great part of the volume, they considered him a giant in comparison with many of the paltry and puling rhymesters who disgraced our English literature by their occasional success; and that, if he would pay some attention to purity of style and simplicity of composition, they had no doubt that he might produce something which English poets would envy, and English critics applaud."

Are there any traces here, we would ask, of national spite and hostility? — or is it not true, that our account of the poem is, on the whole, not only fair but favourable, and the tone of our remarks as good-humoured and friendly as if the author had been a whiggish Scotchman? As to "Marshall's Life of Washington," we do not think that Mr. W. differs very much from the Reviewers. He says, " he does not mean to affirm that the story of their Revolution has been told *absolutely well* by this author;" and we, after complaining of its being cold, heavy, and tedious, have distinctly testified, that " it displayed industry, good sense, and, in so far as we could judge, laudable impartiality; and that the style, though neither elegant nor impressive, was yet, upon the whole, clear and manly." Mr. W., however, thinks that nothing but national spite and illiberality can account for our saying, that "Mr. M. must not promise himself a reputation commensurate with the *dimensions* of his work;" and that "what passes with him for dignity, will, by his readers, be pronounced dulness and frigidity:" and then he endeavours to show, that a passage in which we say that "Mr. Marshall's narrative is *deficient* in *almost* every thing that constitutes historical excellence," is glaringly inconsistent with the favourable sentence we have transcribed in the beginning; not seeing, or not

choosing to see, that in the one place we are speaking of the *literary* merits of the work as an historical *composition*, and in the other of its value in respect of the views and information it supplies. But the question is not, whether our criticism is just and able, or otherwise; but whether it indicates any little spirit of detraction and national rancour — and this it would seem not very difficult to answer. If we had taken the occasion of this publication to gather together all the foolish, and awkward, and disreputable things that occurred in the conduct of the revolutionary councils and campaigns, and to make the history of this memorable struggle, a vehicle for insinuations against the courage or integrity of many who took part in it, we might, with reason, have been subjected to the censure we now confidently repel. But there is not a word in the article that looks that way; and the only ground for the imputation is that we have called Mr. Marshall's book dull and honest, accurate and heavy, valuable and tedious, while neither Mr. Walsh, nor any body else, ever thought or said any thing else of it. It is his style only that we object to. Of his general sentiments — of the conduct and character of his hero — and of the prospects of his country, we speak as the warmest friends of America, and the warmest admirers of American virtue, would wish us to speak. We shall add but one short passage as a specimen of the real tone of this insolent and illiberal production.

"History has no other example of so happy an issue to a revolution, consummated by a long civil war. Indeed it seems to be very near a maxim in political philosophy, that a free government cannot be obtained where a long employment of military force has been necessary, to establish it. In the case of America, however, the military power was, by a rare felicity, disarmed by that very influence which makes a revolutionary army so formidable to liberty: for the images of Grandeur and Power — those meteor lights that are exhaled in the stormy atmosphere of a revolution, to allure the ambitious and dazzle the weak — made no impression on the firm and virtuous soul of the American commander."

As to Adams's Letters on Silesia, the case is nearly the same. We certainly do not run into extravagant compliments to the author, because he happens to be the son of the American President: but he is treated with sufficient courtesy and respect; and Mr. W. cannot well deny that the book is very fairly rated, according to its intrinsic merits. There is no ridicule, nor any attempt at sneering, throughout the article. The work is described as "easy and pleasant, and entertaining," — as containing some excellent remarks on Education, — and indicating, throughout, "that settled attachment to freedom which is worked into the Constitution of every man of virtue who has the fortune to belong to a free and prosperous community." As to the style, we remark, certainly in a very good-natured and inoffensive manner, that "though it is remarkably free from those affectations and corruptions of phrase that overrun the compositions of his country, a few national, perhaps we might still venture to call them provincial, peculiarities, might be detected;" and then we add, in a style which we do not think can appear impolite, even to a minister plenipotentiary, "that if men of birth and education in that other England which they are building up in the West, will not diligently study the great authors who fixed and purified the language of our common forefathers, we must soon lose the only badge that is still worn of our consanguinity." Unless the Americans are really to set up a new standard of speech, we conceive that these remarks are perfectly just and unanswerable; and we are sure, at all events, that nothing can be farther from a spirit of insult or malevolence.

Our critique on the volume of American Transactions is perhaps *more liable to objection;* and, on looking back to it, we at once admit that it contains some petulant and rash expressions which had better have been omitted — and that its general tone is less liberal and courteous than might have been desired. It is remarkable, however, that this, which is by far the most offensive of our discussions on American literature, is one of the earliest, and that the sarcasms with which it is seasoned have never been repeated — a fact which, with many others, may serve to expose the singular inaccuracy with which Mr. W. has been led, throughout his work, to assert that we began our labours with civility and kindness towards his country, and have only lately changed our tone, and joined its inveterate enemies in all the extravagance of abuse. The substance of our criticism, it does not seem to be disputed,

was just — the volume containing very little that was at all interesting, and a good part of it being composed in a style very ill suited for such a publication.

Such are the perversions of our critical office which Mr. W. can only explain on the supposition of national jealousy and malice. As proofs of an opposite disposition, we beg leave just to refer to our lavish and reiterated praise of the writings of Franklin — to our high and distinguished testimony to the merits of The Federalist — to the terms of commendation in which we have spoken of the Journal of Messrs. Lewis and Clarke; and, in an especial manner, to the great kindness with which we have treated a certain American pamphlet, published at Philadelphia and London in 1810, and of which we shall have a word to say hereafter, — though each and all of those performances touched much more nearly on subjects of national contention, and were far more apt to provoke feelings of rivalry, than any thing in the Philosophical Transactions, or the tuneful pages of the Columbiad.

3. We come now to the ticklish Chapter of Manners; on which, though we have said less than on any other, we suspect we have given more offence—and, if possible, with less reason. We may despatch the lower orders first, before we come to the people of fashion. The charge here is, that we have unjustly libelled those persons, by saying, in one place, that they were too much addicted to spirituous liquors; in another, that they were rudely inquisitive; and in a third, that they were absurdly vain of their free constitution, and offensive in boasting of it. Now, we may have been mistaken in making these imputations; but we find them stated in the narrative of *every* traveller who has visited their country; and most of them noticed by the better writers among themselves, from Franklin to Cooper inclusive. We have noticed them, too, without bitterness or insult, and generally in the words of the authors upon whose authority they are stated. Neither are the imputations themselves very grievous, or such as can be thought to bespeak any great malignity in their authors. Their inquisitiveness, and the boast of their freedom, are but excesses of laudable qualities; and intemperance, though it is apt to lead further, is, in itself, a sin rather against prudence than morality. Mr. W. is infinitely offended, too, because we have said, " that the people of the Western States are very hospitable to strangers—*because* they are seldom troubled with them, and because they have always plenty of maize and hams;" as if this were not the *rationale* of *all* hospitality among the lower orders, throughout the world,—and familiarly applied, among ourselves, to the case of our Highlanders and remote Irish. But slight as these charges are, we may admit, that Mr. W. would have had some reason to complain, if they had included all that we had ever said of the great bulk of his nation. But the truth is, that we have all along been much more careful to notice their virtues than their faults, and have lost no fair opportunity of speaking well of them. In our 23rd Number, we have said, " The great body of the American people is *better educated*, and more comfortably situated, than the bulk of *any* European community; and possesses all the accomplishments that are anywhere to be found in persons of the same occupation and condition." And more recently, " The Americans are about as polished as 99 out of 100 of our own countrymen, in the upper ranks; and *quite as moral, and well educated, in the lower.* Their virtues too are such as we ought to admire; for they are those on which we value ourselves most highly." We have never said any thing inconsistent with this: — and if this be to libel a whole nation, and vilify and degrade them in comparison of ourselves, we have certainly been guilty of that enormity.

As for the manners of the upper classes, we have really said very little about them, and can scarcely recollect having given any positive opinion upon the subject. We have lately quoted, with warm approbation, Captain Hall's strong and very respectable testimony to their agreeableness — and certainly have never contradicted it on our own authority. We have made however certain hypothetical and conjectural observations, which, we gather from Mr. W., have given some offence — we must say, we think, very unreasonably. We have said, for example, as already quoted, that "the Americans are about as polished as 99 in 100 of our own countrymen in the upper ranks." Is it the reservation of this inconsiderable fraction in our own favour that is resented? Why, our very *seniority*, we think, might have

entitled us to this precedence: and we must say that our monarchy — our nobility — our greater proportion of hereditary wealth, and our closer connection with the old civilized world, might have justified a higher per-centage. But we will not dispute with Mr. W. even upon this point. Let him set down the fraction, if he pleases, to the score merely of our national partiality;—and he must estimate that element very far indeed below its ordinary standard, if he does not find it sufficient for it, without the supposition of intended insult or malignity. Was there ever any great nation that did not prefer its own manners to those of any of its neighbours?—or can Mr. W. produce another instance in which it was ever before allowed, that a rival came so near as to be within one hundredth of its own excellence.

But there is still something worse than this. Understanding that the most considerable persons in the chief cities of America were their opulent merchants, we conjectured that their society was probably much of the same description with that of Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow: — and does Mr. W. really think there is any disparagement in this? — Does he not know that these places have been graced, for generations, by some of the most deserving and enlightened citizens, and some of the most learned and accomplished men that have ever adorned our nation? Does he not know that Adam Smith, and Reid, and Miller, spent their happiest days in Glasgow; that Roscoe and Currie illustrated the society of Liverpool — and Priestley, and Ferriar, and Darwin, that of Manchester? The wealth and skill and enterprise of all the places is equally indisputable — and we confess we are yet to learn in which of the elements of respectability they can be imagined to be inferior to New York, or Baltimore, or Philadelphia.

But there is yet another passage in the Review which Mr. W. has quoted as insulting and vituperative — for such a construction of which we confess ourselves still less able to divine a reason. It is part of an honest and very earnest attempt to overcome the high monarchical prejudices of a part of our own country against the Americans, and notices this objection to their manners only collaterally and hypothetically. Mr. W. needs not be told that all courtiers and zealots of monarchy impute rudeness and vulgarity to republicans. The French used to describe an inelegant person as having "Les manières d'un Suisse, En Hollande civilisé;"—and the Court faction among ourselves did not omit this reproach when we went to war with the Americans. To expose the absurdity of such an attack, we expressed ourselves in 1814 as follows.

"The complaint respecting America is, that there are no people of fashion, — that their column still wants its Corinthian capital, or, in other words, that those who are rich and idle, have not yet existed so long, or in such numbers, as to have brought to full perfection that system of ingenious trifling and elegant dissipation, by means of which it has been discovered that wealth and leisure may be most agreeably disposed of. Admitting the fact to be so, and in a country where there is no court, no nobility, and no monument or tradition of chivalrous usages, — and where, moreover, the greatest number of those who are rich and powerful have raised themselves to that eminence by mercantile industry, we really do not see how it could well be otherwise; we would still submit, that this is no lawful cause either for national contempt or for national hostility. It is a peculiarity in the structure of society among that people, which, we take it, can only give offence to their visiting acquaintance; and, while it does us no sort of harm while it subsists, promises, we think, very soon to disappear altogether, and no longer to afflict even our imagination. The number of individuals born to the enjoyment of hereditary wealth is, or at least was, daily increasing in that country; and it is impossible that their multiplication (with all the models of European refinement before them, and all the advantages resulting from a free government and a general system of good education) should fail, within a very short period, to give birth to a *better tone of conversation and society*, and *to manners more dignified and refined*. Unless we are very much misinformed, indeed, *the symptoms* of such a change may already be traced in their cities. Their youths of fortune already travel over all the countries of Europe for their improvement; and specimens are occasionally met with, even in these islands, which, with all our prejudices, we must admit, would do no discredit to the best blood of the land from which they originally sprung."

Now, is there really any matter of offence in this? — In the first place, is it not substantially true? — in the next place, is it not mildly and respectfully stated? Is it not true, that the greater part of those who compose the higher society of the American cities, have raised themselves to opulence by commercial pursuits? — and is it to be imagined that, in America alone, this is not to produce its usual effects upon the style and tone of society? As

families become old, and hereditary wealth comes to be the portion of many, it cannot but happen that a change of manners will take place;—and is it an insult to suppose that this change will be an improvement? Surely they cannot be *perfect*, both as they are, and as they are to be; and, while it seems impossible to doubt that a considerable change is inevitable, the offence seems to be, that it is expected to be for the better! It is impossible, we think, that Mr. W. can seriously imagine that the manners of any country upon earth can be so dignified and refined—or their tone of conversation and society so good, when the most figuring persons come into company from the desk and the counting-house, as when they pass only from one assembly to another, and have had no other study or employment from their youth up, than to render society agreeable, and to cultivate those talents and manners which give its charm to polite conversation. If there are any persons in America who seriously dispute the accuracy of these opinions, we are pretty confident that they will turn out to be those whom the rest of the country would refer to in illustration of their truth. The truly polite, we are persuaded, will admit the case to be pretty much as we have stated it. The upstarts alone will contend for their present perfection. If we have really been so unfortunate as to give any offence by our observations, we suspect that offence will be greater at Cincinnati than at New York,—and not quite so slight at New York as at Philadelphia or Boston.

But we have no desire to pursue this topic any further—nor any interest indeed to convince those who may not be already satisfied. If Mr. W. really thinks us wrong in the opinions we have now expressed, we are willing for the present to be thought so: but surely we have said enough to show that we had plausible grounds for those opinions; and surely, if we did entertain them, it was impossible to express them in a manner less offensive. We did not even recur to the topic spontaneously—but occasionally took it up in a controversy on behalf of America, with a party of our own countrymen. What we said was not addressed *to* America—but said *of* her; and, most indisputably, with friendly intentions to the people of both countries.

But we have dwelt too long on this subject. The manners of fashionable life, and the rivalry of *bon ton* between one country and another, is, after all, but a poor affair to occupy the attention of philosophers, or affect the peace of nations.—Of what real consequence is it to the happiness or glory of a country, how a few thousand idle people—probably neither the most virtuous nor the most useful of their fellow citizens—pass their time, or divert the ennui of their inactivity?—And men must really have a great propensity to hate each other, when it is thought a reasonable ground of quarrel, that the rich *désœuvrés* of one country are accused of not knowing how to get through their day so cleverly as those of another. Manners alter from age to age, and from country to country, and much is at all times arbitrary and conventional in that which is esteemed the best. What pleases and amuses each people the most, is the best for that people: and, where states are tolerably equal in power and wealth, a great and irreconcileable diversity is often maintained with suitable arrogance and inflexibility, and no common standard recognized or dreamed of. The *bon ton* of Pekin has no sort of affinity, we suppose, with the *bon ton* of Paris—and that of Constantinople but little resemblance to either. The difference, to be sure, is not so complete within the limits of Europe; but it is sufficiently great, to show the folly of being dogmatical or intolerant upon a subject so incapable of being reduced to principle. The French accuse us of coldness and formality, and we accuse them of monkey tricks and impertinence. The good company of Rome would be much at a loss for amusement at Amsterdam; and that of Brussels at Madrid. The manners of America, then, are probably the best for America: but, for that very reason, they are not the best for us: and when we hinted that they probably might be improved, we spoke with reference to the European standard, and to the feelings and judgment of strangers, to whom that standard alone was familiar. When their circumstances, and the structure of their society, come to be more like those of Europe, their manners will be more like—and they will suit better with those altered circumstances. When the fabric has reached its utmost elevation, the Corin-

thian capital may be added: for the present, the Doric is perhaps more suitable; and, if the style be kept pure, we are certain it will be equally graceful.

4. It only remains to notice what is said with regard to Negro Slavery;—and on this we shall be very short. We have no doubt spoken very warmly on the subject in one of our late Numbers;—but Mr. W. must have read what we there said, with a jaundiced eye indeed, if he did not see that our warmth proceeded, not from any animosity against the people, among whom this miserable institution existed, but against the institution itself—and was mainly excited by the contrast that it presented to the freedom and prosperity upon which it was so strangely engrafted;—thus appearing

——"Like a stain upon a Vestal's robe,
The worse for what it soils."—

Accordingly, we do not call upon other nations to hate and despise America for this practice; but upon *the Americans themselves* to wipe away this foul blot from their character. We have a hundred times used the same language to our own countrymen—and repeatedly on the subject of the Slave Trade;—and Mr. W. cannot be ignorant, that many pious and excellent citizens of his own country have expressed themselves in similar terms with regard to this very institution. As to his recriminations on England, we shall explain to Mr. W. immediately, that they have no bearing whatever on the question now at issue between us; and, though nobody can regret more than we do the domestic slavery of our West India islands, it is quite absurd to represent the difficulties of the abolition as at all parallel in the case of America. It is still confidently asserted that, without slaves, those Islands could not be maintained; and, independent of private interests, the trade of England cannot afford to part with them. But will any body pretend to say, that the great and comparatively temperate regions over which the American Slavery extends, would be deserted, if all their inhabitants were free—or even that they would be permanently less populous or less productive? We are perfectly aware, that a sudden or immediate emancipation of all those who are now in slavery, might be attended with frightful disorders, as well as intolerable losses; and, accordingly, we have nowhere recommended any such measure: but we must repeat, that it is a crime and a shame, that the freest nation on the earth should keep a million and a half of fellow-creatures in actual chains, within the very territory and sanctuary of their freedom; and should see them multiplying, from day to day, without thinking of any provision for their *ultimate* liberation. When we say this, we are far from doubting, that there are many amiable and excellent individuals among the slave proprietors. There were many such among the importers of slaves in our West Indies: yet, it is not the less true, that that accursed traffic was a crime—and it was so called, in the most emphatic language, and with general assent, year after year, in Parliament, without any one ever imagining that this imported a personal attack on those individuals, far less a malignant calumny upon the nation which tolerated and legalized their proceedings.

Before leaving this topic, we have to thank Mr. W. for a great deal of curious, and, to us, original information, as to the history of the American slave trade, and the measures pursued by the different States with regard to the institution of Slavery: from which we learn, among other things, that, so early as 1767, the legislature of Massachussets brought in a bill for prohibiting the importation of negroes into that province, which was rejected by the British governor, in consequence of express instructions;—and another in 1774 shared the same fate. We learn also, that, in 1770, two years *before* the decision of Somerset's case in England, the courts of the same distinguished province decided, upon solemn argument, that no person could be held in slavery within their jurisdiction; and awarded not only their freedom, but wages for their past services, to a variety of negro suitors. These, indeed, are fair subjects of pride and exultation; and we hail them, without grudging, as bright trophies in the annals of the States to which they relate. But do not *their* glories cast a deeper shade on those who have refused to follow the example—and may *we* not now be allowed to speak of the guilt and unlawfulness of slavery, as their own countrymen are praised and

boasted of for having spoken, so many years ago?

We learn also from Mr. W., that Virginia abolished the foreign slave trade so early as 1778 — Pennsylvania in 1780 — Massachussets in 1787 — and Connecticut and Rhode Island in 1788. It was finally interdicted by the General Congress in 1794; and made punishable as a crime, seven years before that measure was adopted in England. We have great pleasure in stating these facts. But they all appear to us not only incongruous with the permanent existence of slavery, but as indicating those very feelings with regard to it which we have been so severely blamed for expressing.

We here close our answer to Mr. W.'s charges. Our readers, we fear, have been for some time tired of it: and, indeed, we have felt all along that there was something absurd in answering gravely to such an accusation. If any regular reader of our Review could be of opinion that we were hostile to America, and desirous of fomenting hostility between her and this country, we could scarcely hope that he would change that opinion for any thing we have now been saying. But Mr. W.'s book may fall into the hands of many, in his own country at least, to whom our writings are but little known; and the imputations it contains may become known to many who never inquire into their grounds: on such persons, the statements we have now made may produce some impression — and the spirit in which they are made perhaps still more. Our labour will not have been in vain, if there are any that rise up from the perusal of these pages with a better opinion of their transatlantic brethren, and an increased desire to live with them in friendship and peace.

There still remains behind, a fair moiety of Mr. W.'s book; containing his recriminations on England—his exposition of "her sores and blotches" — and his retort courteous for all the abuse which her writers have been pouring on his country for the last hundred years. The task, we should think, must have been rather an afflicting one to a man of much moral sensibility: — but it is gone through very resolutely, and with marvellous industry. The learned author has not only ransacked forgotten histories and files of old newspapers in search of disreputable transactions and degrading crimes — but has groped, for the materials of our dishonour, among the filth of Dr. Colquhoun's Collections, and the Reports of our Prison and Police Committees — culled vituperative exaggerations from the record of angry debates — and produced, as incontrovertible evidence of the excess of our guilt and misery, the fervid declamations of moralists exhorting to amendment, or of satirists endeavouring to deter from vice. Provincial misgovernment, from Ireland to Hindostan — cruel amusements — increasing pauperism — disgusting brutality — shameful ignorance — perversion of law — grinding taxation — brutal debauchery, and many other traits equally attractive, are all heaped together, as the characteristics of English society; and unsparingly illustrated by "loose extracts from English Journals," — quotations from Espriella's Letters — and selections from the Parliamentary Debates. Accustomed, as we have long been, to mark the vices and miseries of our countrymen, we really cannot say that we recognize any likeness in this distorted representation; which exhibits our fair England as one great lazar-house of moral and intellectual disease — one hideous and bloated mass of sin and suffering — one festering heap of corruption, infecting the wholesome air which breathes upon it, and diffusing all around the contagion and the terror of its example.

We have no desire whatever to *argue* against the truth or the justice of this picture of our country; which we can assure Mr. W. we contemplate with perfect calmness and equanimity; but we are tempted to set against it the judgment of another foreigner, with whom he cannot complain of being confronted, and whose authority at this moment stands higher, perhaps, with the whole civilized world, than that of any other individual. We allude to Madame de Staël — and to the splendid testimony she has borne to the character and happiness of the English nation, in her last admirable book on the Revolution of her own country. But we have spoken of this work so lately, that we shall not now recall the attention of our readers to it further than by this general reference. We rather wish, at present, to lay before them an *American* authority.

In a work of great merit, entitled "A Letter on the Genius and Dispositions of the French Government," published at Philadelphia in 1810, and which attracted much notice, both there and in this country, the author, in a strain of great eloquence and powerful reasoning, exhorts his country to make common cause with England in the great struggle in which she was then engaged with the giant power of Bonaparte, and points out the many circumstances in the character and condition of the two countries that invited them to a cordial alliance. He was well aware, too, of the distinction we have endeavoured to point out between the Court, or the Tory rulers of the State, and the body of our People: and, after observing that the American Government, by following his councils, might retrieve the character of their country, he adds, "They will, I am quite sure, be seconded by an entire correspondence of feeling, not only on our part, but on that of the PEOPLE of England — whatever may be the narrow policy, or illiberal prejudices, of the British MINISTRY;" — and, in the body of his work, he gives an ample and glowing description of the character and condition of that England of which we have just seen so lamentable a representation. The whole passage is too long for insertion; but the following extracts will afford a sufficient specimen of its tone and tenor.

"A peculiar masculine character, and the utmost energy of feeling, are communicated to all orders of men, — by the abundance which prevails so universally, — the consciousness of equal rights, — the fulness of power and fame to which the nation has attained, — and the beauty and robustness of the species under a climate highly favourable to the animal economy. The dignity of the rich is without insolence, — the subordination of the poor without servility. Their freedom is well guarded, both from the dangers of popular licentiousness, and from the encroachments of authority. — Their national pride leads to national sympathy, and is built upon the most legitimate of all foundations — a sense of pre-eminent merit and a body of illustrious annals.

"Whatever may be the representations of those, who, with little knowledge of facts, and still less soundness or impartiality of judgment, affect to deplore the condition of England, — it is nevertheless true, that there does not exist, and never has existed elsewhere, — so beautiful and perfect a model of public and private prosperity, — so magnificent, and at the same time, so solid a fabric of social happiness and national grandeur. *I pay this just tribute of admiration with the more pleasure, as it is to me in the light of an Atonement for the errors and prejudices, under which I laboured on this subject, before I enjoyed the advantage of a personal experience.* A residence of nearly two years in that country, — during which period I visited and studied almost every part of it, — with no other view or pursuit than that of obtaining correct information, and, I may add, with previous studies well fitted to promote my object, — convinced me that I had been egregiously deceived. I saw no instances of individual oppression, and scarcely any individual misery but that which belongs, under any circumstances of our being, to the infirmity of all human institutions. —

"The agriculture of England is confessedly superior to that of any other part of the world, and the condition of those who are engaged in the cultivation of the soil, incontestably preferable to that of the same class in any other section of Europe. An inexhaustible source of admiration and delight is found in the unrivalled beauty, as well as richness and fruitfulness of their husbandry; the effects of which are heightened by the magnificent parks and noble mansions of the opulent proprietors: by picturesque gardens upon the largest scale, and disposed with the most exquisite taste: and by Gothic remains no less admirable in their structure than venerable for their antiquity. The neat cottage, the substantial farmhouse, the splendid villa, are constantly rising to the sight, surrounded by the most choice and poetical attributes of the landscape. The vision is not more delightfully recreated by the rural scenery, than the moral sense is gratified, and the understanding elevated, by the institutions of this great country. The first and continued exclamation of an American who contemplates them with unbiassed judgment, is —

Salve! magna Parens frugum, Saturnia tellus!
Magna virum.

"It appears something *not less than Impious to desire the ruin of this people,* when you view the height to which they have carried the comforts, the knowledge, and the virtue of our species. the extent and number of their foundations of charity; their skill in the mechanic arts, by the improvement of which alone they have conferred inestimable benefits on mankind; the masculine morality, the lofty sense of independence, the sober and rational piety which are found in all classes; their impartial, decorous, and able administration of a code of laws, than which none more just and perfect has ever been in operation; their seminaries of education yielding more solid and profitable instruction than any other whatever; their eminence in literature and science — the urbanity and learning of their privileged orders — their deliberative assemblies, illustrated by so many profound statesmen, and brilliant orators. *It is worse than ingratitude in* US not to sympathize with them in their present struggle, when we recollect that it is from them we derive *the principal merit of our own* CHARACTER — *the best of our own institutions — the sources of our highest*

enjoyments—and *the light of Freedom itself*, which, if *they* should be destroyed, will *not long shed its radiance over this country*."

What will Mr. Walsh say to this picture of the country he has so laboured to degrade?—and what will our readers say, when they are told that Mr. Walsh himself is the author of this picture!

So, however, the fact unquestionably stands.—The book from which we have made the preceding extracts, was written and published, in 1810, by the very same individual who has now recriminated upon England in the volume which lies before us,—and in which he is pleased to speak with extreme severity of the *inconsistencies* he has detected in our Review!—That some discordant or irreconcileable opinions should be found in the miscellaneous writings of twenty years, and thirty or forty individuals under no effective control, may easily be imagined, and pardoned, we should think, without any great stretch of liberality. But such a transmutation of sentiments on the same identical subject—such a reversal of the poles of the same identical head, we confess has never before come under our observation; and is parallel to nothing that we can recollect, but the memorable transformation of *Bottom*, in the Midsummer Night's Dream. Nine years, to be sure, had intervened between the first and the second publication. But all the guilt and all the misery which is so diligently developed in the last, had been contracted before the first was thought of; and all the injuries, and provocations too, by which the exposition of them has lately become a duty. Mr. W. knew perfectly, in 1810, how England had behaved to her American colonies before the war of independence, and in what spirit she had begun and carried on that war:—our poor-rates and taxes, our bull-baitings and swindlings, were then nearly as visible as now. Mr. Colquhoun had, before that time, put forth his Political Estimate of our prostitutes and pickpockets; and the worthy Laureate his authentic Letters on the bad state of our parliaments and manufactures. Nay, the Edinburgh Review had committed the worst of those offences which now make hatred to England the duty of all true Americans, and had expressed little of that zeal for her friendship which appears in its subsequent Numbers. The Reviews of the American Transactions, and Mr. Barlow's Epic, of Adams's Letters, and Marshall's History, had all appeared before this time—and but very few of the articles in which the future greatness of the country is predicted, and her singular prosperity extolled.

How then is it to be accounted for, that Mr. W. should have taken such a favourable view of our state and merits in 1810, and so very different a one in 1819? There is but one explanation that occurs to us.—Mr. W., as appears from the passages just quoted, had been originally very much of the opinion to which he has now returned—for he tells us, that he considers the tribute of admiration which he there offers to our excellence, as an *atonement* for the errors and prejudices under which he laboured till he came among us—and hints pretty plainly, that he had formerly been *ungrateful* enough to disown all obligation to our race, and *impious* enough even to wish for our ruin. Now, from the tenor of the work before us, compared with these passages, it is pretty plain, we think, that Mr. W. has just *relapsed* into those damnable heresies, which we fear are epidemic in his part of the country—and from which nothing is so likely to deliver him, as a repetition of the same remedy by which they were formerly removed. Let him come again then to England, and try the effect of a second course of "personal experience and observation"—let him make another pilgrimage to Mecca, and observe whether his faith is not restored and confirmed—let him, like the Indians of his own world, visit the Tombs of his Fathers in the old land, and see whether he can *there* abjure the friendship of their other children? If he will venture himself among us for another two years' residence, we can promise him that he will find in substance the same England that he left:—our laws and our landscapes—our industry and urbanity;—our charities, our learning, and our personal beauty, he will find unaltered and unimpaired;—and we think we can even engage, that he shall find also a still greater "correspondence of feeling in the body of our People," and not a less disposition to welcome an accomplished stranger who comes to get rid of errors and prejudices, and to learn—or, if he

pleases, to teach the great lessons of a generous and indulgent philanthropy.

We have done, however, with this topic. We have a considerable contempt for the *argumentum ad hominem* in any case — and have no desire to urge it further at present. The truth is, that neither of Mr. W.'s portraitures of us appears to be very accurate. We are painted *en beau* in the one, and *en laid* in the other. The particular traits in each may be given with tolerable truth — but *the whole truth* most certainly is to be found in neither; and it will not even do to take them together — any more than it would do to make a correct likeness, by patching or compounding together a flattering portrait and a monstrous caricature. — We have but a word or two, indeed, to add on the general subject, before we take a final farewell of this discussion.

We admit that many of the charges which Mr. W. has here made against our country, are justly made — and that for many of the things with which he has reproached us, there is just cause of reproach. It would be strange, indeed, if we were to do otherwise — considering that it is from our pages that he has on many occasions borrowed the charge and the reproach. If he had stated them, therefore, with any degree of fairness or temper, and had not announced that they were brought forward as incentives to hostility and national alienation, we should have been so far from complaining of him, that we should have been heartily thankful for the services of such an auxiliary in our holy war against vice and corruption; and rejoiced to obtain the testimony of an impartial observer, in corroboration of our own earnest admonitions. Even as it is, we are inclined to think, that this exposition of our infirmities will rather do good than harm, so far as it produces any effect at all, in this country. Among our national vices, we have long reckoned an insolent and overweening opinion of our own universal superiority; and though it really does not belong to America to reproach as with *this* fault, and though the ludicrous exaggeration of Mr. W.'s charge is sure very greatly to weaken his authority, still such an alarming catalogue of our faults and follies may have some effect, as a wholesome mortification of our vanity. It is with a view to its probable effect in his own country, and to his avowal of the effect he wishes it to produce there, that we consider it as deserving of all reprobation: — and therefore beg leave to make one or two very short remarks on its manifest injustice, and indeed absurdity, in so far as relates to ourselves, and that great majority of the country, whom we believe to concur in our sentiments. The object of this violent invective on England is, according to the author's own admission, to excite a spirit of animosity in America, to meet and revenge that, which other invectives on our part are said to indicate here; and also to show the flagrant injustice and malignity of the said invectives: — and this is the shape of the argument — What right have you to abuse us for keeping and whipping slaves, when you yourselves whip your soldiers, and were so slow to give up your slave trade, and use your subjects so ill in India and Ireland? — or what right have you to call our Marshall a dull historian, when you have a Belsham and a Gifford who are still duller? Now, though this argument would never show that whipping slaves was a right thing, or that Mr. Marshall was not a dull writer, it might be a very smart and embarrassing retort to those among us who had defended our slave trade or our military floggings, or our treatment of Ireland and India — or who had held out Messrs. Belsham and Gifford as pattern historians, and ornaments of our national literature. But what meaning or effect can it have when addressed to those who have always testified against the wickedness and the folly of the practices complained of? and who have treated the Ultra-Whig and the Ultra-Tory historian with equal scorn and reproach? *We have* a right to censure cruelty and dulness abroad, *because* we have censured them with more and more frequent severity at home; — and their home existence, though it may prove indeed that our censures have not yet been effectual in producing amendment, can afford no sort of reason for not extending them where they might be more attended to.

We have generally blamed what we thought worthy of blame in America, without any express reference to parallel cases in England, or any invidious comparisons. Their books we have criticised just as we should have done those of any other country; and in speaking more generally of their literature and manners, we

have rather brought them into competition with those of Europe in general, than those of our own country in particular. — When we have made any comparative estimate of our own advantages and theirs, we can say with confidence, that it has been far oftener in their favour than against them; — and, after repeatedly noticing their preferable condition as to taxes, elections, sufficiency of employment, public economy, freedom of publication, and many other points of paramount importance, it surely was but fair that we should notice, in their turn, those merits or advantages which might reasonably be claimed for ourselves, and bring into view our superiority in eminent authors, and the extinction and annihilation of slavery in every part of our realm.

We would also remark, that while we have thus praised America far more than we have blamed her — and reproached *ourselves* far more bitterly than we have ever reproached her, Mr. W., while he affects to be merely following our example, has heaped abuse on us without one grain of commendation — and praised his own country extravagantly, without admitting one fault or imperfection. Now, this is not a fair way of retorting the proceedings, even of the Quarterly; for they have occasionally given some praise to America, and have constantly spoken ill enough of the paupers, and Radicals, and Reformers of England. But as to *us*, and the great body of the nation which think with us, it is a proceeding without the colour of justice or the shadow of apology — and is not a less flagrant indication of impatience or bad humour, than the marvellous assumption which runs through the whole argument, that it is an unpardonable insult and an injury to find *any fault* with *any thing* in America, — must necessarily proceed from national spite and animosity, and affords, whether true or false, sufficient reason for endeavouring to excite a corresponding animosity against our nation. Such, however, is the scope and plan of Mr. W.'s whole work. Whenever he thinks that his country has been erroneously accused, he points out the error with sufficient keenness and asperity; — but when he is aware that the imputation is just and unanswerable, instead of joining his rebuke or regret to those of her foreign censors, he turns fiercely and vindictively on the parallel infirmities of this country — as if those also had not been marked with reprobation, and without admitting that the censure was merited, or hoping that it might work amendment, complains in the bitterest terms of malignity, and rouses his country to revenge!

Which, then, we would ask, is the most fair and reasonable, or which the most truly patriotic?—We, who, admitting our own manifold faults and corruptions, testifying loudly against them, and feeling grateful to any foreign auxiliary who will help us to *reason*, to *rail*, or to *shame* our countrymen out of them, are willing occasionally to lend a similar assistance to others, and speak freely and fairly of what appear to us to be the faults and errors, as well as the virtues and merits, of all who may be in any way affected by our observations; — or Mr. Walsh, who will admit *no* faults in his own country, and *no* good qualities in ours — sets down the mere extension of our domestic censures to their corresponding objects abroad, to the score of national rancour and partiality; and can find no better use for those mutual admonitions, which should lead to mutual amendment or generous emulation, than to improve them into occasions of mutual animosity and deliberate hatred?

This extreme impatience, even of merited blame from the mouth of a stranger — this still more extraordinary abstinence from any hint or acknowledgment of error on the part of her intelligent defender, is a trait too remarkable not to call for some observation: — and we think we can see in it one of the worst and most unfortunate consequences of a republican government. It is the misfortune of sovereigns in general, that they are fed with flattery till they loathe the wholesome truth, and come to resent, as the bitterest of all offences, any insinuation of their errors, or intimation of their dangers. But of all sovereigns, *the Sovereign People* is most obnoxious to this corruption, and most fatally injured by its prevalence. In America, every thing depends on their suffrages, and their favour and support; and accordingly it would appear, that they are pampered with constant adulation, from the rival suitors for their favour — so that no one will venture to tell them of their faults: and moralists, even of the austere cha-

racter of Mr. W., *dare* not venture to whisper a syllable to their prejudice. It is thus, and thus only, that we can account for the strange sensitiveness which seems to prevail among them on the lightest sound of disapprobation, and for the acrimony with which, what would pass anywhere else for very mild admonitions, are repelled and resented. It is obvious, however, that nothing can be so injurious to the character either of an individual or a nation, as this constant and paltry cockering of praise; and that the want of any native censor, makes it more a duty for the moralists of other countries to take them under their charge, and let them know now and then what other people think and say of them.

We are anxious to part with Mr. W. in good humour; — but we must say that we rather wish he would not go on with the work he has begun — at least if it is to be pursued in the spirit which breathes in the part now before us. Nor is it so much to his polemic and vindictive tone that we object, as this tendency to adulation, this passionate, vapouring, rhetorical style of amplifying and exaggerating the felicities of his country. In point of talent, and knowledge, and industry, we have no doubt that he is eminently qualified for the task — (though we must tell him that he does not write so well now as when he left England) — but no man will ever write a book of authority on the institutions and resources of his country, who does not add some of the virtues of a Censor to those of a Patriot — or rather, who does not feel, that the noblest, as well as the most difficult part of patriotism, is that which prefers his country's *Good* to its *Favour*, and is more directed to reform its vices, than to cherish the pride of its virtues. With foreign nations, too, this tone of fondness and self-admiration is always suspected; and most commonly ridiculous — while calm and steady claims of merit, interspersed with acknowledgments of faults, are sure to obtain credit, and to raise the estimation both of the writer and of his country. The ridicule, too, which naturally attaches to this vehement self-laudation, must insensibly contract a darker shade of contempt, when it comes to be suspected that it does not proceed from mere honest vanity, but from a poor fear of giving offence to power — sheer want of courage, in short (in the wiser part at least of the population), to let their foolish ΔΗΜΟΣ know what in their hearts they think of him.

And now we must at length close this very long article — the very length and earnestness of which, we hope, will go some way to satisfy our American brethren of the importance we attach to their good opinion, and the anxiety we feel to prevent any national repulsion from being aggravated by a misapprehension of our sentiments, or rather of those of that great body of the English nation of which we are here the organ. In what we have now written, there may be much that requires explanation — and much, we fear, that is liable to misconstruction. — *The spirit* in which it is written however, cannot, we think, be misunderstood. We cannot descend to little cavils and altercations; and have no leisure to maintain a controversy about words and phrases. We have an unfeigned respect and affection for the free people of America; and we mean honestly to pledge ourselves for that of the better part of our own country. We are very proud of the extensive circulation of our Journal in that great country, and the importance that is there attached to it. But we should be undeserving of this favour, if we could submit to seek it by any mean practices, either of flattery or of dissimulation; and feel persuaded that we shall not only best deserve, but most surely obtain, the confidence and respect of Mr. W. and his countrymen, by speaking freely what we sincerely think of them, — and treating them exactly as we treat that nation to which we are here accused of being too favourable.

BRACEBRIDGE HALL.

(November, 1822.)

Bracebridge Hall; or, the Humorists. By Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. Author of "The Sketch Book," &c. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 800. Murray. London: 1822.*

We have received so much pleasure from this book, that we think ourselves bound in grati-

---

* My heart is still so much in the subject of the preceding paper, that I am tempted to add this to it; chiefly for the sake of the powerful backing which

tude, as well as justice, to make a public acknowledgment of it, — and seek to repay, by a little kind notice, the great obligations we shall ever feel to the author.. These amiable sentiments, however, we fear, will scarcely furnish us with materials for an interesting article; — and we suspect we have not much else to say, that has not already occurred to most of our readers — or, indeed, been said by ourselves with reference to his former publication. For nothing in the world can be so complete as the identity of the author in these two productions — identity not of style merely and character, but of merit also, both in kind and degree, and in the sort and extent of popularity which that merit has created — not merely the same good sense and the same good humour directed to the same good ends, and with the same happy selection and limited variety, but the same proportion of things that seem scarcely to depend on the individual — the same *luck*, as well as the same labour, and an equal share of felicities, to enhance the fair returns of judicious industry. There are few things, we imagine, so rare as this sustained level of excellence in the works of a popular writer — or, at least, if it does exist now and then *in rerum natura*, there is scarcely any thing that is so seldom allowed. When an author has once gained a large share of public attention, — when his name is once up among a herd of idle readers, they can never be brought to believe that one who has risen so far can ever remain stationary. In their estimation, he must either rise farther, or begin immediately to descend; so that, when he ventures before these prepossessed judges with a new work, it is always discovered, either that he has infinitely surpassed himself, or, in the far greater number of cases, that there is a sad falling off, and that he is hastening to the end of his career. In this way it may in general be presumed, that an author who is admitted by the public not to have fallen off in a second work, has in reality improved upon his first; and has truly proved his title to a higher place, by merely maintaining that, which he had formerly earned. We would not have Mr. Crayon, however, plume himself too much upon this sage observation; for though *we*, and other great lights of public judgment, have decided that his former level has been maintained in this work with the most marvellous precision, we must whisper in his ear that the million are not exactly of that opinion; and that the common buzz among the idle and impatient critics of the drawing-room is, that, in comparison with the Sketch Book, it is rather monotonous and languid; that there is too little variety of characters for two thick volumes; and that the said few characters come on so often, and stay so long, that the gentlest reader at last detects himself in rejoicing at being done with them. The premises of this enthymem we do not much dispute; but the conclusion, for all that, is wrong: for, in spite of these defects, Bracebridge Hall is quite as good as the Sketch Book; and Mr. C. may take comfort, — if he is humble enough to be comforted with such an assurance, — and trust to us that it will be quite as popular, and that he still holds his own with the efficient body of his English readers.

The great charm and peculiarity of this work consists now, as on former occasions, in the singular sweetness of the composition, and the mildness of the sentiments, — sicklied over perhaps a little, now and then, with that cloying heaviness into which unvaried sweetness is too apt to subside. The rhythm and melody of the sentences is certainly excessive: as it not only gives an air of mannerism, from its uniformity, but raises too strong an impression of the labour that must have been bestowed, and the importance which must have been attached, to that which is, after all, but a secondary attribute to good writing. It is very ill-natured in us, however, to object to what has given us so much pleasure; for we happen to be very intense and sensitive admirers of those soft harmonies of studied speech in which this author is so apt to indulge himself; and have caught ourselves, oftener than we shall confess, neglecting his excellent matter, to lap ourselves in the liquid music of his periods — and letting ourselves float passively down the mellow falls and windings of his soft-flowing sen-

my English exhortation to amity among brethren, is there shown to have received from the most amiable and elegant of *American* writers. I had said nearly the same things in a previous review of "The Sketch Book," and should have reprinted that article also, had it not been made up chiefly of extracts, with which I do not think it quite fair to fill up this publication.

tences, with a delight not inferior to that which we derive from fine versification.

We should reproach ourselves still more, however, and with better reason, if we were to persist in the objection which we were also at first inclined to take, to the extraordinary kindliness and disarming gentleness of all this author's views and suggestions; and we only refer to it now, for the purpose of answering, and discrediting it, with any of our readers to whom also it may happen to have occurred.

It first struck us as an objection to the author's courage and sincerity. It was quite unnatural, we said to ourselves, for any body to be always on such very amiable terms with his fellow-creatures; and this air of eternal philanthropy could be nothing but a pretence put on to bring himself into favour; and then we proceeded to assimilate him to those silken parasites who are in raptures with every body they meet, and ingratiate themselves in general society by an unmanly suppression of all honest indignation, and a timid avoidance of all subjects of disagreement. Upon due consideration, however, we are now satisfied that this was an unjust and unworthy interpretation. An author who comes deliberately before the public with certain select monologues of doctrine and discussion, is not at all in the condition of a man in common society; on whom various overtures of baseness and folly are daily obtruded, and to whose sense and honour appeals are perpetually made, which must be manfully answered, as honour and conscience suggest. The author, on the other hand, has no questions to answer, and no society to select: his professed object is to instruct and improve the world—and his real one, if he is tolerably honest, is nothing worse than to promote his own fame and fortune by succeeding in that which he professes. Now, there are but two ways that we have ever heard of by which men may be improved—either by cultivating and encouraging their amiable propensities, or by shaming and frightening them out of those that are vicious; and there can be but little doubt, we should imagine, which of the two offices is the highest and most eligible—since the one is left in a great measure to Hell and the hangman,—and for the other, we are taught chiefly to look to Heaven, and all that is angelic upon earth. The most perfect moral discipline would be that, no doubt, in which both were combined; but one is generally as much as human energy is equal to; and, in fact, they have commonly been divided in practice, without surmise of blame. And truly, if men have been hailed as great public benefactors, merely for having beat tyrants into moderation, or coxcombs into good manners, we must be permitted to think, that one whose vocation is different may be allowed to have deserved well of his kind, although he should have confined his efforts to teaching them mutual charity and forbearance, and only sought to repress their evil passions, by strengthening the springs and enlarging the sphere of those that are generous and kindly.

The objection in this general form, therefore, we soon found could not be maintained:—but, as we still felt a little secret spite lingering within us at our author's universal affability, we set about questioning ourselves more strictly as to its true nature and tendency; and think we at last succeeded in tracing it to an eager desire to see so powerful a pen and such great popularity employed in demolishing those errors and abuses to which we had been accustomed to refer most of the unhappiness of our country. Though we love his gentleness and urbanity on the whole, we should have been very well pleased to see him a little rude and surly, now and then, to our particular opponents; and could not but think it showed a want of spirit and discrimination that he did not mark his sense of their demerits, by making them an exception to his general system of toleration and indulgence. Being Whigs ourselves, for example, we could not but take it a little amiss, that one born and bred a republican, and writing largely on the present condition of England, should make so little distinction between that party and its opponents—and should even choose to attach himself to a Tory family, as the proper type and emblem of the old English character. Nor could we well acquit him of being "pigeon-livered—and lacking gall," when we found that nothing could provoke him to give a palpable hit to the Ministry, or even to employ his pure and powerful eloquence in reproving the shameful scurrilities of the ministerial press. We were

also a little sore, too, we believe, on discovering that he took no notice of Scotland! and said absolutely nothing about our Highlanders, our schools, and our poetry.

Now, though we have magnanimously chosen to illustrate this grudge at his neutrality in our own persons, it is obvious that a dissatisfaction of the same kind must have been felt by all the other great and contending parties into which this and all free countries are necessarily divided. Mr. Crayon has rejected the alliance of any one of these; and resolutely refused to take part with them in the struggles to which they attach so much importance; and consequently has, to a certain extent, offended and disappointed them all. But we must carry our magnanimity a step farther, and confess, for ourselves, and for others, that, upon reflection, the offence and disappointment seem to us altogether unreasonable and unjust. The ground of complaint is, that we see talents and influence — innocently, we must admit, and even beneficially employed — but not engaged on our side, or in the particular contest which we may feel it our duty to wage against the errors or delusions of our contemporaries. Now, in the first place, is not this something like the noble indignation of a recruiting serjeant, who thinks it a scandal that any stout fellow should degrade himself by a pacific employment, and takes offence accordingly at every pair of broad shoulders and good legs which he finds in the possession of a priest or a tradesman? But the *manifest* absurdity of the grudge consists in this. *First*, That it is equally reasonable in all the different parties who sincerely believe their own cause to be that which ought to prevail; while it is manifest, that, as the desired champion could only side with one, all the rest would be only worse off by the termination of his neutrality: and *secondly*, That the weight and authority, for the sake of which his assistance is so coveted, and which each party is now so anxious to have thrown into its scale, having been entirely created by virtues and qualities which belong only to a state of neutrality, are, in reality, incapable of being transferred to contending parties, and would utterly perish and be annihilated in the attempt. A good part of Mr. C.'s reputation, and certainly a very large share of his influence and popularity with all parties, has been acquired by the indulgence with which he has treated all, and his abstinence from all sorts of virulence and hostility; and it is, no doubt, chiefly on account of this influence and favour that we and others are rashly desirous to see him take part against our adversaries — forgetting, that those very qualities which render his assistance valuable, would infallibly desert him the moment that he complied with our desire, and vanish in the very act of his compliance.

The question then comes to be, not properly whether there should be any neutrals in great national contentions — but whether any man should be allowed to aspire to distinction by acts not subservient to party purposes? — a question which, even in this age of party and polemics, we suppose there are not many who would have the hardihood seriously to propound. Yet *this*, we must be permitted to repeat, *is* truly the question: — for if a man may lawfully devote his talents to music, or architecture, or drawing, or metaphysics, or poetry, and lawfully challenge the *general* admiration of his age for his proficiency in those pursuits, though totally disjoined from all political application, we really do not see why he may not write prose essays on national character and the ingredients of private happiness, with the same large and pacific purposes of pleasure and improvement. To Mr. C. especially, who is not a citizen of this country, it can scarcely be proposed as a duty to take a share in our internal contentions; and though the picture which he professes to give of our country may be more imperfect, and the estimate he makes of our character less complete, from the omission of this less tractable element, the value of the parts that he has been able to finish will not be lessened, and the beneficial effect of the representation will, in all probability, be increased. For our own parts, we have ventured, on former occasions, to express our doubts whether the polemical parts, even of a statesman's duty, do not hold too high a place in public esteem — and are sure, at all events, that they ought not to engross the attention of those to whom such a station has not been intrusted. It should never be forgotten, that good political institutions, the sole end and object of all our party contentions, are only

valuable as means of promoting the general happiness and virtue of individuals; — and that, important as they are, there are other means, still more direct and indispensable for the attainment of that great end. The cultivation of the kind affections we humbly conceive to be of still more importance to private happiness, than the good balance of the constitution under which we live; and, if it be true, as we most firmly believe, that it is the natural effect of political freedom to fit and dispose the mind for all gentle as well as generous emotions, we hold it to be equally true, that habits of benevolence, and sentiments of philanthropy, are the surest foundations on which a love of liberty can rest. A man must love his fellows before he loves their liberty; and if he has not learned to interest himself in their enjoyments, it is impossible that he can have any genuine concern for that liberty, which, after all, is only valuable as a means of enjoyment. We consider, therefore, the writers who seek to soften and improve our social affections, not only as aiming *directly* at the same great end which politicians more circuitously pursue, but as preparing those elements out of which alone a generous and enlightened love of political freedom can ever be formed — and without which it could neither be safely trusted in the hands of individuals, nor prove fruitful of individual enjoyment. We conclude, therefore, that Mr. Crayon is in reality a better friend to Whig principles than if he had openly attacked the Tories — and end this long, and perhaps needless apology for his neutrality, by discovering, that such neutrality is in effect the best nursery for the only partisans that ever should be encouraged — the partisans of whatever can be shown to be clearly and unquestionably right. And now we must say a word or two more of the book before us.

There are not many of our readers to whom it can be necessary to mention, that it is in substance, and almost in form, a continuation of the Sketch Book; and consists of a series of little descriptions, and essays on matters principally touching the national character and old habits of England. The author is supposed to be resident at Bracebridge Hall, the Christmas festivities of which he had commemorated in his former publication, and among the inmates of which, most of the familiar incidents occur which he turns to account in his lucubrations. These incidents can scarcely be said to make a story in any sense, and certainly not one which would admit of being abstracted; and as we are under a vow to make but short extracts from popular books, we must see that we choose well the few passages upon which we may venture. There is a short Introduction, and a Farewell, by the author; in both which he alludes to the fact of his being a citizen of America in a way that appears to us to deserve a citation. The first we give chiefly for the beauty of the writing.

"England is as classic ground to an American, as Italy is to an Englishman; and old London teems with as much historical association as mighty Rome.

"But what more especially attracts his notice, are those peculiarities which distinguish an old country, and an old state of society, from a new one. I have never yet grown familiar enough with the crumbling monuments of past ages, to blunt the intense interest with which I at first beheld them. Accustomed always to scenes where history was, in a manner, in anticipation; where every thing in art was new and progressive, and pointed to the future rather than to the past; where, in short, the works of man gave no ideas but those of young existence, and prospective improvement; there was something inexpressibly touching in the sight of enormous piles of architecture, grey with antiquity, and sinking to decay. I cannot describe the mute but deep-felt enthusiasm with which I have contemplated a vast monastic ruin, like Tintern Abbey, buried in the bosom of a quiet valley, and shut up from the world, as though it had existed merely for itself; or a warrior pile, like Conway Castle, standing in stern loneliness, on its rocky height, a mere hollow, yet threatening phantom of departed power. They spread a grand and melancholy, and to me, an unusual charm over the landscape. I for the first time beheld signs of national old age, and empire's decay; and proofs of the transient and perishing glories of art, amidst the ever-springing and reviving fertility of nature.

"But, in fact, to me every thing was full of matter: the footsteps of history were every where to be traced; and poetry had breathed over and sanctified the land. I experienced the delightful freshness of feeling of a child, to whom every thing is new. I pictured to myself a set of inhabitants and a mode of life for every habitation that I saw; from the aristocratical mansion, amidst the lordly repose of stately groves and solitary parks, to the straw-thatched cottage, with its scanty garden and its cherished woodbine. I thought I never could be sated with the sweetness and freshness of a country so completely carpeted with verdure; where every air breathed of the balmy pasture and the honeysuckled hedge. I was continually coming

upon some little document of poetry, in the blossomed hawthorn, the daisy, the cowslip, the primrose, or some other simple object that has received a supernatural value from the Muse. The first time that I heard the song of the nightingale, I was intoxicated more by the delicious crowd of remembered associations, than by the melody of its notes; and I shall never forget the thrill of ecstasy with which I first saw the lark rise, almost from beneath my feet, and wing its musical flight up into the morning sky."—Vol. i. pp. 6—9.

We know nothing more beautiful than the melody of this concluding sentence; and if the reader be not struck with its music, we think he has no right to admire the Vision of Mirza, or any of the other delicious cadences of Addison.

The Farewell we quote for the matter; and it is matter to which we shall miss no fit occasion to recur,—being persuaded not only that it is one of higher moment than almost any other to which we can now apply ourselves, but one upon which the honest perseverance even of such a work as ours may in time produce practical and beneficial effects. We allude to the animosity which intemperate writers on both sides are labouring to create, or exasperate, between this country and America, and which we, and the writer before us, are most anxious to allay. There is no word in the following quotation in which we do not most cordially concur. We receive with peculiar satisfaction the assurances of the accomplished author, as to the kindly disposition of the better part of his countrymen; and are disposed to place entire confidence in it, not only from our reliance on his judgment and means of information, but from the accuracy of his representation of the sort of persons to whom the fashion of abusing the Americans has now gone down, on this side of the Atlantic. Nothing, we think, can be more handsome, persuasive, or grateful, than the whole following passage.

"And here let me acknowledge my warm, my thankful feeling, at the effect produced by one of my trivial lucubrations. I allude to the essay in the Sketch Book, on the subject of the literary feuds between England and America. I cannot express the heartfelt delight I have experienced at the unexpected sympathy and approbation with which those remarks have been received on both sides of the Atlantic. I speak this not from any paltry feelings of gratified vanity; for I attribute the effect to no merit of my pen. The paper in question was brief and casual, and the ideas it conveyed were simple and obvious. 'It was the cause; it was the cause' alone. There was a predisposition on the part of my readers to be favourably affected. My countrymen responded in heart to the filial feelings I had avowed in their name towards the parent country; and there was a generous sympathy in every English bosom towards a solitary individual, lifting up his voice in a strange land, to vindicate the injured character of his nation. There are some causes so sacred as to carry with them an irresistible appeal to every virtuous bosom; and he needs but little power of eloquence, who defends the honour of his wife, his mother, or his country.

"I hail, therefore, the success of that brief paper, as showing how much good may be done by a kind word, however feeble, when spoken in season—as showing how much dormant good feeling actually exists in each country, towards the other, which only wants the slightest spark to kindle it into a genial flame—as showing, in fact, what I have all along believed and asserted, that the two nations would grow together in esteem and amity, if meddling and malignant spirits would but throw by their mischievous pens, and leave kindred hearts to the kindly impulses of nature.

"I once more assert, and I assert it with increased conviction of its truth, that there exists, among the great majority of my countrymen, a favourable feeling towards England. I repeat this assertion, because I think it a truth that cannot too often be reiterated, and because it has met with some contradiction. Among all the liberal and enlightened minds of my countrymen, among all those which eventually give a tone to national opinion, there exists a cordial desire to be on terms of courtesy and friendship. But, at the same time, there unfortunately exists in those very minds a distrust of reciprocal goodwill on the part of England. They have been rendered morbidly sensitive by the attacks made upon their country by the English press; and their occasional irritability on this subject has been misinterpreted into a settled and unnatural hostility.

"For my part, I consider this jealous sensibility as belonging to generous natures. I should look upon my countrymen as fallen indeed from that independence of spirit which is their birth-gift; as fallen indeed from that pride of character, which they inherit from the proud nation from which they sprung, could they tamely sit down under the infliction of contumely and insult. Indeed, the very impatience which they show as to the misrepresentations of the press, proves their respect for English opinion, and their desire for English amity; for there is never jealousy where there is not strong regard.

"To the magnanimous spirits of both countries must we trust to carry such a natural alliance of affection into full effect. To pens more powerful than mine I leave the noble task of promoting the cause of national amity. To the intelligent and enlightened of my own country, I address my parting voice, en-

treating them to show themselves superior to the petty attacks of the ignorant and the worthless, and still to look with a dispassionate and philosophic eye to the moral character of England, as the intellectual source of our own rising greatness; while I appeal to every generous-minded Englishman from the slanders which disgrace the press, insult the understanding, and belie the magnanimity of his country: and I invite him to look to America, as to a kindred nation, worthy of its origin; giving, in the healthy vigour of its growth, the best of comments on its parent stock; and reflecting, in the dawning brightness of its fame, the moral effulgence of British glory.

"*I am sure*, too, that such appeal will not be made in vain. Indeed I have noticed, for some time past, an essential change in English sentiment with regard to America. In Parliament, that fountain-head of public opinion, there seems to be an emulation, on both sides of the House, in holding the language of courtesy and friendship. The same spirit is daily becoming more and more prevalent in good society. There is a growing curiosity concerning my country; a craving desire for correct information, that cannot fail to lead to a favourable understanding. The scoffer, I trust, has had his day; the time of the slanderer is gone by. The ribald jokes, the stale commonplaces, which have so long passed current when America was the theme, are now banished to the ignorant and the vulgar, or only perpetuated by the hireling scribblers and traditional jesters of the press. The intelligent and high-minded now pride themselves upon making America a study." — Vol. ii. pp. 396—403.

From the body of the work, we must indulge ourselves with very few citations. But we cannot resist the following exquisite description of a rainy Sunday at an inn in a country town. It is part of the admirable legend of "The Stout Gentleman," of which we will not trust ourselves with saying one word more. The following, however, is perfect, independent of its connections.

"It was a rainy Sunday, in the gloomy month of November. I had been detained in the course of a journey, by a slight indisposition, from which I was recovering; but I was still feverish, and was obliged to keep within doors all day, in an inn of the small town of Derby. A wet Sunday in a country inn! whoever has had the luck to experience one can alone judge of my situation. The rain pattered against the casements; the bells tolled for church with a melancholy sound. I went to the windows in quest of something to amuse the eye; but it seemed as if I had been placed completely out of the reach of all amusement. The windows of my bed-room looked out among tiled roofs and stacks of chimneys, while those of my sitting-room commanded a full view of the stable-yard. I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stable-yard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travellers and stable-boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water, surrounding an island of muck. There were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a miserable, crest-fallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit; his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back. Near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud, and standing patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapour rising from her reeking hide. A wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves. An unhappy cur, chained to a doghouse hard by, uttered something every now and then, between a bark and a yelp. A drab of a kitchen wench tramped backwards and forwards through the yard in pattens, looking as sulky as the weather itself. Every thing, in short, was comfortless and forlorn — excepting a crew of hard-drinking ducks, assembled, like boon companions, round a puddle, and making a riotous noise over their liquor.

"I sauntered to the window and stood gazing at the people, picking their way to church, with petticoats hoisted mid-leg high, and dripping umbrellas. The bells ceased to toll, and the streets became silent. I then amused myself with watching the daughters of a tradesman opposite; who, being confined to the house for fear of wetting their Sunday finery, played off their charms at the front windows, to fascinate the chance tenants of the inn. They at length were summoned away by a vigilant vinegar-faced mother, and I had nothing further from without to amuse me.

"The day continued lowering and gloomy. The slovenly, ragged, spongy clouds, drifted heavily along. There was no variety even in the rain; it was one dull, continuous, monotonous patter — patter — patter, excepting that now and then I was enlivened by the idea of a brisk shower, from the rattling of the drops upon a passing umbrella. It was quite *refreshing* (if I may be allowed a hackneyed phrase of the day) when, in the course of the morning, a horn blew, and a stage-coach whirled through the street, with outside passengers stuck all over it, cowering under cotton umbrellas, and seethed together, and reeking with the steams of wet box-coats and upper Benjamins. The sound brought out from their lurking-places a crew of vagabond boys, and vagabond dogs, and the carroty-headed hostler, and that nondescript animal ycleped Boots, and all the other vagabond race that infest the purlieus of an inn; but the bustle was transient. The coach again whirled on its way; and boy and dog, and hostler and Boots, all slunk back again to their holes. The street again became silent, and the rain continued to rain on.

"The evening gradually wore away. The travellers read the papers two or three times over. Some drew round the fire, and told long stories about their horses, about their adventures, their overturns, and break-

ings-down. They discussed the credits of different merchants and different inns; and the two wags told several choice anecdotes of pretty chambermaids, and kind landladies. All this passed as they were quietly taking what they called their night-caps, that is to say, strong glasses of brandy and water and sugar, or some other mixture of the kind; after which, they one after another rang for 'Boots' and the chambermaid, and walked off to bed, in old shoes, cut down into marvellously uncomfortable slippers.

"There was only one man left; a short-legged long-bodied, plethoric fellow, with a very large sandy head. He sat by himself with a glass of port wine negus, and a spoon; sipping and stirring, and meditating and sipping, until nothing was left but the spoon. He gradually fell asleep bolt upright in his chair, with the empty glass standing before him; and the candle seemed to fall asleep too! for the wick grew long, and black, and cabbaged at the end, and dimmed the little light that remained in the chamber. The gloom that now prevailed was contagious. Around hung the shapeless, and almost spectral box-coats of departed travellers, long since buried in deep sleep. I only heard the ticking of the clock, with the deep-drawn breathings of the sleeping toper, and the drippings of the rain, drop — drop — drop, from the eaves of the houses."—Vol. i. pp. 112—130.

The whole description of the Lady Lillycraft is equally good in its way; but we can only make room for the portraits of her canine attendants.

"She has brought two dogs with her also, out of a number of pets which she maintains at home. One is a fat spaniel, called Zephyr — though heaven defend me from such a zephyr! He is fed out of all shape and comfort; his eyes are nearly strained out of his head; he wheezes with corpulency, and cannot walk without great difficulty. The other is a little old grey-muzzled curmudgeon, with an unhappy eye that kindles like a coal if you look only at him; his nose turns up; his mouth is drawn into wrinkles, so as to show his teeth; in short, he has altogether the look of a dog far gone in misanthropy, and totally sick of the world. When he walks, he has his tail curled up so tight that it seems to lift his hind feet from the ground; and he seldom makes use of more than three legs at a time, keeping the other drawn up as a reserve. This last wretch is called Beauty.

"These dogs are full of elegant ailments unknown to vulgar dogs; and are petted and nursed by Lady Lillycraft with the tenderest kindness. They have cushions for their express use, on which they lie before the fire, and yet are apt to shiver and moan if there is the least draught of air. When any one enters the room, they make a most tyrannical barking that is absolutely deafening. They are insolent to all the other dogs of the establishment. There is a noble stag-hound, a great favourite of the squire's, who is a privileged visitor to the parlour; but the moment he makes his appearance, these intruders fly at him with furious rage; and I have admired the sovereign indifference and contempt with which he seems to look down upon his puny assailants. When her ladyship drives out, these dogs are generally carried with her to take the air; when they look out of each window of the carriage, and bark at all vulgar pedestrian dogs."—Vol. i. pp. 75—77.

We shall venture on but one extract more —and it shall be a specimen of the author's more pensive vein. It is from the chapter of "Family Reliques;" and affords, especially in the latter part, another striking instance of the pathetic melody of his style. The introductory part is also a good specimen of his sedulous, and not altogether unsuccessful imitation of the inimitable diction and colloquial graces of Addison.

"The place, however, which abounds most with mementos of past times, is the picture gallery; and there is something strangely pleasing, though melancholy, in considering the long rows of portraits which compose the greater part of the collection. They furnish a kind of narrative of the lives of the family worthies, which I am enabled to read with the assistance of the venerable housekeeper, who is the family chronicler, prompted occasionally by Master Simon. There is the progress of a fine lady, for instance, through a variety of portraits. One represents her as a little girl, with a long waist and hoop, holding a kitten in her arms, and ogling the spectator out of the corners of her eyes as if she could not turn her head. In another we find her in the freshness of youthful beauty, when she was a celebrated belle, and so hard-hearted as to cause several unfortunate gentlemen to run desperate and write bad poetry. In another she is depicted as a stately dame, in the maturity of her charms; next to the portrait of her husband, a gallant colonel in full-bottomed wig and gold-laced hat, who was killed abroad; and, finally, her monument is in the church, the spire of which may be seen from the window, where her effigy is carved in marble, and represents her as a venerable dame of seventy-six.— There is one group that particularly interested me. It consisted of four sisters of nearly the same age, who flourished about a century since, and, if I may judge from their portraits, were extremely beautiful. I can imagine what a scene of gaiety and romance this old mansion must have been, when they were in the heyday of their charms; when they passed like beautiful visions through its halls, or stepped daintily to music in the revels and dances of the cedar gallery; or printed, with delicate feet, the velvet verdure of these lawns," &c.

"When I look at these faint records of gallantry and tenderness; when I contemplate the fading portraits of these beautiful girls, and think that they have long since bloomed, reigned, grown old, died,

and passed away, and with them all their graces, their triumphs, their rivalries, their admirers; the whole empire of love and pleasure in which they ruled — 'all dead, all buried, all forgotten,' — I find a cloud of melancholy stealing over the present gaieties around me. I was gazing, in a musing mood, this very morning, at the portrait of the lady whose husband was killed abroad, when the fair Julia entered the gallery, leaning on the arm of the captain. The sun shone through the row of windows on her as she passed along, and she seemed to beam out each time into brightness, and relapse again into shade, until the door at the bottom of the gallery finally closed after her. I felt a sadness of heart at the idea, that this was an emblem of her lot; a few more years of sunshine and shade, and all this life, and loveliness, and enjoyment, will have ceased, and nothing be left to commemorate this beautiful being but one more perishable portrait; to awaken, perhaps, the trite speculations of some future loiterer, like myself, when I also and my scribblings shall have lived through our brief existence and been forgotten."—Vol. i. pp. 64, 65.

We can scarcely afford room even to allude to the rest of this elegant miscellany. "Ready-money Jack" is admirable throughout — and the old General very good. The lovers are, as usual, the most insipid. The Gipsies are sketched with great elegance as well as spirit — and Master Simon is quite delightful, in all the varieties of his ever versatile character. Perhaps the most pleasing thing about all these personages, is the perfect innocence and singleness of purpose which seems to belong to them — and which, even when it raises a gentle smile at their expense, breathes over the whole scene they inhabit an air of attraction and respect — like that which reigns in the De Coverley pictures of Addison. Of the exotic Tales which serve to fill up the volumes, that of "Dolph Heyliger" is incomparably the best — and is more characteristic, perhaps, both of the author's turn of imagination and cast of humour, than any thing else in the work. "The Student of Salamanca" is too long; and deals rather largely in the commonplaces of romantic adventure: — while "Annette de la Barbe," though pretty and pathetic in some passages, is, on the whole, rather *fade* and finical — and too much in the style of the sentimental afterpieces which we have lately borrowed from the Parisian theatres.

On the whole, we are very sorry to receive Mr. Crayon's farewell — and we return it with the utmost cordiality. We thank him most sincerely, for the pleasure he has given us — for the kindness he has shown to our country — and for the lessons he has taught, both here and in his native land, of good taste, good nature, and national liberality. We hope he will come back among us soon — and remember us while he is away; and can assure him, that he is in no danger of being speedily forgotten.

CLARKSON ON QUAKERISM.

(April, 1807.)

A Portraiture of Quakerism, as taken from a View of the Moral Education, Discipline, Peculiar Customs, Religious Principles, Political and Civil Economy, and Character, of the Society of Friends. By Thomas Clarkson, M.A. Author of several Essays on the subject of the Slave Trade. 8vo. 3 vols. London: 1806.

This, we think, is a book peculiarly fitted for reviewing: for it contains many things which most people will have some curiosity to hear about; and is at the same time so intolerably dull and tedious, that no voluntary reader could possibly get through with it.

The author, whose meritorious exertions for the abolition of the slave trade brought him into public notice a great many years ago, was recommended by this circumstance to the favour and the confidence of the Quakers, who had long been unanimous in that good cause; and was led to such an extensive and cordial intercourse with them in all parts of the kingdom, that he came at last to have a more thorough knowledge of their tenets and living manners than any other person out of the society could easily obtain. The effect of this knowledge has evidently been to excite in him such an affection and esteem for those worthy sectaries, as we think can scarcely fail to issue in his public conversion; and, in the mean time, has produced a more minute exposition, and a more elaborate defence of their doctrines and practices, than has recently been drawn from any of their own body.

The book, which is full of repetitions and plagiarisms, is distributed into a number of needless sections, arranged in a most unnatural and inconvenient order. All that any body can want to know about the Quakers,

might evidently have been told, either under the head of their Doctrinal tenets, or of their peculiar Practices; but Mr. Clarkson, with a certain elaborate infelicity of method, chooses to discuss the merits of this society under the several titles, of their moral education — their discipline — their peculiar customs — their religion — their great tenets — and their character; and not finding even this ample distribution sufficient to include all he had to say on the subject, he fills a supplemental half-volume, with repetitions and trifles, under the humiliating name of miscellaneous particulars.

Quakerism had certainly undergone a considerable change in the quality and spirit of its votaries, from the time when George Fox went about pronouncing woes against cities, attacking priests in their pulpits, and exhorting justices of the peace to do justice, to the time when such men as Penn and Barclay came into the society "by convincement," and published such vindications of its doctrine, as few of its opponents have found it convenient to answer. The change since their time appears to have been much less considerable. The greater part of these volumes may be considered, indeed, as a wilful deterioration of Barclay's Apology; and it is only where he treats of the private manners and actual opinions of the modern Quakers, that Mr. Clarkson communicates any thing which a curious reader might not have learnt from that celebrated production. The laudatory and argumentative tone which he maintains throughout, gives an air of partiality to his statements which naturally diminishes our reliance on their accuracy: and as the argument is often extremely bad, and the praise apparently unmerited, we are rather inclined to think that his work will make a less powerful impression in favour of the "friends," than might have been effected by a more moderate advocate. With many praiseworthy maxims and principles for their moral conduct, the Quakers, we think, have but little to say for most of their peculiar practices; and make a much better figure when defending their theological mysteries, than when vindicating the usages by which they are separated from the rest of the people in the ordinary intercourse of life. It will be more convenient, however, to state our observations on their reasonings, as we attend Mr. Clarkson through his account of their principles and practice.

He enters upon his task with such a wretched display of false eloquence, that we were very near throwing away the book. Our readers will scarcely accuse us of impatience, when we inform them that the dissertation on the moral education of the Quakers begins with the following sentence:—

"When the blooming spring sheds abroad its benign influence, man feels it equally with the rest of created nature. The blood circulates more freely, and a new current of life seems to be diffused in his veins. The aged man is enlivened, and the sick man feels himself refreshed. Good spirits and cheerful countenances succeed. But as the year changes in its seasons, and rolls round to its end, the tide seems to slacken, and the current of feeling to return to its former level."—Vol. i. p. 13.

This may serve, once for all, as a specimen of Mr. Clarkson's taste and powers in fine writing, and as an apology for our abstaining, in our charity, from making any further observations on his style. Under the head of moral education, we are informed that the Quakers discourage, and strictly prohibit in their youth, all games of chance, music, dancing, novel reading, field sports of every description, and, in general, the use of idle words and unprofitable conversation. The motives of these several prohibitions are discussed in separate chapters of extreme dulness and prolixity. It is necessary, however, in order to come to a right understanding with those austere persons and their apologist, to enter a little into the discussion.

The basis of the Quaker morality seems evidently to be, that gaiety and merriment ought, upon all occasions, to be discouraged; that everything which tends merely to exhilaration or enjoyment, has in it a taint of criminality; and that one of the chief duties of man is to be always serious and solemn, and constantly occupied, either with his worldly prosperity, or his eternal welfare. If it were not for the attention which is thus permitted to the accumulation of wealth, the Quakers would scarcely be distinguishable from the other gloomy sectaries, who maintain, that man was put into this world for no other purpose, but to mortify himself into a proper condition for the next;—that all our feelings of ridicule and sociality, and all the spring and gaiety of

the animal spirits of youth, were given us only for our temptation; and that, considering the shortness of this life, and the risk he runs of damnation after it, man ought evidently to pass his days in dejection and terror, and to shut his heart to every pleasurable emotion which this transitory scene might hold out to the unthinking. The fundamental folly of these ascetic maxims has prevented the Quakers from adopting them in their full extent: but all the peculiarities of their manners may evidently be referred to this source; and the qualifications and exceptions under which they maintain the duty of abstaining from enjoyment, serve only, in most instances, to bring upon their reasonings the additional charge of inconsistency.

Their objection to cards, dice, wagers, horse-races, &c. is said to be, first, that they may lead to a spirit of gaming, which leads, again, to obvious unhappiness and immorality; but chiefly, that they are sources of amusement unworthy of a sober Christian, and tend, by producing an unreasonable excitement, to disturb that tranquillity and equanimity which they look upon as essential to moral virtue.

"They believe," says Mr. Clarkson, "that stillness and quietness both of spirit and of body, are necessary, as far as they can be obtained. Hence, Quaker children are rebuked for all expressions of anger, as tending to raise those feelings which ought to be suppressed: a raising even of the voice beyond due bounds, is discouraged as leading to the disturbance of their minds. They are taught to rise in the morning in quietness; to go about their ordinary occupation with quietness; and to retire in quietness to their beds."

Now this, we think, is a very miserable picture. The great curse of life, we believe, in all conditions above the lowest, is its excessive stillness and quietness, and the want of interest and excitement which it affords: and though we certainly do not approve of cards and wagers as the best exhilarators of the spirits, we cannot possibly concur in the principle upon which they are rejected with such abhorrence by this rigid society. A remark which Mr. Clarkson himself makes afterwards, might have led him to doubt of the soundness of their petrifying principles.

"It has often been observed," he says, "that a *Quaker Boy* has an unnatural appearance. The idea has arisen from his dress and his sedateness, which, taken together, have produced an appearance of age above the youth in his countenance. I have often been surprised to hear young Quakers talk of the folly and vanity of pursuits in which persons, older than themselves, were then embarking in pursuit of pleasure," &c.

We feel no admiration, we will confess, for prodigies of this description; and think that the world is but little indebted to those moralists, who, in their efforts to ameliorate our condition, begin with constraining the volatile spirit of childhood into sedateness, and extinguishing the happy carelessness and animation of youth, by lessons of eternal quietness.

The next chapter is against music; and is, as might be expected, one of the most absurd and extravagant of the whole. This is Mr. Clarkson's statement of the Quaker reasoning against this delightful art.

"Providence gave originally to man a beautiful and a perfect world. He filled it with things necessary, and things delightful: and yet man has often turned these from their true and original design. The very wood on the surface of the earth he has cut down, and the very stone and metal in its bowels he has hewn and cast, and converted into a graven image, and worshipped in the place of his beneficent Creator. The food which has been given him for his nourishment, he has frequently converted by his intemperance into the means of injuring his health. The wine, that was designed to make his heart glad, on reasonable and necessary occasions, he has used often to the stupefaction of his senses, and the degradation of his moral character. The very raiment, which has been afforded him for his body, he has abused also, so that it has frequently become a source for the excitement of his pride.

"Just so it has been, and so it is, with Music, at the present day."

We do not think we ever before met with an argument so unskilfully, or rather so preposterously put: since, if it follows, from *these premises*, that music ought to be entirely rejected and avoided, it must follow also, that we should go naked, and neither eat nor drink! and as to the arguments that follow against the cultivation of music, because there are some obscene and some bacchanalian songs, which it would be improper for young persons to learn, they are obviously capable of being used, with exactly the same force, against their learning to read, because there are immoral and heretical books, which may possibly fall into their hands. The most authentic and sincere reason, however, we believe, is one which

rests immediately upon the general ascetic principle to which we have already made reference, viz. that "music tends to *self-gratification*, which is not allowable in the Christian system." Now, as this same self-denying principle is really at the bottom of most of the Quaker prohibitions, it may be worth while to consider, in a few words, how far it can be reconciled to reason or morality.

All men, we humbly conceive, are under the necessity of pursuing their own happiness; and cannot even be conceived as ever pursuing any thing else. The only difference between the sensualist and the ascetic is, that the former pursues an immediate, and the other a remote happiness; or, that the one pursues an intellectual, and the other a bodily gratification. The penitent who passes his days in mortification, does so unquestionably from the love of enjoyment; either because he thinks this the surest way to attain eternal happiness in a future world, or because he finds the admiration of mankind a sufficient compensation, even in this life, for the hardships by which he extorts it. It appears, therefore, that self-gratification, so far from being an unlawful object of pursuit, is necessarily *the only object* which a rational being can be conceived to pursue; and, consequently, that to argue against any practice, merely that it is attended with enjoyment, is to give it a recommendation which must operate in its favour, in the first instance at least, even with the most rigid moralist. The only sound or consistent form of the argument, in short, is that which was manfully adopted by the mortified hermits of the early ages; but is expressly disclaimed for the Quakers by their present apologist, viz. that our well-being in this world is a matter of so very little concern, that it is altogether unworthy of a reasonable being to bestow any care upon it; and that our chance of well-being in another world depends so much upon our anxious endeavours after piety upon earth, that It is our duty to employ every moment of our fleeting and uncertain lives, in meditation and prayer; and consequently altogether sinful and imprudent to indulge any propensities which may interrupt those holy exercises, or beget in us any interest in sublunary things.

There is evidently a tacit aspiration after this sublime absurdity in almost all the Quaker prohibitions; and we strongly suspect, that honest George Fox, when he inhabited a hollow tree in the vale of Beevor, taught nothing less to his disciples. The condemnation of music and dancing, and all idle speaking, was therefore quite consistent in him; but since the permission of gainful arts, and of most of the luxuries which wealth can procure, to his disciples, it is no longer so easy to reconcile these condemnations either to reason or to the rest of their practice. A Quaker may suspend all apparent care of his salvation, and occupy himself entirely with his worldly business, for six days in the week, like any other Christian. It is even thought laudable in him to set an example of diligence and industry to those around him; and the fruits of this industry he is by no means required to bestow in relieving the poor, or for the promotion of piety. He is allowed to employ it for self-gratification, in almost every way — but the most social and agreeable! He may keep an excellent table and garden, and be driven about in an easy chariot, by a pious coachman, and two, or even four, plump horses; but his plate must be without carving, and his carriage and horses (perhaps his flowers also) of a dusky colour. His guests may talk of oxen and broad cloth as long as they think fit; but wit and gaiety are entirely proscribed, and topics of literature but rarely allowed. His boys and girls are bred up to a premature knowledge of bargaining and housekeeping; but when their bounding spirits are struggling in every limb, they must not violate their *sedateness* by a single skip; — their *stillness* must not be disturbed by raising their voices beyond their common pitch; — and they would be disowned, if they were to tune their innocent voices in a hymn to their great Benefactor! We cannot help saying, that all this is absurd and indefensible. Either let the Quakers renounce all the enjoyments of this life, or take all that are innocent. The pursuit of wealth surely holds out a greater temptation to immorality, than the study of music. Let them, then, either disown those who accumulate more than is necessary for their subsistence, or permit those who have leisure, to employ it in something better than money-getting. To allow a man to have a house and retinue, from the expenses of which fifty poor families might be supported, and at

the same time to interdict a fold in his coat, or a ruffle to his shirt, on account of their costliness and vanity, is as ridiculous, and as superstitious, as it is for the Church of Rome to permit one of her cardinals to sit down, on a meagre day, to fifty costly and delicious dishes of fish and pastry, while it excommunicates a peasant for breaking through the holy abstinence with a morsel of rusty bacon. With those general impressions, we shall easily dispose of their other peculiarities.

The amusements of the theatre are strictly forbidden to Quakers of every description; and this, partly because many plays are immoral, but chiefly because, on the stage, "men personate characters that are not their own; and thus become altogether sophisticated in their looks, words, and actions, which is contrary to the simplicity and truth required by Christianity!" We scarcely think the Quakers will be much obliged to Mr. Clarkson for imputing this kind of reasoning to them: and, for our own parts, we would much rather hear at once that the playhouse was the Devil's drawing-room, and that the actors painted their faces, and therefore deserved the fate of Jezebel. As to the sin of personating characters not their own, and sophisticating their looks and words, it is necessarily committed by every man who reads aloud a Dialogue from the New Testament, or who adopts, from the highest authority, a dramatic form in his preaching. As to the other objection, that theatrical amusements produce too high a degree of excitement for the necessary sedateness of a good Christian, we answer, in the first place, that we do not see why a good Christian should be more sedate than his innocence and natural gaiety may dispose him to be; and, in the second place, that the objection proves Mr. Clarkson to be laudably ignorant of the state of the modern drama, — which, we are credibly informed, is by no means so extremely interesting, as to make men neglect their business and their duties to run after it.

Next comes dancing. — The Quakers prohibit this strictly; 1st, because it implies the accompaniment of music, which has been already interdicted; 2dly, because "it is useless, and below the dignity of the Christian character;" 3dly, because it implies assemblies of idle persons, which lead to thoughtlessness as to the important duties of life; 4thly, because it gives rise to silly vanity, and envying, and malevolence. The lovers of dancing, we think, will be able to answer those objections without our farther assistance; such of them as have not been already obviated, are applicable, and are in fact applied by the Quakers, to every species of accomplishment. They are applicable also, though the Quakers do *not* so apply them, to all money-getting occupations in which there is room for rivalry and competition.

The reading of novels is next prohibited, not so much, Mr. Clarkson assures us, on account of their fictitious nature, though that is ground enough for the abhorrence of many Quakers, but on account of their general immorality, and their tendency to produce an undue excitement of mind, and to alienate the attention from objects of serious importance. These are good reasons against the reading of immoral novels, and against making them our sole or our principal study. Other moralists are contented with selecting and limiting the novels they allow to be read. The Quakers alone make it an abomination to read any; which is like prohibiting all use of wine or animal food, instead of restricting our censures to the excess or abuse of them.

Last of all, the sports of the field are prohibited, partly on account of the animal suffering they produce, and partly from the habits of idleness and ferocity which they are supposed to generate. This is Mr. Clarkson's account of the matter; but we shall probably form a more correct idea of the true Quaker principle, from being told that George Fox "considered that man in the fall, or the apostate man, had a vision so indistinct and vitiated, that he could *not see the animals of the creation as he ought;* but that the man who was restored, or the spritual Christian, had a new and clear discernment concerning them, which would oblige him to consider and treat them in a proper manner." The Quakers, however, allow the netting of animals for food; and cannot well object therefore to shooting them, provided it be done for the same economical purpose, and not for self-gratification, — at least in the act of killing.

Mr. Clarkson proceeds next to discuss the discipline, as he calls it, or interior government of the Quaker society; but we think it

more natural to proceed to the consideration of what he announces as their peculiar customs, which, for any thing we see, might all have been classed among the prohibitions which constitute their moral education.

The first is, the peculiarity of their dress. The original rule, he says, was only that it should be plain and cheap. He vindicates George Fox, we think, very successfully, from the charge of having gone about in a leathern doublet; and maintains, that the present dress of the Quakers is neither more nor less than the common dress of grave and sober persons of the middling rank at the first institution of the society; and that they have retained it, not out of any superstitious opinion of its sanctity, but because they thought it would indicate a frivolous vanity to change it, unless for some reason of convenience. We should have thought it convenience enough to avoid singularity and misconstruction of motives. Except that the men now wear loops to their hats, and that the women have in a great measure given up their black hoods and green aprons, their *costume* is believed to be almost exactly the same as it was two hundred years ago. They have a similar rule as to their furniture; which, though sometimes elegant and costly, is uniformly plain, and free from glare or ostentation. In conformity with this principle, they do not decorate their houses with pictures or prints, and in general discourage the practice of taking portraits; for which piece of abstinence Mr. Clarkson gives the following simple reason. "The first Quakers, considering themselves as poor helpless creatures, and as little better than dust and ashes, had but a mean idea of their own images!"

One of the most prominent peculiarities in the Quaker customs, relates to their language. They insist, in the first place, upon saying thou instead of you; and this was an innovation upon which their founder seems to have valued himself at least as much as upon any other part of his system. "The use of thou," says honest George Fox, with visible complacency, "was a sore cut to proud flesh!" and many beatings, and revilings, and hours of endurance in the stocks, did he triumphantly endure for his intrepid adherence to this grammatical propriety. Except that it is (or rather was) grammatically correct, we really can see no merit in this form of speech. The chief Quaker reason for it, however, is, that the use of "you" to a single person is a heinous piece of flattery, and an instance of the grossest and meanest adulation. It is obvious, however, that what is applied to all men without exception, cannot well be adulation. If princes and patrons alone were called "you," while "thou" was still used to inferiors or equals, we could understand why the levelling principle of the Quakers should set itself against the distinction; but if "you" be invariably and indiscriminately used to the very lowest of mankind, — to negroes, felons, and toad-eaters, — it is perfectly obvious, that no person's vanity can possibly be puffed up by receiving it; and that the most contemptuous misanthropist may employ it without any scruple. Comparing the said pronouns together, indeed, in this respect, it is notorious, that "thou" is, with us, by far the most flattering compellation of the two. It is the form in which men address the Deity; and in which all tragical love-letters, and verses of solemn adulation, are conceived. "You" belongs unquestionably to familiar and equal conversation. In truth, it is altogether absurd to consider "you" as exclusively a plural pronoun in the modern English language. It may be a matter of *history* that it was originally used as a plural only; and it may be a matter of *theory* that it was first applied to individuals on a principle of flattery; but the *fact* is, that it is now our second person singular. When applied to an individual, it never excites any idea either of plurality or of adulation; but excites precisely and exactly the idea that was excited by the use of "thou" in an earlier stage of the language. There is no more impropriety in the use of it, therefore, than in the use of any modern term which has superseded an obsolete one; nor any more virtue in reviving the use of "thou," than there would be in reviving any other antiquated word. It would be just as reasonable to talk always of our *doublets* and *hose*, and eschew all mention of *coats* or *stockings* as a fearful abomination.

The same observations apply to the other Quaker principle of refusing to call any man Mr. or Sir, or to subscribe themselves in their letters, as any man's humble servant. Their reasons for this refusal are, first, that the common phrases import a falsehood; and, secondly,

that they puff up vain man with conceit. Now, as to the falsehood, we have to observe, that the words objected to really do not mean anything about bondage or dominion when used on those occasions; and neither are so understood, nor are in danger of being so understood, by any one who hears them. Words are significant sounds; and, beyond question, it is solely in consequence of the meaning they convey, that men can be responsible for using them. Now the only meaning which can be inquired after in this respect, is the meaning of the person who speaks, and of the person who hears; but neither the speaker nor the hearer, with us, understand the appellation of Mr., prefixed to a man's name, to import any mastership or dominion in him relatively to the other. It is merely a customary addition, which means nothing but that you wish to speak of the individual with civility. That the word employed to signify this is the same word, or very near the same word, with one which, on other occasions, signifies a master over servants, does not at all affect its meaning upon this occasion. It does not, in fact, signify any such thing when prefixed to a man's proper name; and though it might have been used at first out of servility, with a view to that relation, it is long since that connexion has been lost; and it now signifies nothing but what is perfectly true and correct.

Etymology can point out a multitude of words which, with the same sound and orthography, have thus come to acquire a variety of significations, and which even the Quakers think it sufficiently lawful to use in them all. A *stage*, for example, signifies a certain distance on the road — or a raised platform — or a carriage that travels periodically — or a certain point in the progress of any affair. It could easily be shown, too, that all these different meanings spring from each other, and were gradually attributed to what was originally one and the same word. The words, however, are now substantially multiplied, to correspond with the meanings; and though they have the same sound and orthography, are never confounded by any one who is acquainted with the language. But there is, in fact, the same difference between the word master, implying power and authority over servants, and the word Master or Mister prefixed to a proper name, and implying merely a certain degree of respect and civility. That there is no deception either intended or effected, must be admitted by the Quakers themselves; and it is not easy to conceive how the guilt of falsehood can be incurred without some such intention. Upon the very same principle, they would themselves be guilty of falsehood, if they called a friend by his name of *Walker*, when he was mounted in his one-horse chaise — or by his name of *Smith*, if he did not happen to be a worker in metal.

The most amusing part of the matter, however, is, that in their abhorrence of this etymological falsehood, they have themselves adopted a practice, which is liable, on the same principles, to more serious objections. Though they will not call any body Sir or Master, they call every body "Friend;" although it is evident that, to a stranger, this must be mere civility, like the words they reject, and to an enemy must approach nearly to insincerity. They have rejected an established phraseology, therefore, to adopt one much more proper to fill them with scruples. We have dwelt too long, however, on this paltry casuistry; and must leave our readers to apply these observations to our common epistolary salutations, which are exactly in the same predicament.

For similar, or rather for more preposterous reasons, the Quakers have changed the names of the months and of the days of the week. Some of them are named, it seems, after the heathen gods; and therefore the use of them "seemed to be expressive of a kind of idolatrous homage." If such a new calendar had been devised by the original Christians, when March and June were not only named after Mars and Juno, but distinguished by particular festivals in their honour, we could have comprehended the motive of the innovation; but now-a-days, when Mars and Juno are no more thought of than Hector or Hecuba, and when men would as soon think of worshipping an ape or a crocodile as either of them, it does appear to us the very acmé of absurdity to suppose that there can be any idolatry in naming their names. In point of fact, whatever the matter may be etymologically or historically, we conceive that Wednesday and Thursday are words in modern English that have no sort of reference to the gods Woden

and Thor: since they certainly raise no ideas connected with these personages, and are never used with the intention of raising any such ideas. As they are used at present, therefore, they do not signify days dedicated to these divinities; but merely the days that come between Tuesday and Friday in our calendar. Those who think otherwise must maintain also, that the English word *expedient* actually signifies untying of feet, and the word *consideration* a taking of stars together.

Another of their peculiar customs is, that they will not pull off their hats, or make a bow to any body. This is one of their most ancient and respected canons. "George Fox," Mr. Clarkson assures us, "was greatly grieved about these idle ceremonies. He lamented that men should degrade themselves by the use of them, and that they should encourage habits that were abhorrent of the truth." Honest George! He was accordingly repeatedly beaten and abused for his refractoriness in this particular; and a long story is told in this volume, of a controversy he had with Judge Glynn, whom he posed with a citation from Daniel, purporting, that the three children were cast into the fiery furnace "with their hats on." Is it possible however to believe, that any rational being can imagine that there is any sin in lifting off one's hat, or bending the body? It is an easy and sufficiently convenient way of showing our respect or attention. A good-natured man could do a great deal more to gratify a mere stranger; and if there be one individual who would take the omission amiss, that alone would be a sufficient reason for persisting in the practice.

Mr. Clarkson next discusses the private manners of this rigid sect, and admits that they are rather dull, cold, and taciturn. Their principles prohibit them from the use of idle words; under which they include every sort of conversation introduced merely for gaiety or amusement. Their neglect of classical literature cuts off another great topic. Politics are proscribed, as leading to undue warmth; and all sorts of scandal and gossip, and allusion to public spectacles or amusements, for a more fundamental reason. Thus, they have little to talk about but their health, their business, or their religion; and all these things they think it a duty to discuss in a concise and sober manner. They say no graces; but when their meal is on the table, they sit silent and in a thoughtful posture for a short time; waiting for an illapse of the Spirit. If they are not moved to make any ejaculation, they begin to eat without more ado. They drink no healths, nor toasts; though not so much from the inconvenience of the thing, as because they conceive this to have been a bacchanalian practice borrowed from the Heathens of antiquity. They are very sober; and instead of sitting over their wine after dinner, frequently propose to their guests a walk before tea; the females do not leave the party during this interval. Their marriages are attended with no other ceremony, than that of taking each other by the hand in a public meeting, and declaring their willingness to be united. Notice, however, must be given of this intention at a previous meeting, when the consent of their parents is required, and a deputation appointed to inquire whether they are free from all previous engagements. Quakers marrying out of the society are disowned, though they may be again received into membership, on expressing their repentance for their marriage; a declaration which cannot be very flattering to the infidel spouse. There are many more women than men disowned for this transgression. The funerals of the Quakers are as free from solemnity as their marriages. They wear no mourning, and do not even cover their coffins with black;—their burying-ground receives no consecration;—they use no prayers on such occasions;—the body is generally carried to the meeting-house, before it is committed to the earth, and a short pause is made, during which any one who feels himself moved to speak, may address the congregation;—it is set down for a little time, also, at the edge of the grave, for the same opportunity;—it is then interred, and the friends and relations walk away. They use no vaults, and erect no monuments,—though they sometimes collect and preserve some account of the lives and sayings of their more eminent and pious brethren.

On the subject of trade there is a good deal of casuistry among the Quakers. They strictly prohibit the slave-trade, and had the merit of passing a severe censure upon it so long ago as

1727. They also prohibit privateering, smuggling, and all traffic in weapons of war. Most other trades they allow; but under certain limitations. A Quaker may be a bookseller; but he must not sell any immoral book. He may be a dealer in spirits; but he must not sell to those whom he knows to be drunkards. He may even be a silversmith; but he must not deal in splendid ornaments for the person. In no case may he recommend his goods as fashionable. It is much and learnedly disputed in this volume, whether he may make or sell ribands and other fineries of this sort; or whether, as a tailor or hatter, he may furnish any other articles than such as the society patronizes. Mention is also made of a Quaker tailor well known to King James II., who was so scrupulous in this respect, that "he would not allow his servants to put any corruptive finery upon the clothes which he had been employed to furnish;" and of one John Woolman, who "found himself sensibly weakened as a Christian, whenever he traded in things that served chiefly to please the vain mind, or people." Apart from these fopperies, however, the Quaker regulations for trade are excellent. They discourage all hazardous speculations, and all fictitious paper credit. If a member becomes bankrupt, a committee is appointed to inspect his affairs. If his insolvency is reported to have been produced by misconduct, he is disowned, and cannot be received back till he has paid his whole debts, even although he may have been discharged on a composition. If he has failed through misfortune, he continues in the society, but no contributions are received from him till his debts are fully paid.

When Quakers disagree, they seldom scold; and never fight or go to law. George Fox recommended them to settle all their differences by arbitration: and they have adhered to this practice ever since. Where the arbitrators are puzzled about the law, they may agree on a case, and consult counsel. When a Quaker disagrees with a person out of the society, he generally proposes arbitration in the first instance; if this be refused, he has no scruple of going to law.

We should now proceed to give some account of what Mr. Clarkson has called the four Great Tenets of the Quakers; but the length to which we have already extended these remarks must confine our observations to very narrow limits. The first is, That the civil magistrate has no right to interfere in religious matters, so as either to enforce attendance on one mode of worship, or to interdict any other which is harmless. In this, certainly, their doctrine is liable to very little objection. Their second great tenet is, That it is unlawful to swear upon any occasion whatsoever. We have not leisure now to discuss this point with Mr. Clarkson; indeed, from the obstruction which this scruple has so often occasioned to law proceedings, it has been discussed much oftener than any of the rest. Those who want to see a neat and forcible abstract of the Quaker reasoning on the subject, had better look into Barclay at once, instead of wading through the amplification of Mr. Clarkson.

Their third great tenet is, That it is unlawful to engage in the profession of arms. This is founded entirely upon a literal interpretation of certain texts of scripture, requiring men to love and bless their enemies, and to turn one cheek to him who had smitten the other, &c. It is commonly supposed, we believe, that these expressions were only meant to shadow out, by a kind of figure, that amicable and gentle disposition by which men should be actuated in their ordinary intercourse with each other, and by no means as a literal and peremptory directory for their conduct through life. In any other sense indeed, they would evidently amount to an encouragement to all sorts of violence and injustice; and would entirely disable and annihilate all civil government or authority among men. If evil is not to be resisted, and if the man who takes a cloak is to be pressed to a coat also, it is plain that the punishment of thieves and robbers must be just as unlawful as the resisting of invaders. It is remarkable, indeed, that the Quakers do not carry their literal submission to the scripture quite this length. They would struggle manfully for their cloaks; and, instead of giving the robber their coats also, would be very glad to have him imprisoned and flogged. If they can get rid of the letter of the law, however, in any case, it does appear to us, that there are occasionally stronger reasons for dispensing with the supposed prohibition

of war than with any of the others. If they would be justified in killing a wild beast that had rushed into their habitation, they must be justified in killing an invader who threatens to subject them and the whole community to his brutal lust, rapacity, and cruelty. We must call it a degrading superstition that would withhold the hands of a man in such an emergency. The last great tenet is, That it is unlawful to give pecuniary hire to a gospel ministry. This, again, is entirely a war of texts; aided by a confused reference to the history of tithes, from which the following most logical deductions are made: —

"First, that they are not in equity dues of the Church, — secondly, that the payment of them being compulsory, it would, if acceded to, be an acknowledgment that the civil magistrate had a right to use force in matters of religion, — and, thirdly, that, being claimed upon an act which holds them forth as of divine right, any payment of them would be an acknowledgment of the *Jewish* religion, and that Christ had not yet actually come!" — Vol. iii. p. 141.

After perusing all that we have now abstracted, Mr. Clarkson's readers might perhaps have been presumed capable of forming some conclusion for themselves as to the Quaker character; but the author chooses to make the inference for them, in a dissertation of one hundred and fifty pages; to which we must satisfy ourselves, for the present, with making this general reference. We must use the same liberty with the "miscellaneous particulars," which fill nearly as many pages with an attempt to prove that the Quakers are a very happy people, that they have done good by the example of their virtues, and that those who have thoughts of leaving the society, had better think twice before they take a step of so much consequence.

We come now to say a few words on the subject of their interior government; which appears to us to be formed very much upon the model of the Presbyterian churches so long established in this part of the kingdom. The basis of the whole system is, that every member of the society is not only entitled, but bound in duty, to watch over the moral and religious deportment of any other whom he has an opportunity of observing, and to interfere for his admonition and correction when he sees cause. Till the year 1698, this duty was not peculiarly imposed upon any individual; but, since that time, four or five persons are named in each congregation, under the title of overseers, who are expected to watch over the conduct of the flock with peculiar anxiety. The half of these are women, who take charge of their own sex only. Four or five congregations are associated together, and hold a general *monthly* meeting of deputies, of both sexes, from each congregation. Two or more of each sex are deputed from these monthly meetings to the general *quarterly* meeting; which reunites all the congregations of a county, or larger district, according to the extent of the Quaker population; and those, again, send four of each sex to the great yearly meeting or convocation; which is regularly assembled in London, and continues its sitting for ten or twelve days.

The method of proceeding, where the conduct of a member has been disorderly, is, first, by private admonition, either by individuals, or by the overseers; where this is not effectual, the case is reported to the monthly meeting, who appoint a committee to deal with him, and, upon their report, either receive him back into communion, or expel him from the society by a written document, entitled a Testimony of Disownment. From this sentence, however, he may appeal to the quarterly meeting, and from that to the yearly. These courts of review investigate the case by means of committees; of which none of those who pronounced the sentence complained of can be members.

In the monthly meetings, all presentations of marriages are received, and births and funerals registered; — contributions and arrangements are made for the relief of the poor; — persons are disowned, or received back; — and cases of scruples are stated and discussed. They likewise prepare answers to a series of standing queries as to the state and condition of their several congregations, which they transmit to the quarterly meeting. The quarterly meeting hears appeals, — receives the reports in answer to these queries, — and prepares, in its turn, a more general and comprehensive report for the great annual meeting in London. This assembly, again, hears appeals from the quarterly meetings, and receives their reports; and, finally, draws up a

public or pastoral letter to the whole society, in which it communicates the most interesting particulars, as to its general state and condition, that have been collected from the reports laid before it, — makes such suitable admonitions and exhortations for their moral and civil conduct, as the complexion of the times, or the nature of these reports have suggested, and recommends to their consideration any project or proposition that may have been laid before it, for the promotion of religion, and the good of mankind. The slave-trade has, of late years, generally formed one of the topics of this general epistle, which is printed and circulated throughout the society. In all their meetings, the male and female deputies assemble, and transact their business, in separate apartments; meeting together only for worship, or for making up their general reports. The wants of the poor are provided for by the monthly meetings, who appoint certain overseers to visit and relieve them: the greater part of these overseers are women; and whatever they find wanting in the course of their visits, money, clothes, or medicines, they order, and their accounts are settled by the treasurer of the monthly meeting. Where it happens that there are more poor in any one district than can easily be relieved by the more opulent brethren within it, the deficiency is supplied by the quarterly meeting, to which it is subjected. The children of the poor are all taught to read and write at the public expense, and afterwards bound apprentice to trades;—the females are generally destined for service, and placed in Quaker families.

"Such," says Mr. Clarkson, with a very natural exultation on the good management of his favourites, "such is the organization of the discipline or government of the Quakers. Nor may it improperly be called a Government, when we consider, that, besides all matters relating to the church, it takes cognizance of the actions of Quakers to Quakers, and of these to their fellow-citizens; and of these, again, to the state; in fact, of all actions of Quakers, if immoral in the eye of the society, as soon as they are known. It gives out its prohibitions. It marks its crimes. It imposes offices on its subjects. It calls them to disciplinary duties. This government, however, notwithstanding its power, has, as I observed before, no president or head, either permanent or temporary. There is no first man through the whole society. Neither has it any badge of office — or mace, or constable's staff, or sword. It may be observed also, that it has no office of emolument by which its hands can be strengthened —neither minister, elder, clerk, overseer, or deputy, being paid: and yet its administration is firmly conducted, and its laws are better obeyed than laws by persons under any other denomination or government."— Vol. i. pp. 246, 247.

We have nothing now to discuss with these good people, but their religion: and with this we will not meddle. It is quite plain to us, that their founder George Fox was exceedingly insane; and though we by no means suspect many of his present followers of the same malady, we cannot help saying that most of their peculiar doctrines are too high-flown for our humble apprehension. They hold that God has at all times communicated a certain portion of the *Spirit*, or *word*, or *light*, to mankind; but has given very different portions of it to different individuals: that, in consequence of this inward illumination, not only the ancient patriarchs and prophets, but many of the old heathen philosophers, were very good Christians: that no kind of worship or preaching can be acceptable or profitable, unless it flow from the immediate inspiration and movement of this inward spirit; and that all ordination, or appointment of priests, is therefore impious and unavailing. They are much attached to the Holy Ghost; but are supposed to reject the doctrine of the Trinity; as they certainly reject the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with all other rites, ordinances, and ceremonies, known or practised in any other Christian church. These tenets they justify by various citations from the New Testament and the older fathers; as any one may see in the works of Barclay and Penn, with rather more satisfaction than in this of Mr. Clarkson. We enter not at present into these disputations.

Upon the whole, we are inclined to believe the Quakers to be a tolerably honest, painstaking, and inoffensive set of Christians. Very stupid, dull, and obstinate, we presume, in conversation; and tolerably lumpish and fatiguing in domestic society: active and methodical in their business, and narrow-minded and ill-informed as to most other particulars; beneficent from habit and the discipline of the society; but cold in their affections, and inwardly chilled into a sort of Chinese apathy,

by the restraints to which they are continually subjected; childish and absurd in their religious scruples and peculiar usages, and singularly unlearned as a sect of theologians; but exemplary, above all other sects, for the decency of their lives, for their charitable indulgence to all other persuasions, for their care of their poor, and for the liberal participation they have afforded to their women in all the duties and honours of the society.

We would not willingly insinuate any thing against the general sincerity of those who remain in communion with this body; but Mr. Clarkson has himself noticed, that when they become opulent, they are very apt to fall off from it; and, indeed, we do not recollect ever to have seen either a Quaker gentleman of fortune or a Quaker day-labourer. The truth is, that ninety-nine out of a hundred of them are engaged in trade; and as they all deal and correspond with each other, it is easy to see what advantages they must have as traders, from belonging to so great a corporation. A few follow the medical profession, and a still smaller number that of conveyancing; but they rely, in both, almost exclusively on the support of their brethren of the society. It is rather remarkable, that Mr. Clarkson has not given us any sort of estimate or calculation of their present numbers in England; though, from the nature of their government, it must be known to most of their leading members. It is the general opinion, it seems, that they are gradually diminishing.

WILLIAM PENN.

(July, 1813.)

Memoirs of the Private and Public Life of William Penn. By Thomas Clarkson, M.A. 8vo. 2 vols. pp. 1020. London: 1813.

It is impossible to look into any of Mr. Clarkson's books, without feeling that he is an excellent man — and a very bad writer. Many of the defects of his composition, indeed, seem to be directly referable to the amiableness of his disposition. An earnestness for truth and virtue, that does not allow him to waste any thought upon the ornaments by which they may be recommended — and a simplicity of character which is not aware that what is substantially respectable may be made dull or ridiculous by the manner in which it is presented — are virtues which we suspect not to have been very favourable to his reputation as an author. Feeling in himself not only an entire toleration of honest tediousness, but a decided preference for it upon all occasions over mere elegance or ingenuity, he seems to have transferred a little too hastily to books those principles of judgment which are admirable when applied to men; and to have forgotten, that though dulness may be a very venial fault in a good man, it is such a fault in a book as to render its goodness of no avail whatsoever. Unfortunately for Mr. Clarkson, moral qualities alone will not make a good writer; nor are they even of the first importance on such an occasion: and accordingly, with all his philanthropy, piety, and inflexible honesty, he has not escaped the sin of tediousness — and that to a degree that must render him almost illegible to any but Quakers, Reviewers, and others, who make public profession of patience insurmountable. He has no taste, and no spark of vivacity — not the vestige of an ear for harmony — and a prolixity of which modern times have scarcely preserved any other example. He seems to have a sufficiently sound and clear judgment, but no great acuteness of understanding; and, though visibly tasking himself to judge charitably and speak candidly of all men, is evidently beset with such an antipathy to all who persecute Quakers, or maltreat Negroes, as to make him very unwilling to report any thing in their favour. On the other hand, he has great industry — scrupulous veracity — and that serious and sober enthusiasm for his subject, which is sure in the long run to disarm ridicule, and win upon inattention — and is frequently able to render vulgarity impressive, and simplicity sublime. Moreover, and above all, he is perfectly free from affectation; so that, though we may be wearied, we are never disturbed or offended — and read on, in tranquillity, till we find it impossible to read any more.

It will be guessed, however, that it is not on account of its literary merits that we are induced to take notice of the work before us.

William Penn, to whose honour it is wholly devoted, was, beyond all doubt, a personage of no ordinary standard — and ought, before this time, to have met with a biographer capable of doing him justice. He is most known, and most deserving of being known, as the settler of Pennsylvania; but his private character also is interesting, and full of those peculiarities which distinguished the temper and manners of a great part of the English nation at the period in which he lived. His theological and polemical exploits are no less characteristic of the man and of the times; — though all that is really edifying in this part of his history might have been given in about one twentieth part of the space which is allotted to it in the volumes of Mr. Clarkson.

William Penn was born in 1644, the only son of Admiral Sir W. Penn, the representative of an ancient and honourable family in Buckingham and Gloucestershire. He was regularly educated; and entered a Gentleman Commoner at Christ's Church, Oxford, where he distinguished himself very early for his proficiency both in classical learning and athletic exercises. When he was only about sixteen, however, he was roused to a sense of the corruptions of the established faith, by the preaching of one Thomas Loe, a Quaker — and immediately discontinued his attendance at chapel; and, with some other youths of his own way of thinking, began to hold prayer meetings in their private apartments. This of course gave great scandal and offence to his academical superiors; and a large fine, with suitable admonitions, was imposed on the young nonconformist. Just at this critical period, an order was unluckily received from Court to resume the use of the surplice, which it seems had been discontinued almost ever since the period of the Reformation; and the sight of this unfortunate vestment "operated," as Mr. Clarkson expresses it, "so *disagreeably* on William Penn, that he could not bear it! and joining himself with some other young gentlemen, he fell upon those students who appeared in surplices, and tore them everywhere over their heads." This, we conceive, was not quite correct, even as a Quaker proceeding; and was but an unpromising beginning for the future champion of religious liberty. Its natural consequence, however, was, that he and his associates were, without further ceremony, expelled from the University; and when he went home to his father, and attempted to justify by argument the measures he had adopted, it was no less natural that the good Admiral should give him a good box on the ear, and turn him to the door.

This course of discipline, however, not proving immediately effectual, he was sent upon his travels, along with some other young gentlemen, and resided for two years in France, and the Low Countries; but without any change either in those serious views of religion, or those austere notions of morality, by which his youth had been so prematurely distinguished. On his return his father again endeavoured to subdue him to a more worldly frame of mind; first, by setting him to study law at Lincoln's Inn; and afterwards, by sending him to the Duke of Ormond's court at Dublin, and giving him the charge of his large possessions in that kingdom. These expedients might perhaps have been attended with success, had he not accidentally again fallen in (at Cork) with his old friend Thomas Loe, the Quaker, — who set before him such a view of the dangers of his situation, that he seems from that day forward to have renounced all secular occupations, and betaken himself to devotion, as the main business of his life.

The reign of Charles II., however, was not auspicious to dissenters; and in those evil days of persecution, he was speedily put in prison for attending Quaker meetings; but was soon liberated, and again came back to his father's house, where a long disputation took place upon the subject of his new creed. It broke up with this moderate and very loyal proposition on the part of the Vice-Admiral — that the young Quaker should consent to sit with his hat off, in presence of the King — the Duke of York — and the Admiral himself! in return for which slight compliance, it was stipulated that he should be no longer molested for any of his opinions or practices. The heroic convert, however, would listen to no terms of composition; and, after taking some days to consider of it, reported, that his conscience could not comport with any species of *Hat worship* — and was again turned out of doors for his pains.

He now took openly to preaching in the Quaker meetings; and shortly after began that course of theological and controversial publications, in which he persisted to his dying day; and which has had the effect of overwhelming his memory with two vast folio volumes of Puritanical pamphlets. His most considerable work seems to have been that entitled "No Cross, no Crown;" in which he not only explains and vindicates, at great length, the grounds of the peculiar doctrines and observances of the Society to which he belonged — but endeavours to show, by a very large and entertaining induction of instances from profane history, that the same general principles had been adopted and acted upon by the wise and good in every generation; and were suggested indeed to the reflecting mind by the inward voice of conscience, and the analogy of the whole visible scheme of God's providence in the government of the world. The intermixture of worldly learning, and the larger and bolder scope of this performance, render it far more legible than the pious exhortations and pertinacious polemics which fill the greater part of his subsequent publications. In his love of controversy and of printing, indeed, this worthy sectary seems to have been the very PRIESTLEY of the 17th century. He not only responded in due form to every work in which the principles of his sect were directly or indirectly attacked, — but whenever he heard a sermon that he did not like, — or learned that any of the Friends had been put in the stocks; — whenever he was prevented from preaching, — or learned any edifying particulars of the death of a Quaker, or of a persecutor of Quakers, he was instantly at the press, with a letter, or a narrative, or an admonition — and never desisted from the contest till he had reduced the adversary to silence.

The members of the Established Church, indeed, were rarely so unwary as to make any rejoinder; and most of his disputes, accordingly, were with rival sectaries; in whom the spirit of proselytism and jealous zeal is always stronger than in the members of a larger and more powerful body. They were not always contented indeed with the regular and general war of the press, but frequently challenged each other to personal combat, in the form of solemn and public disputations. William Penn had the honour of being repeatedly appointed the champion of the Quakers in these theological duels; and never failed, according to his partial biographer, completely to demolish his opponent; — though it appears that he did not always meet with perfectly fair play, and that the chivalrous law of arms was by no means correctly observed in those ghostly encounters. His first *set to* was with one Vincent, the oracle of a neighbouring congregation of Presbyterians; and affords rather a ludicrous example of the futility and indecorum which are apt to characterize all such exhibitions After the debate had gone on for some time, Vincent made a long discourse, in which he openly accused the Quakers of blasphemy; and as soon as he had done, he made off, and desired all his friends to follow him. Penn insisted upon being heard in reply: but the Presbyterian troops pulled him down by the skirts; and proceeding to blow out the candles, (for the battle had already lasted till midnight,) left the indignant orator in utter darkness! He was not to be baffled or appalled, however, by a privation of this description; and accordingly went on to argue and retort in the dark, with such force and effect, that it was thought advisable to send out for his fugitive opponent, who, after some time, reappeared with a candle in his hand, and begged that the debate might be adjourned to another day. But he could never be prevailed on, Mr. Clarkson assures us, to renew the combat; and Penn, after going and defying him in his own meeting-house, had recourse, as usual, to the press; and put forth "The Sandy Foundation Shaken," for which he had the pleasure of being committed to the Tower, on the instigation of the Bishop of London; and solaced himself, during his confinement, by writing six other pamphlets.

Soon after his deliverance, he was again taken up, and brought to trial before the Lord Mayor and Recorder for preaching in a Quaker meeting. He afterwards published an account of this proceeding; — and it is in our opinion one of the most curious and instructive pieces that ever came from his pen. The times to which it relates, are sufficiently known to have been times of gross oppression and judicial abuse; — but the brutality of the Court upon

this occasion seems to us to exceed any thing that is recorded elsewhere; — and the noble firmness of the jury still deserves to be remembered, for example to happier days. The prisoner came into court, according to Quaker costume, with his hat on his head; — but the doorkeeper, with a due zeal for the dignity of the place, pulled it off as he entered. — Upon this, however, the Lord Mayor became quite furious, and ordered the unfortunate beaver to be instantly replaced — which was no sooner done than he fined the poor culprit for appearing covered in his presence! — William Penn now insisted upon knowing what law he was accused of having broken, — to which simple question the Recorder was reduced to answer, "that he was an impertinent fellow, — and that many had studied thirty or forty years to understand the law, which he was for having expounded in a moment!" The learned controversialist, however, was not to be silenced so easily; — he quoted Lord Coke and *Magna Charta* on his antagonist in a moment; and chastised his insolence by one of the best and most characteristic repartees that we recollect ever to have met with. "I tell you to be silent," cried the Recorder in a great passion; "if we should suffer you to ask questions till to-morrow morning, you will be never the wiser!" — "That," replied the Quaker, with his immoveable tranquillity, "that is, according as *the answers* are." — "Take him away, take him away!" exclaimed the Mayor and the Recorder in a breath — "turn him into the Bale Dock;" — and into the Bale Dock, a filthy and pestilent dungeon in the neighbourhood, he was accordingly turned — discoursing calmly all the way on Magna Charta and the rights of Englishmen; — while the courtly Recorder delivered a very animated charge to the jury, in the absence of the prisoner.

The jury, however, after a short consultation, brought in a verdict, finding him merely "guilty of *speaking* in Gracechurch Street." For this cautious and most correct deliverance, they were loaded with reproaches by the Court, and sent out to amend their verdict, — but in half an hour they returned with the same ingenious finding, written out at large, and subscribed with all their names. The Court now became more furious than ever, and shut them up without meat, drink, or fire, till next morning; when they twice over came back with the same verdict; — upon which they were reviled, and threatened so outrageously by the Recorder, that William Penn protested against this plain intimidation of the persons, to whose *free* suffrages the law had entrusted his cause. The answer of the Recorder was, "Stop his mouth, jailor — bring fetters and stake him to the ground." William Penn replied with the temper of a Quaker, and the spirit of a martyr, "Do your pleasure — I matter not your fetters!" And the Recorder took occasion to observe, "that, till now, he had never understood the policy of the Spaniards in suffering *the Inquisition* among them. But now he saw that it would never be well with us, till we had something like the Spanish Inquisition in England!" After this sage remark, the jury were again sent back, — and kept other twenty-four hours, without food or refreshment. On the third day, the natural and glorious effect of this brutality on the spirits of Englishmen was at length produced. Instead of the special and unmeaning form of their first verdict, they now, all in one voice, declared the prisoner NOT GUILTY. The Recorder again broke out into abuse and menace; and, after "praying God to keep his life out of such hands," proceeded, we really do not see on what pretext, to fine every man of them in forty marks, and to order them to prison till payment. William Penn then demanded his liberty; but was ordered into custody till he paid the fine imposed on him for wearing his hat; and was forthwith dragged away to his old lodging in the Bale Dock, while in the very act of quoting the 29th chapter of the Great Charter, "*Nullus liber homo*," &c. As he positively refused to acknowledge the legality of this infliction by paying the fine, he might have lain long enough in this dungeon; but his father, who was now reconciled to him, sent the money privately; and he was at last set at liberty.

The spirit, however, which had dictated these proceedings was not likely to cease from troubling; and, within less than a year, the poor Quaker was again brought before the magistrate on an accusation of illegal preaching and was again about to be dismissed for want of evidence, when the worthy justice ingeniously bethought himself of tendering to the

prisoner the oath of allegiance, which, as well as every other oath, he well knew that his principles would oblige him to refuse. Instead of the oath, W. Penn accordingly offered to give his reasons for not swearing; but the magistrate refused to hear him; and an altercation ensued, in the course of which the justice having insinuated, that, in spite of his sanctified exterior, the young preacher was as bad as other folks in his practice, the Quaker forgot, for one moment, the systematic meekness and composure of his sect, and burst out into this triumphant appeal: —

"I make this bold challenge to all men, women, and children upon earth, justly to accuse me of having seen me drunk, heard me swear, utter a curse, or speak one obscene word, much less that I ever made it my practice. I speak this to God's glory, who has ever preserved me from the power of these pollutions, and who from a child begot an hatred in me towards them. Thy words shall be thy burthen, and I trample thy slander as dirt under my feet!" — Pp. 99, 100.

The greater part of the audience confirmed this statement; and the judicial calumniator had nothing for it, but to sentence this unreasonable Puritan to six months' imprisonment to Newgate; where he amused himself, as usual, by writing and publishing four pamphlets in support of his opinions.

It is by no means our intention, however, to digest a chronicle either of his persecutions or his publications. In the earlier part of his career, he seems to have been in prison every six months; and, for a very considerable period of it, certainly favoured the world with at least six new pamphlets every year. In all these, as well as in his public appearances, there is a singular mixture of earnestness and sobriety — a devotedness to the cause in which he was engaged, that is almost sublime; and a temperance and patience towards his opponents, that is truly admirable: while in the whole of his private life, there is redundant testimony, even from the mouths of his enemies, that his conduct was pure and philanthropic in an extraordinary degree, and distinguished at the same time for singular prudence and judgment in all ordinary affairs. His virtues and his sufferings appear at last to have overcome his father's objections to his peculiar tenets; and a thorough and cordial reconciliation took place previous to their final separation. On his death-bed, indeed, the admiral is said to have approved warmly of every part of his son's conduct; and to have predicted, that "if he and his friends kept to their plain way of preaching and of living, they would speedily make an end of the priests, to the end of the world." — By his father's death he succeeded to a handsome estate, then yielding upwards of 1500*l.* a year; but made no change either in his professions or way of life. He was at the press and in Newgate, after this event, exactly as before: and defied and reviled the luxury of the age, just as vehemently, when he was in a condition to partake of it, as in the days of his poverty. Within a short time after his succession, he made a pilgrimage to Holland and Germany in company with George Fox; where it is said that they converted many of all ranks, including young ladies of quality and old professors of divinity. They were ill used, however, by a surly *Graf* or two, who sent them out of their dominions under a corporal's guard; an attention which they repaid, by long letters of expostulation and advice, which the worthy Grafs were probably neither very able nor very willing to read.

In the midst of these labours and trials, he found time to marry a lady of great beauty and accomplishment; and settled himself in a comfortable and orderly house in the country — but, at the same time, remitted nothing of his zeal and activity in support of the cause in which he had embarked. When the penal statutes against Popish recusants were about to be passed, in 1678, by the tenor of which, certain grievous punishments were inflicted upon all who did not frequent the established church, or purge themselves, *upon oath*, from popery, William Penn was allowed to be heard before a Committee of the House of Commons, in support of the Quakers' application for some exemption from the unintended severity of these edicts; — and what has been preserved of his speech, upon that occasion, certainly is not the least respectable of his performances. It required no ordinary magnanimity for any one, in the very height of the frenzy of the Popish plot, boldly to tell the House of Commons, "that it was unlawful to inflict punishment upon Catholics themselves, on account of a conscientious dissent." This, however, William Penn did, with the firmness of a true

philosopher; but, at the same time, with so much of the meekness and humility of a Quaker, that he was heard without offence or interruption: — and having thus put in his protest against the general principle of intolerance, he proceeded to plead his own cause, and that of his brethren, with admirable force and temper as follows:

"I was bred a Protestant, and that strictly too. I lost nothing by time or study. For years, reading, travel, and observation, made the religion of my education the religion of my judgment. My alteration hath brought none to that belief; and though the posture I am in may seem odd or strange to you, yet I am conscientious; and, till you know me better, I hope your charity will call it rather my unhappiness than my crime. I do tell you again, and here solemnly declare, in the presence of the Almighty God, and before you all, that the profession I now make, and the Society I now adhere to, have been so far from altering that Protestant judgment I had, that I am not conscious to myself of having receded from an iota of any one principle maintained by those first Protestants and Reformers of Germany, and our own martyrs at home against the see of Rome: and therefore it is, we think it hard, that though we deny in common with you those doctrines of Rome so zealously protested against, (from whence the name Protestants,) yet that we should be so unhappy as to suffer, and that with extreme severity, by laws made only against the maintainers of those doctrines which we do so deny. We choose no suffering; for God knows what we have already suffered, and how many sufficient and trading families are reduced to great poverty by it. We think ourselves an useful people. We are sure we are a peaceable people: yet, if we must still suffer, let us not suffer as Popish Recusants, but as Protestant Dissenters."—Pp. 220, 221.

About the same period we find him closely leagued with no less a person than Algernon Sydney, and busily employed in canvassing for him in the burgh of Guildford. But the most important of his occupations at this time were those which connected him with that region which was destined to be the scene of his greatest and most memorable exertions. An accidental circumstance had a few years before engaged him in some enquiries with regard to the state of that district in North America, since called New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. A great part of this territory had been granted by the Crown to the family of Lord Berkeley, who had recently sold a large part of it to a Quaker of the name of Billynge; and this person having fallen into pecuniary embarrassments, prevailed upon William Penn to accept of a conveyance of this property, and to undertake the management of it, as trustee for his creditors. The conscientious trustee applied himself to the discharge of this duty with his habitual scrupulousness and activity; — and having speedily made himself acquainted with the condition and capabilities of the great province in question, was immediately struck with the opportunity it afforded, both for a beneficent arrangement of the interest of its inhabitants, and for providing a pleasant and desirable retreat for such of his own communion as might be willing to leave their native land in pursuit of religious liberty. The original charter had vested the proprietor, under certain limitations, with the power of legislation; and one of the first works of William Penn was to draw up a sort of Constitution for the land vested in Billynge — the cardinal foundation of which was, that no man should be troubled, molested, or subjected to any disability, on account of his religion. He then superintended the embarkation of two or three ship-loads of Quakers, who set off for this land of promise; — and continued, from time to time, both to hear so much of their prosperity, and to feel how much a larger proprietor might have it in his power to promote and extend it, that he at length conceived the idea of acquiring for himself a much larger district, and founding a settlement upon a still more liberal and comprehensive plan. The means of doing this were providentially placed in his hands, by the circumstance of his father having a claim upon the dissolute and needy government of the day, for no less than 16,000*l.*, — in lieu of which W. Penn proposed that the district, since called Pennsylvania, should be made over to him, with such ample powers of administration, as made him little less than absolute sovereign of the country. The right of legislation was left entirely to him, and such councils as he might appoint; with no other limitation, than that his laws should be liable to be rescinded by the Privy Council of England, within six months after they were reported to it. This memorable charter was signed on the 4th of March, 1681. He originally intended, that the country should have been called New Wales; but the Under-Secretary of State, being a Welshman, thought, it seems,

that this was using too much liberty with the ancient principality, and objected to it! He then suggested Sylvania; but the king himself insisted upon adding Penn to it, — and after some struggles of modesty, it was found necessary to submit to his gracious desires.

He now proceeded to encourage settlers of all sorts, — but especially such sectaries as were impatient of the restraints and persecutions to which they were subjected in England; and published certain conditions and regulations, "the first fundamental of which," as he expresses it, was, "That every person should enjoy the free profession of his faith, and exercise of worship towards God, in such a way as he shall in his conscience believe is most acceptable; and should be protected in this liberty by the authority of the civil magistrate." With regard to the native inhabitants, he positively enacted, that "whosoever should hurt, wrong, or offend any Indian, should incur the same penalty as if he had offended in like manner against his fellow planter;" and that the planters should not be their own judges in case of any difference with the Indians, but that all such differences should be settled by twelve referees, six Indians and six planters; under the direction, if need were, of the Governor of the province, and the Chief, or King of the Indians concerned. Under these wise and merciful regulations, three ships full of passengers sailed for the new province in the end of 1681. In one of these was Colonel Markham, a relation of Penn's, and intended to act as his secretary when he should himself arrive. He was the chief of several commissioners, who were appointed to confer with the Indians with regard to the cession or purchase of their lands, and the terms of a perpetual peace, — and was the bearer of the following letter to them from the Governor, a part of which we think worthy of being transcribed, for the singular plainness, and engaging honesty, of its manner.

"Now, I would have you well observe, that I am very sensible of the unkindness and injustice which have been too much exercised toward you by the people of these parts of the world, who have sought themselves to make great advantages by you, rather than to be examples of goodness and patience unto you. This I hear hath been a matter of trouble to you, and caused great grudging and animosities, sometimes to the shedding of blood. But I am not such a man; as is well known in my own country. I have great love and regard toward you, and desire to win and gain your love and friendship by a kind, just, and peaceable life; and the people I send are of the same mind, and shall in all things behave themselves accordingly; and if in any thing any shall offend you or your people, you shall have a full and speedy satisfaction for the same, by an equal number of just men on both sides, that by no means you may have just occasion of being offended against them.

"I shall shortly come to see you myself, at which time we may more largely and freely confer and discourse of these matters. In the mean time I have sent my Commissioners to treat with you, about land, and a firm league of peace. Let me desire you to be kind to them and to the people, and receive the presents and tokens, which I have sent you, as a testimony of my good will to you, and of my resolution to live justly, peaceably, and friendly with you.

"I am, your loving Friend,

"William Penn."

In the course of the succeeding year, he prepared to follow these first colonists; and accordingly embarked, with about an hundred other Quakers, in the month of September, 1682. Before separating himself, however, from his family on this long pilgrimage, he addressed a long letter of love and admonition to his wife and children, from which we are tempted to make a pretty large extract for the entertainment and edification of our readers. There is something, we think, very touching and venerable in the affectionateness of its whole strain, and the patriarchal simplicity in which it is conceived; while the language appears to us to be one of the most beautiful specimens of that soft and mellow English, which, with all its redundancy and cumbrous volume, has, to our ears, a far richer and more pathetic sweetness than the epigrams and apothegms of modern times. The letter begins in this manner —

"My dear Wife and Children,

"My love, which neither sea, nor land, nor death itself, can extinguish or lessen toward you, most endearedly visits you with eternal embraces, and will abide with you for ever: and may the God of my life watch over you, and bless you, and do you good in this world and for ever! — Some things are upon my spirit to leave with you in your respective capacities, as I am to one a husband, and to the rest a father, if I should never see you more in this world.

"My dear wife! remember thou wast the love of my youth, and much the joy of my life; the most beloved, as well as most worthy of all my earthly comforts: and the reason of that love was more thy inward than thy outward excellencies, which yet

were many. God knows, and thou knowest it, I can say it was a match of Providence's making; and God's image in us both was the first thing, and the most amiable and engaging ornament in our eyes. Now I am to leave thee, and that without knowing whether I shall ever see thee more in this world, take my counsel into thy bosom, and let it dwell with thee in my stead while thou livest."

Then, after some counsel about godliness and economy, he proceeds:

"And now, my dearest, let me recommend to thy care my dear children; abundantly beloved of me, as the Lord's blessings, and the sweet pledges of our mutual and endeared affection. Above all things endeavour to breed them up in the love of virtue, and that holy plain way of which we have lived in, that the world in no part of it get into my family. I had rather they were homely than finely bred as to outward behaviour; yet I love sweetness mixed with gravity, and cheerfulness tempered with sobriety. Religion in the heart leads into this true civility, teaching men and women to be mild and courteous in their behaviour; an accomplishment worthy indeed of praise.

"Next breed them up in a love one of another: tell them it is the charge I left behind me; and that it is the way to have the love and blessing of God upon them. Sometimes separate them, but not long; and allow them to send and give each other small things, to endear one another with. Once more I say, tell them it was my counsel they should be tender and affectionate one to another. For their learning be liberal. Spare no cost; for by such parsimony all is lost that is saved; but let it be useful knowledge, such as is consistent with truth and godliness, not cherishing a vain conversation or idle mind; but ingenuity mixed with industry is good for the body and the mind too. Rather keep an ingenious person in the house to teach them, than send them to schools; too many evil impressions being commonly received there. Be sure to observe their genius, and do not cross it as to learning; let them not dwell too long on one thing; but let their change be agreeable, and all their diversions have some little bodily labour in them. When grown big, have most care for them; for then there are more snares, both within and without. When marriageable, see that they have worthy persons in their eye, of good life, and good fame for piety and understanding. I desire no wealth, but sufficiency; and be sure their love be dear, fervent, and mutual, that it may be happy for them. I choose not they should be married to earthly, covetous kindred; and of cities and towns of concourse, beware: the world is apt to stick close to those who have lived and got wealth there: a country life and estate I like best for my children. I prefer a decent mansion of a hundred pounds per annum, before ten thousand pounds in London, or such like place, in a way of trade."

He next addresses himself to his children:

"Be obedient to your dear mother, a woman whose virtue and good name is an honour to you; for she hath been exceeded by none in her time for her integrity, humanity, virtue, and good understanding; qualities not usual among women of her worldly condition and quality. Therefore honour and obey her, my dear children, as your mother, and your father's love and delight; nay, love her too, for she loved your father with a deep and upright love, choosing him before all her many suitors: and though she be of a delicate constitution and noble spirit, yet she descended to the utmost tenderness and care for you, performing the painfullest acts of service to you in your infancy, as a mother and a nurse too. I charge you, before the Lord, honour and obey, love and cherish your dear mother."

After a great number of other affectionate counsels, he turns particularly to his elder boys:

"And as for you, who are likely to be concerned in the government of Pennsylvania, I do charge you before the Lord God and his holy angels, that you be lowly, diligent, and tender; fearing God, loving the people, and hating covetousness. Let justice have its impartial course, and the law free passage. Though to your loss, protect no man against it; for you are not above the law, but the law above you. Live therefore the lives yourselves you would have the people live, and then shall you have right and boldness to punish the transgressor. Keep upon the square, for God sees you: therefore do your duty, and be sure you see with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears. Entertain no lurchers; cherish no informers for gain or revenge; use no tricks; fly to no devices to support or cover injustice; but let your hearts be upright before the Lord, trusting in him above the contrivances of men, and none shall be able to hurt or supplant you."

We should like to see any private letter of instructions from a sovereign to his heir-apparent, that will bear a comparison with the injunctions of this honest sectary. He concludes as follows:—

"Finally, my children, love one another with a true endeared love, and your dear relations on both sides, and take care to preserve tender affection in your children to each other, often marrying within themselves, so as it be without the bounds forbidden in God's law, that so they may not, like the forgetting unnatural world, grow out of kindred, and as cold as strangers; but, as becomes a truly natural and Christian stock, you and yours after you, may live in the pure and fervent love of God towards one another, as becoming brethren in the spiritual and natural relation.

"So farewell to my thrice dearly beloved wife and children!

"Yours, as God pleaseth, in that which no waters can quench, no time forget, nor distance wear away, but remains for ever,

"William Penn.

"*Worminghurst, fourth of sixth month,* 1682."

Immediately after writing this letter, he embarked, and arrived safely in the Delaware with all his companions. The country assigned to him by the royal charter was yet full of its original inhabitants; and the principles of William Penn did not allow him to look upon that gift as a warrant to dispossess the first proprietors of the land. He had accordingly appointed his commissioners, the preceding year, to treat with them for the fair purchase of a part of their lands, and for their joint possession of the remainder; and the terms of the settlement being now nearly agreed upon, he proceeded, very soon after his arrival, to conclude the transaction, and solemnly to pledge his faith, and to ratify and confirm the treaty, in sight both of the Indians and Planters. For this purpose a grand convocation of the tribes had been appointed near the spot where Philadelphia now stands; and it was agreed that he and the presiding Sachems should meet and exchange faith, under the spreading branches of a prodigious elm-tree that grew on the bank of the river. On the day appointed, accordingly, an innumerable multitude of the Indians assembled in that neighbourhood; and were seen, with their dark visages and brandished arms, moving, in vast swarms, in the depths of the woods which then overshadowed the whole of that now cultivated region. On the other hand, William Penn, with a moderate attendance of Friends, advanced to meet them. He came of course unarmed — in his usual plain dress — without banners, or mace, or guards, or carriages; and only distinguished from his companions by wearing a blue sash of silk network (which it seems is still preserved by Mr. Kett of Seething-hall, near Norwich), and by having in his hand a roll of parchment, on which was engrossed the confirmation of the treaty of purchase and amity. As soon as he drew near the spot where the Sachems were assembled, the whole multitude of Indians threw down their weapons, and seated themselves on the ground in groups, each under his own chieftain; and the presiding chief intimated to William Penn, that the nations were ready to hear him. Mr. Clarkson regrets, and we cordially join in the sentiment, that there is no written, contemporary account of the particulars attending this interesting and truly novel transaction. He assures us, however, that they are still in a great measure preserved in oral tradition, and that both what we have just stated, and what follows, may be relied on as perfectly accurate. The sequel we give in his own words: —

"Having been thus called upon, he began. The Great Spirit, he said, who made him and them, who ruled the Heaven and the Earth, and who knew the innermost thoughts of man, knew that he and his friends had a hearty desire to live in peace and friendship with them, and to serve them to the utmost of their power. It was not their custom to use hostile weapons against their fellow creatures, for which reason they had come unarmed. Their object was not to do injury, and thus provoke the Great Spirit, but to do good. They were then met on the broad pathway of good faith and good will, so that no advantage was to be taken on either side, but all was to be openness, brotherhood, and love. After these and other words, he unrolled the parchment, and by means of the same interpreter conveyed to them, article by article, the conditions of the Purchase, and the Words of the Compact then made for their eternal Union. Among other things, they were not to be molested in their lawful pursuits, even in the territory they had alienated, for it was to be common to them and the English. They were to have the same liberty to do all things therein relating to the improvement of their grounds, and providing sustenance for their families, which the English had. If any disputes should arise between the two, they should be settled by twelve persons, half of whom should be English and half Indians. He then paid them for the land; and made them many presents besides, from the merchandize which had been spread before them. Having done this, he laid the roll of parchment on the ground, observing again, that the ground should be common to both people. He then added, that he would not do as the Marylanders did, that is, call them Children or Brothers only; for often parents were apt to chastise their children too severely, and Brothers sometimes would differ: neither would he compare the Friendship between him and them to a chain, for the rain might sometimes rust it, or a tree might fall and break it; but he should consider them as the same flesh and blood with the Christians, and the same as if one man's body were to be divided into two parts. He then took up the parchment, and presented it to the Sachem who wore the horn in his chaplet, and desired him and the other Sachems to preserve it carefully for three generations; that their children might

know what had passed between them, just as if he had remained himself with them to repeat it."—Pp. 341—343.

The Indians, in return, made long and stately harangues — of which, however, no more seems to have been remembered, but that "they pledged themselves to live in love with William Penn and his children, as long as the sun and moon should endure." And thus ended this famous treaty; — of which Voltaire has remarked, with so much truth and severity, "that it was the only one ever concluded between savages and Christians that was not ratified by an oath — and the only one that never was broken!"

Such, indeed, was the spirit in which the negotiation was entered into, and the corresponding settlement conducted, that for the space of more than seventy years — and so long indeed as the Quakers retained the chief power in the government, the peace and amity which had been thus solemnly promised and concluded, never was violated; — and a large and most striking, though solitary example afforded, of the facility with which they who are really sincere and friendly in their own views, may live in harmony even with those who are supposed to be peculiarly fierce and faithless. We cannot bring ourselves to wish that there were nothing but Quakers in the world — because we fear it would be insupportably dull; — but when we consider what tremendous evils daily arise from the petulance and profligacy, and ambition and irritability, of sovereigns and ministers, we cannot help thinking that it would be the most efficacious of all reforms to choose all those ruling personages out of that plain, pacific, and sober-minded sect.

William Penn now held an assembly, in which fifty-nine important laws were passed in the course of three days. The most remarkable were those which limited the number of capital crimes to two — murder and high treason — and which provided for the reformation, as well as the punishment of offenders, by making the prisons places of compulsive industry, sobriety, and instruction. It was likewise enacted, that all children, of whatever rank, should be instructed in some art or trade. The fees of law proceedings were fixed, and inscribed on public tables; — and the amount of fines to be levied for offences also limited by legislative authority. Many admirable regulations were added, for the encouragement of industry, and mutual usefulness and esteem. There is something very agreeable in the contentment, and sober and well-earned self-complacency, which breathe in the following letter of this great colonist — written during his first rest from those great labours:

"I am now casting the country into townships for large lots of land. I have held an Assembly, in which many good laws are passed. We could not stay safely till the spring for a government. I have annexed the Territories lately obtained to the Province, and passed general naturalization for strangers; which hath much pleased the people.——As to outward things we are satisfied: the land good, the air clear and sweet, the springs plentiful, and provision good and easy to come at; an innumerable quantity of wild fowl and fish; in fine, here is what an Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be well contented with; and service enough for God, for the fields are here white for harvest. O, how sweet is the quiet of these parts, freed from the anxious and troublesome solicitations, hurries and perplexities of woful Europe!" — Pp. 350, 351.

We cannot persuade ourselves, however, to pursue any farther the details of this edifying biography. W. Penn returned to England after a residence of about two years in his colony — got into great favour with James II. — and was bitterly calumniated as a Jesuit, both by churchmen and sectaries — went on doing good and preaching Quakerism — was sorely persecuted and insulted, and deprived of his government, but finally acquitted, and honourably restored, under King William — lost his wife and son — travelled and married again — returned to Pennsylvania in 1699 for two years longer — came finally home to England — continued to preach and publish as copiously as ever — was reduced to a state of kindly dotage by three strokes of apoplexy — and died at last at the age of seventy-two, in the year 1718.

He seems to have been a man of kind affections, singular activity and perseverance, and great practical wisdom. Yet we can well believe with Burnet, that he was "a little puffed up with vanity;" and that "he had a tedious, luscious way of talking, that was apt to tire the patience of his hearers." He was very neat in his person, and had a great

horror at tobacco, which occasionally endangered his popularity in his American domains. He was mighty methodical, too, in ordering his household; and had stuck up in his hall a written directory, or general order, for the regulation of his family, to which he exacted the strictest conformity. According to this rigorous system of discipline, he required—

"That in that quarter of the year which included part of the winter and part of the spring, the members of it were to rise at seven in the morning, in the next at six, in the next at five, and in the last at six again. Nine o'clock was the hour for breakfast, twelve for dinner, seven for supper, and ten to retire to bed. The whole family were to assemble every morning for worship. They were to be called together at eleven again, that each might read in turn some portion of the holy Scripture, or of the Martyrology, or of Friends' books; and finally they were to meet again for worship at six in the evening. On the days of public meeting, no one was to be absent, except on the plea of health or of unavoidable engagement. The servants were to be called up after supper to render to their master and mistress an account of what they had done in the day, and to receive instructions for the next; and were particularly exhorted to avoid lewd discourses and troublesome noises."

We shall not stop to examine what dregs of ambition, or what hankerings after worldly prosperity, may have mixed themselves with the pious and philanthropic principles that were undoubtedly his chief guides in forming that great settlement which still bears his name, and profits by his example. Human virtue does not challenge, nor admit of such a scrutiny! And it should be sufficient for the glory of William Penn, that he stands upon record as the most humane, the most moderate, and the most pacific of all rulers.

LORD COLLINGWOOD.

(MAY, 1828.)

A Selection from the Public and Private Correspondence of Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood: interspersed with Memoirs of his Life. By G. L. NEWNHAM COLLINGWOOD, Esq. F.R.S. 2 vols. 8vo. Ridgway. London: 1828.

WE do not know when we have met with so delightful a book as this, — or one with which we are so well pleased with ourselves for being delighted. Its attraction consists almost entirely in its moral beauty; and it has the rare merit of filling us with the deepest admiration for heroism, without suborning our judgments into any approbation of the vices and weaknesses with which poor mortal heroism is so often accompanied. In this respect, it is not only more safe, but more agreeable reading than the Memoirs of Nelson; where the lights and shadows are often too painfully contrasted, and the bane and the antidote exhibited in proportions that cannot but be hazardous for the ardent and aspiring spirits on which they are both most calculated to operate.

Is it a mere illusion of national vanity which prompts us to claim Lord Collingwood as a character peculiarly English? Certainly we must admit, that we have few Englishmen left who resemble him; and even that our prevailing notions and habits make it likely that we shall have still fewer hereafter. Yet we do not know where such a character could have been formed but in England; — and feel quite satisfied, that it is there only that it can be properly valued or understood. The combination of the loftiest daring with the most watchful humanity, and of the noblest ambition with the greatest disdain of personal advantages and the most generous sympathy with rival merit, though rare enough to draw forth at all times the loud applause of mankind, have not been without example in any race that boasts of illustrious ancestors. But, for the union of those high qualities with unpretending and almost homely simplicity, sweet temper, undeviating rectitude, and all the purity and sanctity of domestic affection and humble content — we can look, we think, only to England — or to the fabulous legends of uncorrupted and uninstructed Rome. All these graces, however, and more than these, were united in Lord Collingwood: for he had a cultivated and even elegant mind, a taste for all simple enjoyments, and a rectitude of understanding — which seemed in him to be but the emanation of a still higher rectitude. Inferior, perhaps, to Nelson in original genius and energy, and in that noble self-confidence in great emergencies which these qualities usually inspire, he was fully his equal in seamanship and the art of command; as well as in that devotedness to his country and his pro-

fession, and that utter fearlessness and gallantry of soul which exults and rejoices in scenes of tremendous peril, which have almost ceased to be remarkable in the character of a British sailor. On the other hand, we think it will scarcely be disputed, that he was superior to that great commander in general information and accomplishment, and in those thoughtful habits, and that steadiness and propriety of personal deportment, which are their natural fruit. His greatest admirers, however, can ask no higher praise for him than that he stood on the same lofty level with Nelson, as to that generous and cordial appreciation of merit in his brother officers, by which, even more, perhaps, than by any of his other qualities, that great man was distinguished. It does one's heart good, indeed, to turn, from the petty cabals, the paltry jealousies, the spiteful detractions, the irritable vanities, which infest almost every other walk of public life, and meet one, indeed, at every turn in all scenes of competition, and among men otherwise eminent and honourable, — to the brother-like frankness and open-hearted simplicity, even of the official communications between Nelson and Collingwood; and to the father-like interest with which they both concurred in fostering the glory, and cheering on the fortunes of their younger associates. In their noble thirst for distinction, there seems to be absolutely no alloy of selfishness; and scarcely even a feeling of rivalry. If the opportunity of doing a splendid thing has not come to them, it has come to some one who deserved it as well, and perhaps needed it more. It will come to them another day — and then the heroes of this will repay their hearty congratulations There is something inexpressibly beautiful and attractive in this spirit of magnanimous fairness; and if we could only believe it to be general in the navy, we should gladly recant all our heretical doubts as to the superior virtues of men at sea, join chorus to all the slang songs of Dibdin on the subject, and applaud to the echo all the tirades about British tars and wooden walls, which have so often nauseated us at the playhouses.

We feel excessively obliged to the editor of this book: both for making Lord Collingwood known to us, and for the very pleasing, modest, and effectual way he has taken to do it in. It is made up almost entirely of his Lordship's correspondence; and the few connecting statements and explanatory observations are given with the greatest clearness and brevity; and very much in the mild, conciliatory, and amiable tone of the remarkable person to whom they relate. When we say that this publication has made Lord Collingwood known to us, we do not mean that we, or the body of the nation, were previously ignorant that he had long served with distinction in the navy, and that it fell to his lot, as second in command at Trafalgar, to indite that eloquent and touching despatch which announced the final ruin of the hostile fleets, and the death of the Great Admiral by whose might they had been scattered. But till this collection appeared, the character of *the man* was known, we believe, only to those who had lived with him; and the public was generally ignorant both of the detail of his services, and the high principle and exemplary diligence which presided over their performance. Neither was it known, we are persuaded, that those virtues and services actually cost him his life! and that the difficulty of finding, in our large list of admirals, any one fit to succeed him in the important station which he filled in his declining years, induced the government,—most ungenerously, we must say, and unjustly,— to refuse his earnest desire to be relieved of it; and to insist on his remaining, to the last gasp, at a post which he would not desert so long as his country required him to maintain it, but at which it was apparent to himself, and all the world, that he must speedily die. The details now before us will teach the profession, we hope, by what virtues and what toils so great and so pure a fame can alone be won; and by rendering in this way such characters less rare, will also render the distinction to which they lead less fatal to its owners: while they cannot fail, we think, to awaken the government to a sense of its own ingratitude to those who have done it the noblest service, and of the necessity of at last adopting some of the suggestions which those great benefactors have so long pressed on its attention.

We have not much concern with the genealogy or early history of Lord Collingwood. He was born in 1750, of an honourable and ancient family of Northumberland, but of

slender patrimony; and went to sea, under the care of his relative, Captain, afterwards Admiral Brathwaite, when only eleven years old. He used, himself, to tell as an instance of his youth and simplicity at this time, "that as he was sitting crying for his separation from home, the first lieutenant observed him; and, pitying the tender years of the poor child, spoke to him in terms of much encouragement and kindness; which, as Lord Collingwood said, so won upon his heart, that taking this officer to his box, he offered him in gratitude a large piece of plumcake which his mother had given him!" Almost from this early period he was the intimate friend and frequent associate of the brave Nelson; and had his full share of the obscure perils and unknown labours which usually form the noviciate of naval eminence. He was made commander in 1779; and being sent to the W st Indies after the peace of 1783, was only restored to his family in 1786. He married in 1791; and was again summoned upon active service on the breaking out of the war with France in 1793; from which period to the end of his life, in 1810, he was continually in employment, and never permitted to see that happy home, so dear to his heart, and so constantly in his thoughts, except for one short interval of a year, during the peace of Amiens. During almost the whole of this period he was actually afloat; and was frequently, for a year together, and once for the incredible period of twenty-two months, without dropping an anchor. He was in almost all the great actions, and had more than his share of the anxious blockades, which occurred in that memorable time; and signalized himself in all, by that mixture of considerate vigilance and brilliant courage, which may be said to have constituted his professional character. His first great battle was that which ended in Lord Howe's celebrated victory of the 1st June, 1794; and we cannot resist the temptation of heading our extracts with a part of the account he has given of it, in a letter to his father-in-law, Mr. Blackett—not so much for the purpose of recalling the proud feelings which must ever cling to the memory of our first triumph over triumphant France, as for the sake of that touching mixture it presents, of domestic affection and family recollections, with high professional enthusiasm, and the kindling spirit of war. In this situation he says:—

"We cruised for a few days, like disappointed people looking for what they could not find, until the morning of little Sarah's birth-day, between eight and nine o'clock, when the French fleet, of twenty-five sail of the line, was discovered to windward. We chased them, and they bore down within about five miles of us. The night was spent in watching and preparation for the succeeding day; and many a blessing did I send forth to my Sarah, lest I should never bless her more! At dawn, we made our approach on the enemy, then drew up, dressed our ranks, and it was about eight when the Admiral made the signal for each ship to engage her opponent, and bring her to close action,—and then down we went under a crowd of sail, and in a manner that would have animated the coldest heart, and struck terror into the most intrepid enemy. The ship we were to engage was two a-head of the French Admiral, so that we had to go through his fire and that of two ships next him, and received all their broadsides two or three times, before we fired a gun. It was then near ten o'clock. I observed to the Admiral, that about that time our wives were going to church, but that I thought that the peal we should ring about the Frenchmen's ears would outdo their parish bells! Lord Howe began his fire some time before we did; and he is not in the habit of firing soon. We got very near indeed, and then began such a fire as would have done you good to have heard! During the whole action the most exact order was preserved, and no accident happened but what was inevitable, and the consequence of the enemy's shot. In ten minutes the Admiral was wounded; I caught him in my arms before he fell: the first lieutenant was slightly wounded by the same shot, and I thought I was in a fair way of being left on the deck by myself; but the lieutenant got his head dressed, and came up again. Soon after, they called from the forecastle that the Frenchman was sinking; at which the men started up and gave three cheers. I saw the French ship dismasted, and on her broadside, but in an instant she was clouded with smoke and I do not know whether she sunk or not. All the ships in our neighbourhood were dismasted, and are taken, except the French Admiral, who was driven out of the line by Lord Howe, and saved himself by flight."

In 1796 he writes to the same gentleman, from before Toulon —

"It is but dull work, lying off the enemy's port: they cannot move a ship without our seeing them, which must be very mortifying to them; but we have the mortification also to see their merchant-vessels going along shore, and cannot molest them. It is not a service on which we shall get fat; and often do I wish we had some of those bad potatoes which Old Scott and William used to throw over the wall of the garden, for we feel the want of vegetables more than any thing.

"The accounts I receive of my dear girls give me infinite pleasure. How happy I shall be to see them again! but God knows when the blessed day will come in which we shall be again restored to the comforts of domestic life; for here, so far from any prospect of peace, the plot seems to thicken, as if the most serious part of the war were but beginning."

In 1797 he had a great share in the splendid victory off Cape St. Vincent, and writes, as usual, a simple and animated account of it to Mr. Blackett. We omit the warlike details, however, and give only these characteristic sentences: —

"I wrote to Sarah the day after the action with the Spaniards, but I am afraid I gave her but an imperfect account of it. It is a very difficult thing for those engaged in such a scene to give the detail of the whole, because all the powers they have are occupied in their own part of it. As to myself, I did my duty to the utmost of my ability, as I have ever done: that is acknowledged now; and that is the only real difference between this and the former action. One of the great pleasures I have received from this glorious event is, that I expect it will enable me to provide handsomely for those who serve me well. Give my love to my wife, and blessing to my children. What a day it will be to me when I meet them again! The Spaniards always carry their patron saint to sea with them, and I have given St. Isidro a berth in my cabin: it was the least I could do for him, after he had consigned his charge to me. It is a good picture, as you will see when he goes to Morpeth."

By some extraordinary neglect, Captain Collingwood had not received one of the medals generally distributed to the officers who distinguished themselves in Lord Howe's action; and it is to this he alludes in one of the passages we have now cited. His efforts, however, on this last occasion, having been the theme of universal admiration throughout the fleet, and acknowledged indeed by a variety of grateful and congratulatory letters from the admirals, and from Captain Nelson, to whose aid he came most gallantly in a moment of great peril, it was at last thought necessary to repair this awkward omission.

"When Lord St. Vincent informed Captain Collingwood that he was to receive one of the medals which were distributed on this occasion, he told the Admiral with great feeling and firmness, that he could not consent to receive a medal, while that for the 1st of June was withheld. 'I feel,' said he, 'that I was then improperly passed over; and to receive such a distinction now would be to acknowledge the propriety of that injustice.'—'That is precisely the answer which I expected from you, Captain Collingwood,' was Lord St. Vincent's reply.

"*The two* medals were afterwards—and, as Captain Collingwood seems to have thought, by desire of the King — transmitted to him at the same time by Lord Spencer, the then First Lord of the Admiralty, with a civil apology for the former omission. 'I congratulate you most sincerely,' said his Lordship, 'on having had the good fortune to bear so conspicuous a part on two such glorious occasions; and have troubled you with this letter, only to say, that the former medal would have been transmitted to you some months ago, if a proper conveyance had been found for it.'"

We add the following little trait of the undaunted Nelson, from a letter of the same year: —

"My friend Nelson, whose spirit is equal to all undertakings, and whose resources are fitted to all occasions, was sent with three sail of the line and some other ships to Teneriffe, to surprise and capture it. After a series of adventures, tragic and comic, that belong to romance, they were obliged to abandon the enterprise. Nelson was shot in the right arm when landing, and was obliged to be carried on board. He himself hailed the ship, and desired the surgeon would get his instruments ready to dis-arm him; and in half an hour after it was off, he gave all the orders necessary for carrying on their operations, as if nothing had happened to him. In three weeks after, when he joined us, he went on board the Admiral, and I think exerted himself to a degree of great imprudence."

The following letter to Captain Ball, on occasion of the glorious victory of the Nile, may serve to illustrate what we have stated, as to the generous and cordial sympathy with rival glory and fortune, which breathes throughout the whole correspondence: —

"I cannot express to you how great my joy was when the news arrived of the complete and unparalleled victory which you obtained over the French; or what were my emotions of thankfulness, that the life of my worthy and much-respected friend was preserved through such a day of danger, to his family and his country. I congratulate you, my dear friend, on your success. Oh, my dear Ball, how I have lamented that I was not one of you! Many a victory has been won, and I hope many are yet to come, but there never has been, nor will be perhaps again, one in which the fruits have been so completely gathered, the blow so nobly followed up, and the consequences so fairly brought to account. I have heard with great pleasure, that your squadron has presented Sir H. Nelson with a sword; it is the honours to which he led you reflected back upon himself, — the finest testimony of his merits for having led you to a field in which you all so nobly displayed your own. The

expectation of the people of England was raised to the highest pitch; the event has exceeded all expectation."

After this he is sent, for repairs, for a few weeks to Portsmouth, and writes to his father-in-law as follows: —

"We never know, till it is too late, whether we are going too fast or too slow; but I am now repenting that I did not persuade my dear Sarah to come to me as soon as I knew I was not to go from this port; but the length of the journey, the inclemency of the weather, and the little prospect of my staying here half this time, made me think it an unnecessary fatigue for her. I am now quite sick at heart with disappointment and vexation; and though I hope every day for relief, yet I find it impossible to say when I shall be clear.

"Last night I went to Lady Parker's twelfth-night, where all the gentlemen's children of the town were at dance and revelry: but I thought of my own! and was so completely out of spirits that I left them in the middle of it. My wife shall know all my movements, even the very hour in which I shall be able to come to you. I hope they will not hurry me to sea again, for my spirit requires some respite from the anxieties which a ship occasions.

"Bless my precious girls for me, and their beloved mother."

The following are in the same tone of tenderness and considerate affection; and coming from the hand of the fiery warrior, and devoted servant of his country, are to us extremely touching: —

"Would to God that this war were happily concluded! It is anguish enough for me to be thus for ever separated from my family; but that my Sarah should, in my absence, be suffering from illness, is complete misery. Pray, my dear sir, have the goodness to write a line or two very often, to tell me how she does. I am quite pleased at the account you give me of my girls. If it were peace, I do not think there would be a happier set of creatures in Northumberland than we should be! . . . .

"It is a great comfort to me, banished as I am from all that is dear to me, to learn that my beloved Sarah and her girls are well. Would to Heaven it were peace! that I might come, and for the rest of my life be blessed in their affection. Indeed, this unremitting hard service is a great sacrifice; giving up all that is pleasurable to the soul, or soothing to the mind, and engaging in a constant contest with the elements, or with tempers and dispositions as boisterous and untractable. Great allowance should be made for us when we come on shore: for being long in the habits of absolute command, we grow impatient of contradiction, and are unfitted, I fear, for the gentle intercourse of quiet life. I am really in great hopes that it will not be long before the experiment will be made upon me — for I think we shall soon have peace; and I assure you that I will endeavour to conduct myself with as much moderation as possible! I have come to another resolution, which is, when this war is happily terminated, to think no more of ships, but pass the rest of my days in the bosom of my family, where I think my prospects of happiness are equal to any man's." . . . .

"You have been made happy this winter in the visit of your daughter. How glad should I have been could I have joined you! but it will not be long; two years more will, I think, exhaust me completely, and then I shall be fit only to be nursed. God knows how little claim I have on any body to take that trouble. My daughters can never be to me what yours have been, whose affections have been nurtured by daily acts of kindness. They may be told that it is a duty to regard me, but it is not reasonable to expect that they should have the same feeling for a person of whom they have only heard: but if they are good and virtuous, as I hope and believe they will be, I may share at least in their kindness with the rest of the world."

He decides at last on sending for his wife and child, in the hope of being allowed to remain for some months at Portsmouth; but is suddenly ordered off on the very day they are expected! It is delightful to have to record such a letter as the following, on occasion of such an affliction, from such a man as Nelson:

"My dear Friend, — I truly feel for you, and as much for poor Mrs. Collingwood. How sorry I am! For Heaven's sake, do not think I had the gift of foresight; but something told me, so it would be. Can't you contrive and stay to-night? it will be a comfort if only to see your family one hour. Therefore, had you not better stay on shore and wait for her? Ever, my dear Collingwood, believe me, your affectionate and faithful friend,

"Nelson and Bronte.

"If they would only have manned *me*, and sent me off, it would have been real pleasure to me. How cross are the fates!"

He does stay accordingly, and sees those beloved pledges for a few short hours. We will not withhold from our readers his account of it: —

"Sarah will have told you how and when we met; it was a joy to me that I cannot describe, and repaid me, short as our interview was, for a world of woe which I was suffering on her account. I had been reckoning on the possibility of her arrival that Tuesday, when about two o'clock I received an express to go to sea immediately with all the ships that were ready, and had we not then been engaged at a court martial, I might have got out that day; but

this business delaying me till near night, I determined to wait on shore until eight o'clock for the chance of their arrival. I went to dine with Lord Nelson; and while we were at dinner their arrival was announced to me. I flew to the inn where I had desired my wife to come, and found her and little Sarah as well after their journey as if it had lasted only for the day. No greater happiness is human nature capable of than was mine that evening; but at dawn we parted — and I went to sea!"

And afterwards —

"You will have heard from Sarah what a meeting we had, how short our interview, and how suddenly we parted. It is grief to me to think of it now; it almost broke my heart then. After such a journey, to see me but for a few hours, with scarce time for her to relate the incidents of her journey, and no time for me to tell her half that my heart felt at such a proof of her affection: but I am thankful that I did see her, and my sweet child. It was a blessing to me, and composed my mind, which was before very much agitated. I have little chance of seeing her again, unless a storm should drive us into port, for the French fleet is in a state of preparation, which makes it necessary for us to watch them narrowly.

"I can still talk to you of nothing but the delight I experienced in the little I have had of the company of my beloved wife and of my little Sarah. What comfort is promised to me in the affections of that child, if it should please God that we ever again return to the quiet domestic cares of peace! I should be much obliged to you if you would send Scott a guinea for me, for these hard times must pinch the poor old man, and he will miss my wife, who was very kind to him!"

Upon the peace of Amiens he at last got home, about the middle of 1802. The following brief sketch of his enjoyment there, is from the hand of his affectionate editor: —

"During this short period of happiness and rest, he was occupied in superintending the education of his daughters, and in continuing those habits of study which had long been most familiar to him. His reading was extensive, particularly in history; and it was his constant practice to exercise himself in composition, by making abstracts from the books which he read; and some of his abridgments, with the observations by which he illustrated them, are written with singular conciseness and power. 'I know not,' said one of the most eminent English diplomatists, with whom he had afterwards very frequent communication, 'I know not where Lord Collingwood got his style, but he writes better than any of us.' His amusements were found in the intercourse with his family, in drawing, planting, and the cultivation of his garden, which was on the bank of the beautiful river Wansbeck. This was his favourite employment; and on one occasion, a brother Admiral, who had sought him through the garden in vain, at last discovered him with his gardener, old Scott, to whom he was much attached, in the bottom of a deep trench, which they were both busily occupied in digging."

In spring 1803, however, he was again called upon duty by his ancient commander, Admiral Cornwallis, who hailed him as he approached, by saying, "Here comes Collingwood! — the last o leave, and the first to rejoin me!" His occupation there was to watch and blockade the French fleet at Brest, a duty which he performed with the most unwearied and scrupulous anxiety.

"During this time he frequently passed the whole night on the quarter-deck, — a practice which, in circumstances of difficulty, he continued till the latest years of his life. When, on these occasions, he has told his friend Lieutenant Clavell, who had gained his entire confidence, that they must not leave the deck for the night, and that officer has endeavoured to persuade him that there was no occasion for it, as a good look-out was kept, and represented that he was almost exhausted with fatigue; the Admiral would reply, 'I fear *you* are. You have need of rest; so go to bed, Clavell, and I will watch by myself.' Very frequently have they slept together on a gun; from which Admiral Collingwood would rise from time to time, to sweep the horizon with his night-glass, lest the enemy should escape in the dark."

In 1805 he was moved to the station off Cadiz, and condemned to the same weary task of watching and observation. He here writes to his father-in-law as follows: —

"How happy should I be, could I but hear from home, and know how my dear girls are going on! Bounce is my only pet now, and he is indeed a good fellow; he sleeps by the side of my cot, whenever I lie in one, until near the time of tacking, and then marches off, to be out of the hearing of the guns, for he is not reconciled to them yet. I am fully determined, if I can get home and manage it properly, to go on shore next spring for the rest of my life, for I am very weary. There is no end to my business; I am at work from morning till even; but I dare say Lord Nelson will be out next month. He told me he should; and then what will become of me I do not know. I should wish to go home: but I must go or stay as the exigencies of the times require."

At last, towards the close of the year, the enemy gave some signs of an intention to come out — and the day of Trafalgar was at hand. In anticipation of it, Lord Nelson addressed the following characteristic note to his friend,

which breathes in every line the noble frankness and magnanimous confidence of his soul:

"They surely cannot escape us. I wish we could get a fine day. I send you my plan of attack, as far as a man dare venture to guess at the very uncertain position the enemy may be found in: but, my dear friend, it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgment for carrying them into effect. *We* can, my dear Coll., have no little jealousies: we have only one great object in view — that of annihilating our enemies, and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence in another than I have in you; and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend,

"NELSON AND BRONTE."

The day at last came; and though it is highly characteristic of its author, we will not indulge ourselves by transcribing any part of the memorable despatch, in which Lord Collingwood, after the fall of his heroic commander, announced its result to his country. We cannot, however, withhold from our readers the following particulars as to his personal conduct and deportment, for which they would look in vain in that singularly modest and generous detail. The first part, the editor informs us, is from the statement of his confidential servant.

"'I entered the Admiral's cabin,' he observed, 'about daylight, and found him already up and dressing. He asked if I had seen the French fleet; and and on my replying that I had not, he told me to look out at them, adding, that, in a very short time, we should see a great deal more of them. I then observed a crowd of ships to leeward; but I could not help looking, with still greater interest, at the Admiral, who, during all this time, was shaving himself with a composure that quite astonished me!' Admiral Collingwood dressed himself that morning with peculiar care; and soon after, meeting Lieut. Clavell, advised him to pull off his boots. 'You had better,' he said, 'put on silk stockings, as I have done: for if one should get a shot in the leg, they would be so much more manageable for the surgeon.' He then proceeded to visit the decks, encouraged the men to the discharge of their duty, and addressing the officers, said to them, 'Now, gentlemen, let us do something to-day which the world may talk of hereafter.'

"He had changed his flag about ten days before the action, from the Dreadnought; the crew of which had been so constantly practised in the exercise of the great guns, under his daily superintendence, that few ships' companies could equal them in rapidity and precision of firing. He had begun by telling them, that if they could fire three well-directed broadsides in five minutes, no vessel could resist them; and, from constant practice, they were enabled to do so in three minutes and a half. But though he left a crew which had thus been disciplined under his own eye, there was an advantage in the change; for the Royal Sovereign, into which he went, had lately returned from England, and as her copper was quite clean, she much outsailed the other ships of the lee division. While they were running down, the well-known telegraphic signal was made of 'England expects every man to do his duty.' When the Admiral observed it first, he said that he wished Nelson would make no more signals, for they all understood what they were to do: but when the purport of it was communicated to him he expressed great delight and admiration, and made it known to the officers and ship's company. Lord Nelson had been requested by Captain Blackwood (who was anxious for the preservation of so invaluable a life) to allow some other vessels to take the lead, and at last gave permission that the Téméraire should go a-head of him; but resolving to defeat the order which he had given, he crowded more sail on the Victory, and maintained his place. The Royal Sovereign was far in advance when Lieutenant Clavell observed that the Victory was setting her studding-sails, and with that spirit of honourable emulation which prevailed between the squadrons, and particularly between these two ships, he pointed it out to Admiral Collingwood, and requested his permission to do the same. 'The ships of our division,' replied the Admiral, 'are not yet sufficiently up for us to do so now; but you may be getting ready.' The studding sail and royal halliards were accordingly manned, and in about ten minutes the Admiral, observing Lieutenant Clavell's eyes fixed upon him with a look of expectation, gave him a nod; on which that officer went to Captain Rotherham, and told him that the Admiral desired him to make all sail. The order was then given to rig out and hoist away, and in one instant the ship was under a crowd of sail, and went rapidly a-head. The Admiral then directed the officers to see that all the men lay down on the decks, and were kept quiet. At this time the Fougueux, the ship astern of the Santa Anna, had closed up with the intention of preventing the Royal Sovereign from going through the line; and when Admiral Collingwood observed it, he desired Captain Rotherham to steer immediately for the Frenchman and carry away his bowsprit. To avoid this the Fougueux backed her main topsail, and suffered the Royal Sovereign to pass, at the same time beginning her fire; when the Admiral ordered a gun to be occasionally fired at her to cover his ship with smoke.

"The nearest of the English ships was now distant about a mile from the Royal Sovereign; and it was at this time, while she was pressing alone into the midst of the combined fleets, that Lord Nelson said to Captain Blackwood, 'See how that noble fellow, Collingwood, takes his ship into action. How I envy him!' On the other hand, Admiral Collingwood, well knowing his commander and friend, observed,

'What would Nelson give to be here!' and it was then, too, that Admiral Villeneuve, struck with the daring manner in which the leading ships of the English squadrons came down, despaired of the issue of the contest. In passing the Santa Anna, the Royal Sovereign gave her a broadside and a half into her stern, tearing it down, and killing and wounding 400 of her men; then, with her helm hard a-starboard, she ranged up alongside so closely that the lower yards of the two vessels were locked together. The Spanish admiral, having seen that it was the intention of the Royal Sovereign to engage to leeward, had collected all his strength on the starboard; and such was the weight of the Santa Anna's metal, that her first broadside made the Sovereign heel two streaks out of the water. Her studding-sails and halliards were now shot away; and as a top-gallant studding-sail was hanging over the gangway hammocks, Admiral Collingwood called out to Lieutenant Clavell to come and help him to take it in, observing that they should want it again some other day. These two officers according rolled it carefully up and placed it in the boat." *

We shall add only what he says in his letter to Mr. Blackett of Lord Nelson: —

"When my dear friend received his wound, he immediately sent an officer to me to tell me of it, — and give his love to me! Though the officer was directed to say the wound was not dangerous, I read in his countenance what I had to fear; and before the action was over, Captain Hardy came to inform me of his death. I cannot tell you how deeply I was affected; my friendship for him was unlike anything that I have left in the navy; a brotherhood of more than thirty years. In this affair he did nothing without my counsel: we made our line of battle together, and concerted the mode of attack, which was put in execution in the most admirable style. I shall grow very tired of the sea soon; my health has suffered so much from the anxious state I have been in, and the fatigue I have undergone, that I shall be unfit for service. The severe gales which immediately followed the day of victory ruined our prospect of prizes."

He was now elevated to the peerage, and a pension of 2000*l.* was settled on him by parliament for his own life, with 1000*l.* in case of his death to Lady Collingwood, and 500*l.* to each of his daughters. His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence also honoured him with a very kind letter, and presented him with a sword. The way in which he received all those honours, is as admirable as the services by which they were earned. On the first tidings of his peerage he writes thus to Lady Collingwood: —

"It would be hard if I could not find one hour to write a letter to my dearest Sarah, to congratulate her on the high rank to which she has been advanced by my success. Blessed may you be, my dearest love, and may you long live the happy wife of your happy husband! I do not know how you bear your honours; but I have so much business on my hands, from dawn till midnight, that I have hardly time to think of mine, except it be in gratitude to my King, who has so graciously conferred them upon me. But there are so many things of which I might justly be a little proud — for extreme pride is folly — that I must share my gratification with you. The first is the letter from Colonel Taylor, his Majesty's private secretary to the Admiralty, to be communicated to me. I enclose you a copy of it. It is considered the highest compliment the King can pay; and, as the King's personal compliment, I value it above everything. But I will tell you what I feel nearest to my heart, after the honour which his Majesty has done me, and that is the praise of every officer of the fleet. There is a thing which has made a considerable impression upon me. A week before the war, at Morpeth, I dreamed distinctly many of the circumstances of our late battle off the enemy's port, and I believe I told you of it at the time: but I never dreamed that I was to be a peer of the realm! How are my darlings? I hope they will take pains to make themselves wise and good, and fit for the station to which they are raised."

And again, a little after: —

"I labour from dawn till midnight, till I can hardly see; and as my hearing fails me too, you will have but a mass of infirmities in your poor Lord, whenever he returns to you. I suppose I must not be seen to work in my garden now! but tell old Scott that he need not be unhappy on that account. Though we shall never again be able to plant the Nelson potatoes, we will have them of some other sort, and right noble cabbages to boot, in great perfection. You see I am styled of Hethpoole and Caldburne. Was that by your direction? I should prefer it to any other title, if it was; and I rejoice, my love, that we are an instance that there are other and better sources of nobility than wealth."

At this time he had not heard that it was intended to accompany his dignity with any pension; and though the editor assures us that

* "Of his economy, at all times, of the ship's stores, an instance was often mentioned in the navy as having occurred at the battle of St. Vincent. The Excellent shortly before the action had bent a new fore-topsail: and when she was closely engaged with the St. Isidro, Captain Collingwood called out to his boatswain, a very gallant man, who was shortly afterwards killed, 'Bless me! Mr. Peffers, how came we to forget to bend our *old* top-sail? They will quite ruin that new one. It will never be worth a farthing again.'"

his whole income, even including his full pay, was at this time scarcely 1100*l.* a year, he never seems to have wasted a thought on such a consideration. Not that he was not at all times a prudent and considerate person; but, with the high spirit of a gentleman, and an independent Englishman, who had made his own way in the world, he disdained all sordid considerations. Nothing can be nobler, or more natural, than the way in which he expresses this sentiment, in another letter to his wife, written a few weeks after the preceding: —

"Many of the Captains here have expressed a desire that I would give them a general notice whenever I go to court; and if they are within 500 miles, they will come up to attend me! Now all this is very pleasing; but, alas! my love, until we have peace, I shall never be happy: and yet, how we are to make it out in peace, I know not, — with high rank and no fortune. At all events, we can do as we did before. It is true I have the chief command, but there are neither French nor Spaniards on the sea, and our cruisers find nothing but neutrals, who carry on all the trade of the enemy. Our prizes, you see, are lost. Villeneuve's ship had a great deal of money in her, but it all went to the bottom. I am afraid the fees of this patent will be large, and pinch me: but never mind; let others solicit pensions, I am an Englishman, and will never ask for money as a favour. How do my darlings go on? I wish you would make them write to me by turns, and give me the whole history of their proceedings. Oh! how I shall rejoice, when I come home, to find them as much improved in knowledge as I have advanced them in station in the world: but take care they do not give themselves foolish airs. Their excellence should be in knowledge, in virtue, and benevolence to all; but most to those who are humble, and require their aid. This is true nobility, and is now become an incumbent duty on them. I am out of all patience with Bounce. The consequential airs he gives himself since he became a Right Honourable dog, are insufferable. He considers it beneath his dignity to play with Commoners' dogs, and, truly, thinks that he does them grace when he condescends to lift up his leg against them. This, I think, is carrying the insolence of rank to the extreme: but he is a dog that does it.—25th December. This is Christmas-day; a merry and cheerful one, I hope, to all my darlings. May God bless us and grant that we may pass the next together. Everybody is very good to me; but his Majesty's letters are my pride: it is there I feel the object of my life attained."

And again, in the same noble spirit is the following to his father-in-law: —

"I have only been on shore once since I left England, and do not know when I shall go again. I am unceasingly writing, and the day is not long enough for me to get through my business. I hope my children are every day acquiring some knowledge, and wish them to write a French letter every day to me or their mother. I shall read them all when I come home. If there were an opportunity, I should like them to be taught Spanish, which is the most elegant language in Europe, and very easy. I hardly know how we shall be able to support the dignity to which his Majesty has been pleased to raise me. Let others plead for pensions; I can be rich without money, by endeavouring to be superior to every thing poor. I would have my services to my country unstained by any interested motive; and old Scott and I can go on in our cabbage-garden without much greater expense than formerly. But I have had a great destruction of my furniture and stock; I have hardly a chair that has not a shot in it, and many have lost both legs and arms — without hope of pension! My wine broke in moving, and my pigs slain in battle; and these are heavy losses where they cannot be replaced. . . .

"I suppose I shall have great demands on me for patents and fees; but we must pay for being great. I get no prize-money. Since I left England, I have received only 183*l.*, which has not quite paid for my wine; but I do not care about being rich, if we can but keep a good fire in winter. How I long to have a peep into my own house, and a walk in my own garden! It is the pleasing object of all my hopes."

In the midst of all those great concerns, it is delightful to find the noble Admiral writing thus, from the Mediterranean, of his daughter's sick governess, and inditing this postscript to the little girls themselves: —

"How sorry am I for poor Miss ——! I am sure you will spare no pains for her; and do not lose sight of her when she goes to Edinburgh. Tell her that she must not want any advice or any comfort; but I need not say this to you, my beloved, who are kindness itself. I am much obliged to the Corporation of Newcastle for every mark which they give of their esteem and approbation of my service. But where shall we find a place in our small house for all those vases and epergnes? A kind letter from them would have gratified me as much, and have been less trouble to them."

"My darlings, Sarah and Mary,

"I was delighted with your last letters, my blessings, and desire you to write to me very often, and tell me all the news of the city of Newcastle and town of Morpeth. I hope we shall have many happy days, and many a good laugh together yet. Be kind to old Scott; and when you see him weeding my oaks, give the old man a shilling!

"May God Almighty bless you."

The patent of his peerage was limited to the heirs *male* of his body; and, having only daughters, he very early expressed a wish that

it might be extended to them and their male heirs. But this was not attended to. When he heard of his pension, he wrote, in the same lofty spirit, to Lord Barham, that if the title could be continued to the heirs of his daughters, he did not care for the pension at all! and in urging his request for the change, he reminded his Lordship, with an amusing naïveté, that government ought really to show some little favour to his daughters, considering that, if they had not kept him constantly at sea since 1793, he would probably have had half a dozen sons by this time, to succeed him in his honours!

It is delightful to read and extract passages like these; but we feel that we must stop; and that we have already exhibited enough of this book, both to justify the praises we have bestowed on it, and to give our readers a full impression of the exalted and most amiable character to which it relates. We shall add no more, therefore, that is merely personal to Lord Collingwood, except what belongs to the decay of his health, his applications for recall, and the death that he magnanimously stayed to meet, when that recall was so strangely withheld. His constitution had been considerably impaired even before the action of Trafalgar; but in 1808 his health seemed entirely to give way; and he wrote, in August of that year, earnestly entreating to be allowed to come home. The answer to his application was, that it was so difficult to supply his place, that his recall must, at all events, be suspended. In a letter to Lady Collingwood, he refers to this correspondence, and after mentioning his official application to the Admiralty he says: —

"What their answer will be, I do not know yet; but I had before mentioned my declining health to Lord Mulgrave, and he tells me in reply, that he hopes I will stay, for he knows not how to supply my place. The impression which his letter made upon me was one of grief and sorrow: first, that with such a list as we have — including more than a hundred admirals — there should be thought to be any difficulty in finding a successor of superior ability to me; and next, that there should be any obstacle in the way of the only comfort and happiness that I have to look forward to in this world."

In answer to Lord Mulgrave's statement, he afterwards writes, that his infirmities had sensibly increased; but "I have no object in the world that I put in competition with my public duty; and so long as your lordship thinks it proper to continue me in this command, my utmost efforts shall be made to strengthen the impression which you now have; but I still hope that, whenever it may be done with convenience, your lordship will bear in mind my request." Soon after he writes thus to his family: — "I am an unhappy creature — old and worn out. I wish to come to England; but some objection is ever made to it." And, again, "I have been very unwell. The physician tells me that it is the effect of constant confinement — which is not very comfortable, as there seems little chance of its being otherwise. Old age and its infirmities are coming on me very fast; and I am weak and tottering on my legs. It is high time I should return to England; and I hope I shall be allowed to do it before long. It will otherwise be too late."

And it was too late! He was not relieved — and scorning to leave the post assigned to him, while he had life to maintain it, he died at it, in March, 1810, upwards of eighteen months after he had thus stated to the government his reasons for desiring a recall. The following is the editor's touching and affectionate account of the closing scene — full of pity and of grandeur — and harmonizing beautifully with the noble career which was destined there to be arrested: —

"Lord Collingwood had been repeatedly urged by his friends to surrender his command, and to seek in England that repose which had become so necessary in his declining health; but his feelings on the subject of discipline were peculiarly strong, and he had ever exacted the most implicit obedience from others He thought it, therefore, his duty not to quit the post which had been assigned to him, until he should be duly relieved, — and replied, 'that his life was his country's, *in whatever way it might be required of him.*' When he moored in the harbour of Port Mahon, on the 25th of February, he was in a state of great suffering and debility; and having been strongly recommended by his medical attendants to try the effect of gentle exercise on horseback, he went immediately on shore, accompanied by his friend Captain Hallowell, who left his ship to attend him in his illness: but it was then too late. He became incapable of bearing the slightest fatigue; and as it was represented to him that his return to England was indispensably necessary, for the preservation of his life, he, on the 3d of March, surrendered his command to Rear-Admiral Martin. The two following days were spent in unsuccessful attempts to warp the

Ville de Paris out of Port Mahon; but on the 6th the wind came round to the westward, and at sunset the ship succeeded in clearing the harbour, and made sail for England. When Lord Collingwood was informed that he was again at sea, he rallied for a time his exhausted strength, and said to those around him, 'Then I may yet live to meet the French once more.' On the morning of the 7th there was a considerable swell, and his friend Captain Thomas, on entering his cabin, observed that he feared the motion of the vessel disturbed him. 'No, Thomas,' he replied; 'I am now in a state in which nothing in this world can disturb me more. I am dying; and I am sure it must be consolatory to you, and all who love me, to see how comfortably I am coming to my end.' He told one of his attendants that he had endeavoured to review, as far as was possible, all the actions of his past life, and that he had the happiness to say, that nothing gave him a moment's uneasiness. He spoke at times of his absent family, and of the doubtful contest in which he was about to leave his country involved, but ever with calmness and perfect resignation to the will of God; and in this blessed state of mind, after taking an affectionate farewell of his attendants, he expired without a struggle at six o'clock in the evening of that day, having attained the age of fifty-nine years and six months.

"After his decease, it was found that, with the exception of the stomach, all the other organs of life were peculiarly vigorous and unimpaired; and from this inspection, and the age which the surviving members of his family have attained, there is every reason to conclude that if he had been earlier relieved from his command, he would still have been in the enjoyment of the honours and rewards which would doubtless have awaited him on his return to England."

The remainder of this article, containing discussions on the practices of flogging in the Navy, and of Impressment (to both which Lord Collingwood, as well as Nelson, were opposed), is now omitted; as scarcely possessing sufficient originality to justify its republication, even in this Miscellany.

BISHOP HEBER.

(December, 1828.)

Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824, 1825 (*with Notes upon Ceylon*)*; an Account of a Journey to Madras and the Southern Provinces,* 1826; *and Letters written in India.* By the late Right Reverend Reginald Heber, Lord Bishop of Calcutta. Second Edition. 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1828.

This is another book for Englishmen to be proud of—almost as delightful as the Memoirs of Lord Collingwood, and indebted for its attractions mainly to the same cause — the singularly amiable and exalted character of the person to whom it relates — and that combination of gentleness with heroic ambition, and simplicity with high station, which we would still fondly regard as characteristic of our own nation. To us in Scotland the combination seems, in this instance, even more admirable than in that of the great Admiral. We have no Bishops on our establishment; and have been accustomed to think that we are better without them. But, if we could persuade ourselves that Bishops in general were at all like Bishop Heber, we should tremble for our Presbyterian orthodoxy; and feel not only veneration, but something very like envy, for a communion which could number many such men among its ministers.

The notion entertained of a Bishop, in our antiepiscopal latitudes, is likely enough, we admit, not to be altogether just: — and we are far from upholding it as correct, when we say, that a Bishop, among us, is generally supposed to be a stately and pompous person, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day— somewhat obsequious to persons in power, and somewhat haughty and imperative to those who are beneath him — with more authority in his tone and manner than solidity in his learning; and yet with much more learning than charity or humility — very fond of being called my Lord, and driving about in a coach with mitres on the panels, but little addicted to visiting the sick and fatherless, or earning for himself the blessing of those who are ready to perish —

——— "Familiar with a round
Of Ladyships — a stranger to the poor"—

decorous in manners, but no foe to luxurious indulgences — rigid in maintaining discipline among his immediate dependents, and in exacting the homage due to his dignity from the undignified mob of his brethren; but perfectly willing to leave to them the undivided privileges of teaching and of comforting their people, and of soothing the sins and sorrows of their erring flocks — scornful, if not openly hostile, upon all occasions, to the claims of the People, from whom he is generally sprung — and presuming every thing in favour of the

royal will and prerogative, by which he has been exalted—setting indeed, in all cases, a much higher value on the privileges of the few, than the rights that are common to all, and exerting himself strenuously that the former may ever prevail—caring more, accordingly, for the interests of his order than the general good of the Church, and far more for the Church than for the Religion it was established to teach—hating dissenters still more bitterly than infidels—but combating both rather with obloquy and invocation of civil penalties, than with the artillery of a powerful reason, or the reconciling influences of an humble and holy life—uttering now and then haughty professions of humility, and regularly bewailing, at fit seasons, the severity of those Episcopal labours, which sadden, and even threaten to abridge a life, which to all other eyes appears to flow on in almost unbroken leisure and continued indulgence!

This, or something like this, we take to be the notion that most of us Presbyterians have been used to entertain of a modern Bishop: and it is mainly because they believed that the rank and opulence which the station implied, were likely to realize this character in those who should be placed in it, that our ancestors contended so strenuously for the abrogation of the order, and thought their Reformation incomplete till it was finally put down—till all the ministers of the Gospel were truly pastors of souls, and stood in no other relation to each other than as fellow-labourers in the same vineyard.

If this notion be utterly erroneous, the picture which Bishop Heber has here drawn of himself, must tend powerfully to correct it. If, on the other hand, it be in any respect just, he must be allowed, at all events, to have been a splendid exception. We are willing to take it either way. Though we must say that we incline rather to the latter alternative—since it is difficult to suppose, with all due allowance for prejudices, that our abstract idea of a Bishop should be in such flagrant contradiction to the truth, that one who was merely a fair specimen of the order, should be most accurately characterized by precisely *reversing* every thing that entered into that idea. Yet this is manifestly the case with Bishop Heber—of whom we do not know at this moment how we could give a better description, than by merely *reading backwards* all we have now ventured to set down as characteristic of his right reverend brethren. Learned, polished, and dignified, he was undoubtedly; yet far more conspicuously kind, humble, tolerant, and laborious—zealous for his church too, and not forgetful of his station; but remembering it more for the duties than for the honours that were attached to it, and infinitely more zealous for the religious improvement, and for the happiness, and spiritual and worldly good of his fellow-creatures, of every tongue, faith, and complexion: indulgent to all errors and infirmities—liberal, in the best and truest sense of the word—humble and conscientiously diffident of his own excellent judgment and never-failing charity—looking on all men as the children of one God, on all Christians as the redeemed of one Saviour, and on all Christian teachers as fellow-labourers, bound to help and encourage each other in their arduous and anxious task. His portion of the work, accordingly, he wrought faithfully, zealously, and well; and, devoting himself to his duty with a truly apostolical fervour, made no scruple to forego, for its sake, not merely his personal ease and comfort, but those domestic affections which were ever so much more valuable in his eyes, and in the end, we fear, consummating the sacrifice with his life! If such a character be common among the dignitaries of the English Church, we sincerely congratulate them on the fact, and bow our heads in homage and veneration before them. If it be rare, as we fear it must be in any church, we trust we do no unworthy service in pointing it out for honour and imitation to all; and in praying that the example, in all its parts, may promote the growth of similar virtues among all denominations of Christians, in every region of the world.

But though the great charm of the book be derived from the character of its lamented author, we are not sure that this is by any means what will give it its great or most permanent value. Independently of its moral attraction, we are inclined to think it, on the whole, the most instructive and important publication that has ever been given to the world, on the actual state and condition of our Indian Empire: not only exhibiting a more

clear, graphic, and intelligible account of the country, and the various races by which it is peopled, but presenting us with more candid, judicious, and reasonable views of all the great questions relating to its destiny, and our interests and duties with regard to it, than are any where else to be met with. It is the result, no doubt, of a hasty and somewhat superficial survey. But it embraces a very wide and various range, and thus affords the means of correcting errors, which are almost inseparable from a narrower observation; and has, above all, the inestimable advantage of being given while the freshness of the first impression was undiminished, and the fairness of the first judgment unperverted by the gradual accumulation of interests, prejudices, and deference to partial authorities; and given by a man not only free from all previous bias, but of such singular candour, calmness, and deliberation of judgment, that we would, in almost any case, take his testimony, even on a superficial view, against that of a much cleverer person, who, with ampler opportunities, had surveyed or reported with the feelings consciously or unconsciously cherished, of an advocate, a theorist, a bigot, or a partizan.

Unhappily, almost all who have hitherto had the means of knowing much about India, have been, in a greater or less degree, subject to these influences; and the consequence has been, that though that great country is truly a portion of our own — and though we may find in every large town, whole clubs of intelligent men, returned after twenty or thirty years' residence in it in high situations, it is nearly impossible to get any distinct notion of its general condition, or to obtain such information as to its institutions and capacities as may be furnished by an ordinary book of travels, as to countries infinitely less important or easy of access. Various causes, besides the repulsions of a hostile and jealous religion, have conspired to produce this effect. In the first place, the greater part of our *revenans* have been too long in the other world, to be able to describe it in such a way as to be either interesting or intelligible to the inhabitants of this. They have been too long familiar with its aspects to know how they would strike a stranger; and have confounded, in their passive and incurious impressions, the most trivial and insignificant usages, with practices and principles that are in the highest degree curious, and of the deepest moral concernment. In the next place, by far the greater part of these experienced and authoritative residents have seen but a very small portion of the mighty regions with which they are too hastily presumed to be *generally* acquainted; and have for the most part seen even those, only in the course of some limited professional or official occupation, and only with the eyes of their peculiar craft or profession. They have been traders, or soldiers, or tax-gatherers — with here and there a diplomatic agent, an engineer, or a naturalist — all, too busy, and too much engrossed with the special object of their several missions, to have time to look to the general condition of the country — and almost all moving through it, with a retinue and accompaniment of authority, which excluded all actual contact with the People, and even, in a great degree, the possibility of seeing them in their natural state. We have historical memoirs accordingly, and accounts of military expeditions, of great value and accuracy; and are beginning to have reports of the culture of indigo, of the general profits of trade, and of the heights and structure of mountains, that may be depended on. But, with the exception of Mr. Elphinstone's Caubul and Sir John Malcolm's Central India — both relating to very limited and peculiar districts — we have no good account of the country or the people. But by far the worst obstruction to the attainment of correct information is to be found in the hostility which has prevailed for the last fifteen or twenty years, between the adversaries and the advocates of the East India Company and its monopoly; and which has divided almost all who are now able and willing to enlighten us on its concerns, into the champions of opposite factions; characterized, we fear we must add, with a full share of the partiality, exaggeration, and inaccuracy, which has at all times been chargeable upon such champions. In so large and complicated a subject there is room of course for plausible representations on both sides; but what we chiefly complain of is, that both parties have been so anxious to make a case for themselves, that neither of them have thought of stating *the whole facts*, so as to enable the public to

judge between them. They have invariably brought forward only what they thought peculiarly favourable for themselves, or peculiarly unfavourable for the adversary, and have fought to the utterance upon those high grounds of quarrel; but have left out all that is not prominent and remarkable — that is, all that is truly characteristic of the general state of the country, and the ordinary conduct of its government; by reference to which alone, however, the real magnitude of the alleged benefits or abuses can ever be truly estimated.

It is chiefly for these reasons that we have hitherto been shy, perhaps to a blameable excess, in engaging with the great questions of Indian policy, which have of late years engrossed so much attention. Feeling the extreme difficulty of getting safe materials for our judgment, we have been conscientiously unwilling to take a decided or leading part in discussions which did not seem to us to be conducted, on either part, in a spirit of perfect fairness, on a sufficient view of well-established facts, or on a large and comprehensive perception of the principles to which they referred. With a strong general leaning against all monopoly and arbitrary restrictions, we could not but feel that the case of India was peculiar in many respects; and that more than usual deliberation was due, not only to its vast practical importance, but to the weight of experience and authority that seemed arrayed against our predilections; and we longed, above all things, for a calm and dispassionate statement of facts, from a recent and intelligent observer, unconnected, if possible, either by interest or any other tie, with either of the parties, and untainted even by any preparatory study of their controversies; but applying his mind with perfect freedom and fairness to what fell under his own immediate observation, and recording his impressions with that tranquil sincerity which can scarcely ever be relied on but where the record is meant to be absolutely private, and is consequently made up without any feeling of responsibility, ambition, or deference.

Such a statement, and much more than such a statement, we have in the work before us; and both now, and on all future occasions, we feel that it has relieved us from the chief difficulty, we have hitherto experienced in forming our opinions, and supplied the most valuable elements for the discussions to which we have alluded. The author, it must be admitted, was more in connexion with the Government than with any party or individual opposed to it, and was more exposed, therefore, to a bias in that direction. But he was, at the same time, so entirely independent of its favours, and so much more removed from its influence than any one with nearly the same means of observation, and was withal of a nature so perfectly candid, upright and conscientious, that he may be regarded, we think, as altogether impartial; and we verily believe has set down nothing in this private journal, intended only for his own eye or that of his wife, not only that he did not honestly think, but that he would not have openly stated to the Governor in Council, or to the Court of Directors themselves.

The Bishop sailed for India with his family, in 1823; and in June, 1824, set out on the visitation of his imperial Diocese, having been obliged, much against his will, to leave his wife and children, on account of their health, behind him. He ascended the Ganges to Dacca and Benares, and proceeded by Oude and Lucknow to Delhi and Agra, and to Almorah, at the base of the Himalaya mountains, and so onward through the newly acquired provinces of Malwah, to Guzerat and Bombay, where he had the happiness of rejoining Mrs. Heber. They afterwards sailed together to Ceylon; and after some stay in that island, returned, in October, 1825, to Calcutta. In January, 1826, the indefatigable prelate sailed again for Madras, and proceeded in March to the visitation of the southern provinces; but had only reached Tanjore when his arduous and exemplary career was cut short, and all his labours of love and duty brought to an end, by a sudden and most unexpected death — having been seized with a fit in stepping into the bath, after having spent the morning in the offices of religion, on the 3d of April of that year.

The work before us consists of a very copious journal, written for, and transmitted to his wife, during his long peregrinations; and of several most valuable and interesting letters, addressed to her, and to his friends in England, in the course of the same journey; all

written in a very pleasing, and even elegant, though familiar style, and indicating in every line not only the clear judgment and various accomplishments of the writer, but the singular kindness of heart and sweetness of temper, by which he seems to have been still more distinguished. He surveys every thing with the vigilance and delight of a cultivated and most active intellect — with the eye of an artist, an antiquary, and a naturalist — the feelings and judgment of an English gentleman and scholar — the sympathies of a most humane and generous man — and the piety, charity, and humility of a Christian. The work is somewhat diffuse, and exhibits some repetitions, and perhaps some inconsistencies. It is not such a work, in short, as the author would himself have offered to the public. But we do not know whether it is not more interesting than any that he could have prepared for publication. It carries us more completely into the very heart of the scenes he describes than any such work could have done, and it admits us more into his intimacy. We pity those, we confess, who find it tedious to accompany such a man on such a journey.

It is difficult to select extracts from a work like this; or, rather, it is not worth while to stand on selection. We cannot pretend to give any abstract of the whole, or to transfer to our pages any reasonable proportion of the beauty or instruction it contains. We can only justify our account of it by a few specimens, taken very much at random. The following may serve to show the unaffected and considerate kindness with which he treated his attendants, and all the inferior persons who came in contact with him; and the effects of that kindness on its objects.

"Two of my sepoys had been ill for several days, in much the same way with myself. I had treated them in a similar manner, and they were now doing well: but being Brahmins of high caste, I had much difficulty in conquering their scruples and doubts about the physic which I gave them. They both said that they would rather die than taste wine. They scrupled at my using a spoon to measure their castor-oil, and insisted that the water in which their medicines were mixed should be poured by themselves only. They were very grateful, however, particularly for the care I took of them when I was myself ill, and said repeatedly that the sight of me in good health would be better to them than all medicines. They seemed now free from disease, but recovered their strength more slowly than I did; and I was glad to find that the Soubahdar said he was authorized, under such circumstances, to engage a hackery at the Company's expense, to carry them till they were fit to march. He mentioned this in consequence of my offering them a lift on a camel, which they were afraid of trying."

"I had a singular instance this evening of the fact how mere children all soldiers, and I think particularly sepoys, are, when put a little out of their usual way. On going to the place where my escort was hutted, I found that there was not room for them all under its shelter, and that four were preparing to sleep on the open field. Within a hundred yards stood another similar hut unoccupied, a little out of repair, but tolerably tenantable. 'Why do you not go thither?' was my question. 'We like to sleep all together,' was their answer. 'But why not bring the branches here, and make your own hut larger? see, I will show you the way.' They started up immediately, in great apparent delight; every man brought a bow, and the work was done in five minutes — being only interrupted every now and then by exclamations of 'Good, good, poor man's provider!'"—

"A little before five in the morning, the servants came to me for directions, and to say that the good careful old Soubahdar was very ill, and unable to leave his tent. I immediately put on my clothes and went down to the camp, in my way to which they told me, that he had been taken unwell at night, and that Dr. Smith had given him medicine. He opened a vein, and with much humane patience continued to try different remedies while any chance remained; but no blood flowed, and no sign of life could be detected from the time of his coming up, except a feeble flutter at the heart, which soon ceased. He was at an advanced age, at least for an Indian, though apparently hale and robust. I felt it a comfort that I had not urged him to any exertion, and that in fact I had endeavoured to persuade him to lie still till he was quite well. But I was necessarily much shocked by the sudden end of one who had travelled with me so far, and whose conduct had, in every instance, given me satisfaction. Nor, while writing this, can I recollect without a real pang, his calm countenance and grey hairs, as he sat in his tent door telling his beads in an afternoon, or walked with me, as he seldom failed to do, through the villages on an evening, with his own silver-hilted sabre under his arm, his loose cotton mantle folded round him, and his golden necklace and Rajpoot string just visible above it.

"The death of the poor Soubahdar led to the question, whether there would be still time to send on the baggage. All the Mussulmans pressed our immediate departure; while the Hindoos begged that they might be allowed to stay, at least, till sunset. I determined on remaining, as, in my opinion, more decent and respectful to the memory of a good and aged officer."

"In the way, at Futtehgunge, I passed the tents pitched for the large party which were to return

towards Cawnpoor next day, and I was much pleased and gratified by the Soubahdar and the greater number of the sepoys of my old escort running into the middle of the road to bid me another farewell, and again express their regret that they were not going on with me 'to the world's end.' They who talk of the ingratitude of the Indian character, should, I think, pay a little more attention to cases of this sort. These men neither got nor expected any thing by this little expression of good-will. If I had offered them money, they would have been bound, by the rules of the service, and their own dignity, not to take it. Sufficient civility and respect would have been paid if any of them who happened to be near the road had touched their caps, and I really can suppose them actuated by no motive but good-will. It had not been excited, so far as I know, by any particular desert on my part: but I had always spoken to them civilly, had paid some attention to their comforts in securing them tents, firewood, and camels for their knapsacks, and had ordered them a dinner, after their own fashion, on their arrival at Lucknow, at the expense of, I believe, not more than four rupees! Surely if good-will is to be bought by these sort of attentions, it is a pity that any body should neglect them."—

"In crossing a nuddee, which from a ford had become a ferry, we saw some characteristic groups and occurrences; the price of passage in the boat was only a few cowries; but a number of country folk were assembled, who could not, or would not, pay, and were now sitting patiently by the brink, waiting till the torrent should subside, or, what was far less likely to happen, till the boatmen should take compassion on them. Many of these poor people came up to beg me to make the boatmen take them over, one woman pleading that her 'malik our bucher' (literally master, or lord, and young one) had run away from her, and she wanted to overtake them; another that she and her two grandchildren were following her son, who was a Havildar in the regiment which we had passed just before; and some others, that they had been intercepted the previous day by this torrent, and had neither money nor food till they had reached their homes. Four anas purchased a passage for the whole crowd, of perhaps thirty people, and they were really very thankful. I bestowed two anas more on the poor deserted woman, and a whimsical scene ensued. She at first took the money with eagerness, then, as if she recollected herself, she blushed very deeply, and seemed much confused, then bowed herself to my feet, and kissed my hands, and at last said, in a very modest tone, 'it was not fit for so great a man as I was, to give her two anas, and she hoped that I and 'the chota Sahib' (little lord) would give her a rupee each!' She was an extremely pretty little woman, but we were inexorable; partly, I believe, in my own case at least, because we had only just rupees enough to take us to Cawnpoor, and to pay for our men's provisions; however, I gave her two more anas, my sole remaining stock of small change."

These few traits will do, we believe; but we must add a few more, to let the reader fully into the noble humanity and genuine softness of this man's heart.

"In the course of this evening a fellow, who said he was a gao-wala, brought me two poor little leverets, which he said he had just found in a field. They were quite unfit to eat, and bringing them was an act of cruelty of which there are few instances among the Hindoos, who are generally humane to wild animals. In this case, on my scolding the man for bringing such poor little things from their mother, all the crowd of camel-drivers and camp-followers, of whom no inconsiderable number were around us, expressed great satisfaction and an entire concurrence in my censure. It ended in the man promising to take them back to the very spot (which he described) where he had picked them up, and in my promising him an ana if he did so. To see him keep his word two stout waggoner's boys immediately volunteered their services, and I have no doubt kept him to his contract.

"The same adviser wanted me to take off a joint of Câbul's tail, under the hair, so as not to injure his appearance. 'It was known,' he said, 'that by how much the tail was made shorter, so much the taller the horse grew.' I said, 'I could not believe that God gave any animal a limb too much, or one which tended to its disadvantage, and that as He had made my horse, so he should remain.' This speech, such as it was, seemed to chime in wonderfully with the feelings of most of my hearers; and one old man said, that 'during all the twenty-two years that the English held the country, he had not heard so grave and godly a saying from any of them before.' I thought of Sancho Panza and his wise apophthegms!

"Our elephants were receiving their drink at a well, and I gave the largest some bread, which, before my illness, I had often been in the habit of doing. 'He is glad to see you again,' observed the goomashta, and I certainly was much struck by the calm, clear, attentive, intelligent eye which he fixed on me, both while he was eating, and afterwards while I was patting his trunk and talking about him. He was, he said, a fine-tempered beast, but the two others were 'great rascals.' One of them had once almost killed his keeper. I have got these poor beasts' allowance increased, in consideration of their long march; and that they may not be wronged, have ordered the mohout to give them all their gram in presence of a sentry. The gram is made up in cakes, about as large as the top of a hat-box, and baked on an earthen pot. Each contains a seer, and sixteen of them are considered as sufficient for one day's food for an elephant on a march. The suwarree elephant had only twelve, but I ordered him the full allowance, as well as an increase to the others. If they knew this they would indeed be glad to see me."—

"The morning was positively cold, and the whole scene, with the exercise of the march, the picturesque

groups of men-and animals round me—the bracing air, the singing of birds, the light mist hanging on the trees, and the glistening dew, had something at once so Oriental and so English, I have seldom found any thing better adapted to raise a man's animal spirits, and put him in good temper with himself and all the world. How I wish those I love were with me! How much my wife would enjoy this sort of life,— its exercise, its cleanliness, and purity; its constant occupation, and at the same time its comparative freedom from form, care, and vexation! At the same time a man who is curious in his eating had better not come here. Lamb and kid (and we get no other flesh) most people would soon tire of. The only fowls which are attainable are as tough and lean as can be desired; and the milk and butter are generally seasoned with the never-failing condiments of Hindostan,—smoke and soot. These, however, are matters to which it is not difficult to become reconciled; and all the more serious points of warmth, shade, cleanliness, air, and water, are at this season nowhere enjoyed better than in the spacious and well-contrived tents, the ample means of transport, the fine climate, and fertile regions of Northern Hindostan. Another time, by God's blessing, I will not be alone in this Eden; yet I confess that there are few people whom I greatly wish to have as associates in such a journey. It is only a wife or a friend so intimate as to be quite another self, whom one is really anxious to be with one while travelling through a new country."

Instead of wishing, as we should have expected a Bishop to do, to move in the dignified and conspicuous circle at the seat of government, it is interesting to find this exemplary person actually languishing for a more retired and obscure situation.

"Do you know, dearest, that I sometimes think we should be more useful, and happier, if Cawnpoor or Benares, not Calcutta, were our home? My visitations would be made with far more convenience, the expense of house rent would be less to the Company, and our own expenses of living would be reduced very considerably. The air, even of Cawnpoor, is, I apprehend, better than that of Bengal, and that of Benares decidedly so. The greater part of my business with government may be done as well by letters as personal interviews; and, if the Archdeacon of Calcutta were resident there, it seems more natural that the Bishop of India should remain in the centre of his diocese. The only objection is the great number of Christians in Calcutta, and the consequent probability that my preaching is more useful there than it would be any where else. We may talk these points over when me meet."

One of the most characteristic passages in the book, is the account of his interview with the learned and very liberal Brahmin in Guzerât, whom he understood to teach a far purer morality than is usually enjoined by his brethren, and also to discountenance the distinction of castes, and to inculcate a signal toleration. We can now afford, however, to give little more than the introductory narrative.

"About eleven o'clock I had the expected visit from Swaamee Narain, to my interview with whom I had looked forward with an anxiety and eagerness which, if he had known it, would perhaps have flattered him. He came in a somewhat different style from what I expected; having with him nearly 200 horsemen, mostly well-armed with matchlocks and swords, and several of them with coats of mail and spears. Besides them he had a large rabble on foot, with bows and arrows; and when I considered that I had myself more than fifty horse, and fifty muskets and bayonets, I could not help smiling, though my sensations were in some degree painful and humiliating, at the idea of two religious teachers meeting at the head of little armies! and filling the city, which was the scene of their interview, with the rattling of quivers, the clash of shields, and the tramp of the war-horse. Had our troops been opposed to each other, mine, though less numerous, would have been doubtless far more effective, from the superiority of arms and discipline. But, in moral grandeur, what a difference was there between his troop and mine! Mine neither knew me nor cared for me. They escorted me faithfully, and would have defended me bravely, because they were ordered by their superiors to do so; and as they would have done for any other stranger of sufficient worldly rank to make such attendance usual. The guards of Swaamee Narain were his own disciples and enthusiastic admirers; men who had voluntarily repaired to hear his lessons, who now took a pride in doing him honour, and who would cheerfully fight to the last drop of blood rather than suffer a fringe of his garment to be handled roughly. In the parish of Hodnet there were once perhaps a few honest countrymen who felt something like this for me; but how long a time must elapse before any Christian teacher in India can hope to be thus loved and honoured!

"After the usual mutual compliments, I said that I had heard much good of him, and the good doctrine which he preached among the poor people of Guzerât, and that I greatly desired his acquaintance; that I regretted that I knew Hindostanee so imperfectly, but that I should be very glad, so far as my knowledge of the language allowed, and by the interpretation of friends, to learn what he believed on religious matters, and to tell him what I myself believed; and that if he would come and see me at Kairah, where we should have more leisure, I would have a tent pitched for him and treat him like a brother. I said this, because I was very earnestly desirous of getting him a copy of the Scriptures, of which I had none

with me in the Nagree character, and persuading him to read them; and because I had some further hopes of inducing him to go with me to Bombay, where I hoped that, by conciliatory treatment, and the conversations to which I might introduce him with the Church Missionary Society established in that neighbourhood, I might do him more good than I could otherwise hope to do.

"I saw that both he, and, still more, his disciples, were highly pleased by the invitation which I gave him; but he said, in reply, that his life was one of very little leisure; that he had 5000 disciples now attending on his preaching in the neighbouring villages, and nearly 50,000 in different parts of Guzerât; that a great number of these were to assemble together in the course of next week, on occasion of his brother's son coming of age to receive the Brahminical string; but that if I staid long enough in the neighbourhood to allow him to get this engagement over, he would gladly come again to see me. 'In the mean time,' I said, 'have you any objection to communicate some part of your doctrine now?' It was evidently what he came to do; and his disciples very visibly exulted in the opportunity of his perhaps *converting me*."

The conference is too long to extract, but it is very curious; though the result fell something short of what the worthy Bishop, in the zeal of his benevolence, had anticipated. We should now leave the subject of the author's personal character; but it shines out so strongly in the account of the sudden death of one of his English friends and fellow-travellers, that we cannot refrain from gratifying our readers and ourselves with one other extract. Mr. Stowe, the individual alluded to, died after a very short illness at Dacca. The day after his burial, the Bishop writes to his wife as follows: —

"Sincerely as I have mourned, and do mourn him continually, the moment perhaps at which I felt his loss most keenly was on my return to this house. I had always after airings, or other short absences, been accustomed to run up immediately to his room to ask about his medicines and his nourishment, to find if he had wanted any thing during my absence, and to tell him what I had seen and heard. And now, as I went up stairs, I felt most painfully that the object of my solicitude was gone, and that there was nobody now to derive comfort or help from my coming, or whose eyes would faintly sparkle as I opened the door.

"It will be long before I forget the guilelessness of his nature, the interest which he felt and expressed in all the beautiful and sequestered scenery which we passed through; his anxiety to be useful to me in any way which I could point out to him (he was indeed very useful), and, above all, the unaffected pleasure which he took in discussing religious subjects; his diligence in studying the Bible, and the fearless humanity with which he examined the case, and administered to the wants, of nine poor Hindoos, the crew of a salt-barge, whom, as I mentioned in my Journal, we found lying sick together of a jungle fever, unable to leave the place where they lay, and unaided by the neighbouring villagers. I then little thought how soon he in his turn would require the aid he gave so cheerfully."

On the day after, he writes in these terms to Miss Stowe, the sister of his departed friend: —

"With a heavy heart, my dear Miss Stowe, I send you the enclosed keys. How to offer you consolation in your present grief, I know not; for by my own deep sense of the loss of an excellent friend, I know how much heavier must be your burden. Separation of one kind or another is, indeed, one of the most frequent trials to which affectionate hearts are exposed. And if you can only regard your brother as removed for his own advantage to a distant country, you will find, perhaps, some of that misery alleviated under which you are now suffering. Had you remained in England when he came out hither, you would have been, for a time, divided no less effectually than you are now. The difference of hearing from him is almost all; and though you now have not that comfort, yet even without hearing from him you may be well persuaded (which there you could not always have been) that he is well and happy; and, above all, you may be persuaded, as your dear brother was most fully in his time of severest suffering, that God never smites his children in vain, or out of cruelty.

"So long as you choose to remain with us, we will be, to our power, a sister and a brother to you. And it may be worth your consideration whether, in your present state of health and spirits, a journey in my wife's society will not be better for you than a dreary voyage home. But this is a point on which you must decide for yourself; I would scarcely venture to advise, far less dictate, where I am only anxious to serve. In my dear Emily you will already have had a most affectionate and sensible counsellor."

We dare not venture on any part, either of the descriptions of scenery and antiquities, or of the persons and presentations at the several native courts. But we have no hesitation in recommending them as by far the best and most interesting, in both sorts, that we have ever met with. The account of his journeyings and adventures in the mountain region at the foot of the Himalaya is peculiarly striking, from the affecting resemblance the author is continually tracing to the scenery of his beloved England, his more beloved Wales, or his

most beloved Hodnet! Of the natives, in all their orders, he is a most indulgent and liberal judge, as well as a very exact observer. He estimates their civilization higher, we think, than any other traveller who has given an account of them, and is very much struck with the magnificence of their architecture — though very sceptical as to the high antiquity to which some of its finest specimens pretend. We cannot afford to give any of the splendid and luminous descriptions in which the work abounds. In a private letter he says: —

"I had heard much of the airy and gaudy style of Oriental architecture; a notion, I apprehend, taken from that of China only, since solidity, solemnity, and a richness of ornament, so well managed, as not to interfere with solemnity, are the characteristics of all the ancient buildings which I have met with in this country. I recollect no corresponding parts of Windsor at all equal to the entrance of the castle of Delhi and its marble hall of audience; and even Delhi falls very short of Agra in situation, in majesty of outline, in size, and the costliness and beauty of its apartments."

The following is a summary of his opinion of the people, which follows in the same letter: —

"Of the people, so far as their natural character is concerned, I have been led to form, on the whole, a very favourable opinion. They have, unhappily, many of the vices arising from slavery, from an unsettled state of society, and immoral and erroneous systems of religion. But they are men of high and gallant courage, courteous, intelligent, and most eager after knowledge and improvement, with a remarkable aptitude for the abstract sciences, geometry, astronomy, &c., and for the imitative arts, painting and sculpture. They are sober, industrious, dutiful to their parents, and affectionate to their children, of tempers almost uniformly gentle and patient, and more easily affected by kindness and attention to their wants and feelings than almost any men whom I have met with. Their faults seem to arise from the hateful superstitions to which they are subject, and the unfavourable state of society in which they are placed.

"More has been done, and more successfully, to obviate these evils in the Presidency of Bombay, than in any part of India which I have yet visited, through the wise and liberal policy of Mr. Elphinstone; to whom this side of the Peninsula is also indebted for some very important and efficient improvements in the administration of justice, and who, both in amiable temper and manners, extensive and various information, acute good sense, energy, and application to business, is one of the most extraordinary men, as he is quite the most popular governor, that I have fallen in with."

The following is also very important; and gives more new and valuable information than many pretending volumes, by men who have been half their lives in the countries to which they relate: —

"Of the people of this country, and the manner in which they are governed, I have, as yet, hardly seen enough to form an opinion. I have seen enough, however, to find that the customs, the habits, and prejudices of the former are much misunderstood in England. We have all heard, for instance, of the humanity of the Hindoos towards brute creatures, their horror of animal food, &c.; and you may be, perhaps, as much surprised as I was, to find that those who can afford it are hardly less carnivorous than ourselves; that even the purest Brahmins are allowed to eat mutton and venison; that fish is permitted to many castes, and pork to many others; and that, though they consider it a grievous crime to kill a cow or bullock for the purpose of eating, yet they treat their draft oxen, no less than their horses, with a degree of barbarous severity which would turn an English hackney coachman sick. Nor have their religious prejudices, and the unchangeableness of their habits, been less exaggerated. Some of the best informed of their nation, with whom I have conversed, assure me that half their most remarkable customs of civil and domestic life are borrowed from their Mohammedan conquerors; and at present there is an obvious and increasing disposition to imitate the English in every thing, which has already led to very remarkable changes, and will, probably, to still more important. The wealthy natives now all affect to have their houses decorated with Corinthian pillars, and filled with English furniture. They drive the best horses and the most dashing carriages in Calcutta. Many of them speak English fluently, and are tolerably read in English literature; and the children of one of our friends I saw one day dressed in jackets and trousers, with round hats, shoes and stockings. In the Bengalee newspapers, of which there are two or three, politics are canvassed, with a bias, as I am told, inclining to Whiggism; and one of their leading men gave a great dinner not long since in honour of the Spanish Revolution. Among the lower orders the same feeling shows itself more beneficially, in a growing neglect of *caste* — in not merely a willingness, but an anxiety, to send their children to our schools, and a desire to learn and speak English, which, if properly encouraged, might, I verily believe, in fifty years' time, make our language what the *Oordoo*, or *court* and *camp* language of the country (the Hindoostanee), is at present. And though instances of actual conversion to Christianity are, as yet, very uncommon, yet the number of children, both male and female, who are now receiving a sort of Christian education, reading the New Testament, repeating the Lord's Prayer and Commandments, and all with the consent, or at least without the censure,

of their parents or spiritual guides, have increased, during the last two years, to an amount which astonishes the old European residents, who were used to tremble at the name of a Missionary, and shrink from the common duties of Christianity, lest they should give offence to their heathen neighbours. So far from that being a consequence of the zeal which has been lately shown, many of the Brahmins themselves express admiration of the morality of the Gospel, and profess to entertain a better opinion of the English since they have found that they too have a religion and a Shaster. All that seems necessary for the best effects to follow is, to let things take their course; to make the Missionaries discreet; to keep the government as it now is, strictly neuter; and to place our confidence in a general diffusion of knowledge, and in making ourselves really useful to the temporal as well as spiritual interests of the people among whom we live.

"In all these points there is, indeed, great room for improvement; but I do not by any means assent to the pictures of depravity and general worthlessness which some have drawn of the Hindoos. They are decidedly, by nature, a mild, pleasing, and intelligent race; sober, parsimonious, and, where an object is held out to them, most industrious and persevering. But the magistrates and lawyers all agree that in no country are lying and perjury so common, and so little regarded; and notwithstanding the apparent mildness of their manners, the criminal calendar is generally as full as in Ireland, with gang-robberies, setting fire to buildings, stacks, &c.; and the number of children who are decoyed aside and murdered, for the sake of their ornaments, Lord Amherst assures me, is dreadful."

We may add the following direct testimony on a point of some little curiosity, which has been alternately denied and exaggerated: —

"At Broach is one of those remarkable institutions which have made a good deal of noise in Europe, as instances of Hindoo benevolence to inferior animals. I mean hospitals for sick and infirm beasts, birds, and insects. I was not able to visit it; but Mr. Corsellis described it as a very dirty and neglected place, which, though it has considerable endowments in land, only serves to enrich the Brahmins who manage it. They have really animals of several different kinds there, not only those which are accounted sacred by the Hindoos, as monkeys, peacocks, &c., but horses, dogs, and cats; and they have also, in little boxes, an assortment of lice and fleas! It is not true, however, that they feed those pensioners on the flesh of beggars hired for the purpose. The Brahmins say that these insects, as well as the other inmates of their infirmary, are fed with vegetables only, such as rice, &c. How the insects thrive, I did not hear; but the old horses and dogs, nay the peacocks and apes, are allowed to starve; and the only creatures said to be in any tolerable plight are some milch cows, which may be kept from other motives than charity."

He adds afterwards, —

"I have not been led to believe that our Government is generally popular, or advancing towards popularity. It is, perhaps, impossible that we should be so in any great degree; yet I really think there are some causes of discontent which it is in our own power, and which it is our duty to remove or diminish. One of these is the distance and haughtiness with which a very large proportion of the civil and military servants of the Company treat the upper and middling class of natives. Against their mixing much with us in society, there are certainly many hindrances; though even their objection to eating with us might, so far as the Mussulmans are concerned, I think, be conquered by any popular man in the upper provinces, who made the attempt in a right way. But there are some of our amusements, such as private theatrical entertainments and the sports of the field, in which they would be delighted to share, and invitations to which would be regarded by them as extremely flattering, if they were not, perhaps with some reason, voted bores, and treated accordingly. The French, under Perron and Des Boignes, who in more serious matters left a very bad name behind them, had, in this particular, a great advantage over us; and the easy and friendly intercourse in which they lived with natives of rank is still often regretted in Agra and the Dooad. This is not all, however. The foolish pride of the English absolutely leads them to set at nought the injunctions of their own Government. The Tussildars, for instance, or principal active officers of revenue, ought, by an order of council, to have chairs always offered them in the presence of their European superiors; and the same, by the standing orders of the army, should be done to the Soubahdars. Yet there are hardly six collectors in India who observe the former etiquette; and the latter, which was fifteen years ago never omitted in the army, is now completely in disuse. At the same time, the regulations of which I speak are known to every Tussildar and Soubahdar in India, and they feel themselves aggrieved every time these civilities are neglected."

Of the state of the Schools, and of Education in general, he speaks rather favourably; and is very desirous that, without any direct attempt at conversion, the youth should be generally exposed to the humanizing influence of the New Testament morality, by the general introduction of that holy book, as a lesson book in the schools; a matter to which he states positively that the natives, and even their Brahminical pastors, have no sort of objection. Talking of a female school, lately established at Calcutta, under the charge of a very pious

and discreet lady, he observes, that "Rhadacant Deb, one of the wealthiest natives in Calcutta, and regarded as the most austere and orthodox of the worshippers of the Ganges, bade, some time since, her pupils go on and prosper; and added, that, 'if they practised the Sermon on the Mount as well as they repeated it, he would choose all the handmaids for his daughters, and his wives, from the English school.'"

He is far less satisfied with the administration of justice; especially in the local or district courts, called *Adawlut*, which the costliness and intricacy of the proceedings, and the needless introduction of the Persian language, have made sources of great practical oppression, and objects of general execration throughout the country. At the Bombay Presidency Mr. Elphinstone has discarded the Persian, and appointed every thing to be done in the ordinary language of the place.

And here we are afraid we must take leave of this most instructive and delightful publication; which we confidently recommend to our readers, not only as more likely to amuse them than any book of travels with which we are acquainted, but as calculated to enlighten their understandings, and to touch their hearts with a purer flame than they generally catch from most professed works of philosophy or devotion. It sets before us, in every page, the most engaging example of devotion to God and good-will to man; and touching every object with the light of a clear judgment and a pure heart, exhibits the rare spectacle of a work written by a priest upon religious creeds and establishments, without a shade of intolerance; and bringing under review the characters of a vast multitude of eminent individuals, without one trait either of sarcasm or adulation.

SKETCHES OF INDIA, ETC.

(OCTOBER, 1824.)

1. *Sketches of India.* Written by an OFFICER, for Fire-Side Travellers at Home. Second Edition, with Alterations. 8vo. pp. 358. London: 1824.
2. *Scenes and Impressions in Egypt and in Italy.* By the Author of "Sketches of India," and "Recollections of the Peninsula." 8vo. pp. 452. London: 1824.

THESE are very amiable books: — and, besides the good sentiments they contain, they are very pleasing specimens of a sort of travel-writing, to which we have often regretted that so few of those who roam loose about the world will now condescend — we mean a brief and simple notice of what a person of ordinary information and common sensibility may see and feel in passing through a new country, which he visits without any learned preparation, and traverses without any particular object. There are individuals, no doubt, who travel to better purpose, and collect more weighty information — exploring, and recording as they go, according to their several habits and measures of learning, the mineralogy, antiquities, or statistics of the different regions they survey. But the greater part, even of intelligent wanderers, are neither so ambitious in their designs, nor so industrious in their execution; — and, as most of those who travel for pleasure, and find pleasure in travelling, are found to decline those tasks, which might enrol them among the contributors to science, while they turned all their movements into occasions of laborious study, it seems reasonable to think that a lively and succinct account of what actually delighted them, will be more generally agreeable than a digest of the information they might have acquired. We would by no means undervalue the researches of more learned and laborious persons, especially in countries rarely visited: but, for common readers, their discussions require too much previous knowledge, and too painful an effort of attention. They are not books of travels, in short, but works of science and philosophy; and as the principal delight of travelling consists in the impressions which we receive, almost passively, from the presentment of new objects, and the reflections to which they spontaneously give rise, so the most delightful books of travels should be those that give us back those impressions in their first freshness and simplicity, and excite us to follow out the train of feelings and reflection into which they lead us, by the direct and unpretending manner in which they are suggested. By aiming too ambitiously at instruction and research, this charm is lost; and we often close these copious dissertations and details, needlessly digested in the form of a journal, without having the least idea how *we*, or any other ordinary person, would have felt as companions of the journey — thoroughly con-

vinced, certainly, that we should *not* have occupied ourselves as the writers before us seem to have been occupied; and pretty well satisfied, after all, that they themselves were not so occupied during the most agreeable hours of their wanderings, and had omitted in their books what they would most frequently recall in their moments of enjoyment and leisure.

Nor are these records of superficial observation to be disdained as productive of entertainment only, or altogether barren of instruction. Very often the surface presents all that is really worth considering — or all that we are capable of understanding; — and our observer, we are taking it for granted, is, though no great philosopher, an intelligent and educated man — looking curiously at all that presents itself, and making such passing inquiries as may satisfy a reasonable curiosity, without greatly disturbing his indolence or delaying his progress. Many themes of reflection and topics of interest will be thus suggested, which more elaborate and exhausting discussions would have strangled in the birth—while, in the variety and brevity of the notices which such a scheme of writing implies, the mind of the reader is not only more agreeably excited, but is furnished, in the long run, with more materials for thinking, and solicited to more lively reflections, than by any quantity of extract knowledge on plants, stones, ruins, manufactures, or history.

Such, at all events, is the merit and the charm of the volumes before us. They place us at once by the side of the author — and bring before our eyes and minds the scenes he has passed through, and the feelings they suggested. In this last particular, indeed, we are entirely at his mercy; and we are afraid he sometimes makes rather an unmerciful use of his power. It is one of the hazards of this way of writing, that it binds us up in the strictest intimacy and closest companionship with the author. Its attraction is in its direct personal sympathy — and its danger in the temptation it holds out to abuse it. It enables us to share the grand spectacles with which the traveller is delighted — but compels us in a manner to share also in the sentiments with which he is pleased to connect them. For the privilege of seeing with his eyes, we must generally renounce that of using our own judgment — and submit to adopt implicitly the tone of feeling which *he* has found most congenial with the scene.

On the present occasion, we must say, the reader, on the whole, has been fortunate. The author, though an officer in the King's service, and not without professional predilections, is, generally speaking, a speculative, sentimental, saintly sort of person — with a taste for the picturesque, a singularly poetical cast of diction, and a mind deeply imbued with principles of philanthropy and habits of affection: — and if there is something of *fadaise* now and then in his sentiments, and something of affectation in his style, it is no more than we can easily forgive, in consideration of his brevity, his amiableness, and variety.

The "Sketches of India," a loose-printed octavo of 350 pages, is the least interesting perhaps of the two volumes now before us — though sufficiently marked with all that is characteristic of the author. It may be as well to let him begin at the beginning.

"On the afternoon of July the 10th, 1818, our vessel dropped anchor in Madras Roads, after a fine run of three months and ten days from the Motherbank. — How changed the scene! how great the contrast! — Ryde, and its little snug dwellings, with slated or thatched roofs, its neat gardens, its green and sloping shores. — Madras and its naked fort, noble-looking buildings, tall columns, lofty verandahs, and terraced roofs. The city, large and crowded, on a flat site; a low sandy beach, and a foaming surf. The roadstead, *there*, alive with beautiful yachts, light wherries, and tight-built fishing barks. *Here*, black, shapeless Massoolah boats, with their naked crews, singing the same wild (yet not unpleasing) air, to which, for ages, the dangerous surf they fearlessly ply over has been rudely responsive.

"I shall never forget the sweet and strange sensations which, as I went peacefully forward, the new objects in nature excited in my bosom. The rich broad-leaved plantain; the gracefully drooping bamboo; the cocoa nut, with that mat-like-looking binding for every branch; the branches themselves waving with a feathery motion in the wind; the bare lofty trunk and fan leaf of the tall palm; the slender and elegant stem of the areca; the large aloes; the prickly pear; the stately banyan with drop-branches, here fibrous and pliant, there strong and columnar, supporting its giant arms, and forming around the parent stem a grove of beauty; and among these wonders, birds all strange in plumage and in note, save the parroquet (at home, the lady's pet-bird in a gilded cage), here spreading his bright green wings in

happy fearless flight, and giving his natural and untaught scream.

"It was late and dark when we reached Poonamallee; and during the latter part of our march we had heavy rain. We found no fellow-countryman to welcome us: but the mess-room was open and lighted, a table laid, and a crowd of smart roguish-looking natives, seemed waiting our arrival to seek service.—Drenched to the skin, without changes of linen, or any bedding, we sat down to the repast provided; and it would have been difficult to have found in India, perhaps, at the moment, a more cheerful party than ours.—Four or five clean-looking natives, in white dresses with red or white turbans, ear-rings of gold, or with emerald drops, and large silver signet rings on their fingers, crowded round each chair, and watched our every glance to anticipate our wishes. Curries, vegetables, and fruits, all new to us, were tasted, and pronounced upon; and after a meal, of which every one seemed to partake with grateful good humour, we lay down for the night. One attendant brought a small carpet, another a mat, others again a sheet or counterpane, till all were provided with something; and thus closed our first evening in India.—The morning scene was very ludicrous. Here, a barber, uncalled for, was shaving a man as he still lay dozing! there, another was cracking the joints of a man half dressed; here were two servants, one pouring water on, the other washing, a Saheb's hands. In spite of my efforts to prevent them, *two* well-dressed men were washing my feet; and near me was a lad dexterously putting on the clothes of a sleepy brother officer, as if he had been an infant under his care!—There was much in all this to amuse the mind, and a great deal, I confess, to pain the heart of a free-born Englishman."—*Sketches of India*, pp. 3—10.

With all this profusion of attendance, the march of a British officer in India seems a matter rather of luxury than fatigue.

"Marching in this country is certainly pleasant; although perhaps you rise too early for comfort. An hour before daybreak you mount your horse; and, travelling at an easy pace, reach your ground before the sun has any power; and find a small tent pitched with breakfast ready on the table. Your large tent follows with couch and baggage, carried by bullocks and coolies; and before nine o'clock, you may be washed, dressed, and employed with your books, pen, or pencil. Mats, made of the fragrant roots of the Cuscus grass, are hung before the doors of your tent to windward; and being constantly wetted, admit, during the hottest winds, a cool refreshing air.

"While our forefathers were clad in wolf-skin, dwelt in caverns, and lived upon the produce of the chase, the Hindoo lived as now. As now, his princes were clothed in soft raiment, wore jewelled turbans, and dwelt in palaces. As now, his haughty half-naked priests received his offerings in temples of hewn and sculptured granite, and summoned him to rites as absurd, but yet more splendid and debauching, than the present. His cottage, garments, household utensils, and implements of husbandry or labour, the same as now. Then, too, he watered the ground with his foot, by means of a plank balanced transversely on a lofty pole, or drew from the deep bowerie by the labour of his oxen, in large bags of leather, supplies of water to flow through the little channels by which their fields and gardens are intersected. His children were then taught to shape letters in the sand, and to write and keep accounts on the dried leaves of the palm, by the village schoolmaster. His wife ground corn at the same mill, or pounded it in a rude mortar with her neighbour. He could make purchases in a regular bazaar, change money at a shroff's, or borrow it at usury, for the expenses of a wedding or festival. In short, all the traveller sees around him of social or civilized life, of useful invention or luxurious refinement, is of yet higher antiquity than the days of Alexander the Great. So that, in fact, the eye of the British officer looks upon the same forms and dresses, the same buildings, manners, and customs, on which the Macedonian troops gazed with the same astonishment two thousand years ago."—*Ibid.* pp. 23—26.

If the traveller proceeds in a palanquin, his comforts are not less amply provided for.

"You generally set off after dark; and, habited in loose drawers and a dressing-gown, recline at full length and slumber away the night. If you are wakeful, you may draw back the sliding panel of a lamp fixed behind, and read. Your clothes are packed in large neat baskets, covered with green oil-cloth, and carried by palanquin boys; two pairs will contain two dozen complete changes. Your palanquin is fitted up with pockets and drawers. You can carry in it, without trouble, a writing desk and two or three books, with a few canteen conveniences for your meals,—and thus you may be comfortably provided for many hundred miles' travelling. You stop for half an hour, morning and evening, under the shade of a tree, to wash and take refreshment: throughout the day read, think, or gaze round you. The relays of bearers lie ready every ten or twelve miles; and the average of your run is about four miles an hour."—*Ibid.* pp. 218, 219.

We cannot make room for his descriptions, though excellent, of the villages, the tanks, the forests—and the dresses and deportment of the different classes of the people; but we must give this little sketch of the Elephant and Camel.

"While breakfast was getting ready, I amused myself with looking at a baggage-elephant and a few camels, which some servants, returning with a general's tents from the Deccan, were in the act of

loading. The intelligent obedience of the elephant is well known; but to look upon this huge and powerful monster kneeling down at the mere bidding of the human voice; and, when he has risen again, to see him protrude his trunk for the foot of his mahout or attendant, to help him into his seat; or, bending the joint of his hind leg, make a step for him to climb up behind; and then, if any loose cloths or cords fall off, with a dog-like docility pick them up with his proboscis and put them up again, will delight and surprise long after it ceases to be novel. When loaded, this creature broke off a large branch from the lofty tree near which he stood, and quietly fanned and fly-flapped himself, with all the nonchalance of an indolent woman of fashion, till the camels were ready. These animals also kneel to be laden. When in motion, they have a very awkward gait, and seem to travel at a much slower pace than they really do. Their tall outstretched necks, long sinewy limbs, and broad spongy feet,—their head furniture, neck-bells, and the rings in their nostrils, with their lofty loads, and a driver generally on the top of the leading one, have a strange appearance."—*Sketches of India*, pp. 46—48.

We must add the following very clear description of a Pagoda:

"A high, solid wall, encloses a large area in the form of an oblong square; at one end is the gateway, above which is raised a large pyramidal tower; its breadth at the base and height proportioned to the magnitude of the pagoda. This tower is ascended by steps in the inside, and divided into stories; the central spaces on each are open, and smaller as the tower rises. The light is seen directly through them, producing, at times, a very beautiful effect, as when a fine sky, or trees, form the background. The front, sides, and top of this gateway and tower, are crowded with sculpture; elaborate, but tasteless. A few yards from the gate, on the outside, you often see a lofty octagonal stone pillar, or a square open building, supported by tall columns of stone, with the figure of a bull couchant, sculptured as large, or much larger than life, beneath it.

"Entering the gateway, you pass into a spacious paved court, in the centre of which stands the inner temple, raised about three feet from the ground, open, and supported by numerous stone pillars. An enclosed sanctuary at the far end of this central building, contains the idol. Round the whole court runs a large deep verandah, also supported by columns of stone, the front rows of which are often shaped by the sculptor into various sacred animals rampant, rode by their respective deities. All the other parts of the pagoda, walls, basements, entablatures, are covered with imagery and ornament of all sizes, in alto or demi-relievo."

The following description and reflections among the ruins of Bijanagur, the last capital of the last Hindu empire, and finally overthrown in 1564, are characteristic of the author's most ambitious, perhaps most questionable manner.

"You cross the garden, where imprisoned beauty once strayed. You look at the elephant-stable and the remaining gateway, with a mind busied in conjuring up some associations of luxury and magnificence.—Sorrowfully I passed on. Every stone beneath my feet bore the mark of chisel, or of human skill and labour. You tread continually on steps, pavement, pillar, capital, or cornice of rude relief, displaced, or fallen, and mingled in confusion. Here, large masses of such materials have already formed bush-covered rocks,—there, pagodas are still standing entire. You may for miles trace the city walls, and can often discover, by the fallen pillars of the long piazza, where it has been adorned by streets of uncommon width. One, indeed, yet remains nearly perfect; at one end of it a few poor ryots, who contrive to cultivate some patches of rice, cotton, or sugar-cane, in detached spots near the river, have formed mud-dwellings under the piazza.

"While, with a mind thus occupied, you pass on through this wilderness, the desolating judgments on other renowned cities, so solemnly foretold, so dreadfully fulfilled, rise naturally to your recollection. I climbed the very loftiest rock at day-break, on the morrow of my first visit to the ruins, by rude and broken steps, winding between and over immense and detached masses of stone; and seated myself near a small pagoda, at the very summit. From hence I commanded the whole extent of what was once a city, described by Cæsar Frederick as twenty-four miles in circumference. Not above eight or nine pagodas are standing; but there are choultries innumerable. Fallen columns, arches, piazzas, and fragments of all shapes on every side for miles.—Can there have been streets and roads in these choked-up valleys? Has the war-horse pranced, the palfrey ambled there? Have jewelled turbans once glittered where those dew-drops now sparkle on the thick-growing bamboos? Have the delicate small feet of female dancers practised their graceful steps where that rugged and thorn-covered ruin bars up the path? Have their soft voices, and the Indian guitar, and the gold bells on their ankles, ever made music in so lone and silent a spot? They have; but other sights and other sounds have also been seen and heard among these ruins. There, near that beautiful banyan-tree, whole families, at the will of a merciless prince, have been thrown to trampling elephants, kept for a work so savage that they learn it with reluctance, and must be taught by *man*. Where those cocoas wave, once stood a vast seraglio, filled at the expense of tears and crimes; there, within that retreat of voluptuousness, have poison, or the creese, obeyed, often anticipated, the sovereign's wish. By those green banks, near which the sacred waters of the Toombudra flow, many aged parents have been carried forth and exposed to perish by those whose infancy they fostered."

The following reflections are equally just and important: —

"Nothing, perhaps, so much damps the ardour of a traveller in India, as to find that he may wander league after league, visit city after city, village after village, and still only see the outside of Indian society. The house he cannot enter, the group he cannot join, the domestic circle he cannot gaze upon, the free unrestrained converse of the natives he can never listen to. He may talk with his moonshee or his pundit; ride a few miles with a Mahometan sirdar; receive and return visits of ceremony among petty nawabs and rajahs; or be presented at a native court; but behind the scenes in India he cannot advance one step. All the natives are, in comparative rank, a few far above, the many far below him: and the bars to intercourse with Mahometans as well as Hindoos, arising from our faith, are so many, that to live upon terms of intimacy or acquaintance with them is impossible. Nay, in this particular, when our establishments were young and small, our officers few, necessarily active, necessarily linguists, and unavoidably, as well as from policy, conforming more to native manners, it is probable that more was known about the natives from practical experience than is at present, or may be again." — *Sketches of India*, pp. 213, 214.

The author first went up the country as far as Agra, visiting, and musing over, all the remarkable places in his way — and then returned through the heart of India — the country of Scindiah and the Deccan, to the Mysore. Though travelling only as a British regimental officer, and without public character of any kind, it is admirable to see with what uniform respect and attention he was treated, even by the lawless soldiery among whom he had frequently to pass. The indolent and mercenary Brahmins seem the only class of persons from whom he experienced any sort of incivility. In an early part of his route he had the good luck to fall in with Scindiah himself; and the picture he has given of that turbulent leader and his *suite* is worth preserving

"First came loose light-armed horse, either in the road, or scrambling and leaping on the rude banks and ravines near; then some better clad, with the quilted poshauk; and one in a complete suit of chain armour; then a few elephants, among them the hunting elephant of Scindiah, from which he had dismounted. On one small elephant, guiding it himself, rode a fine boy, a foundling protégé of Scindiah, called the Jungle Rajah; then came, slowly prancing, a host of fierce, haughty chieftains, on fine horses, showily caparisoned. They darted forward, and all took their proud stand behind and round us, planting their long ances on the earth, and reining up their eager steeds to see, I suppose, our salaam. Next in a common native palkee, its canopy crimson, and not adorned, came Scindiah himself. He was plainly dressed, with a reddish turban, and a shawl over his vest, and lay reclined smoking a small gilt or golden calean.

"I looked down on the chiefs under us, and saw that they eyed us most haughtily, which very much increased the effect they would otherwise have produced. They were armed with lance, scimitar and shield, creese and pistol; wore some shawls, some tissues, some plain muslin or cotton; were all much wrapped in clothing; and wore, almost all, a large fold of muslin, tied over the turban top, which they fasten under the chin; and which, strange as it may sound to those who have never seen it, looks *warlike*, and is a very important defence to the sides of the neck.

"How is it that we can have a heart-stirring sort of pleasure in gazing on brave and armed men, though we know them to be fierce, lawless, and cruel? — though we know stern ambition to be the chief feature of many warriors, who, from the cradle to the grave, seek only fame; and to which, in such as I write of, is added avarice the most pitiless? I cannot tell But I recollect often before, in my life, being thus moved. Once, especially, I stood over a gateway in France, as a prisoner, and saw file in several squadrons of gens-d'armerie d'élite, returning from the fatal field of Leipsic. They were fine, noble-looking men, with warlike helmets of steel and brass, and drooping plumes of black horse-hair; belts handsome and broad; heavy swords; were many of them decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honour. Their trumpets flourished: and I felt my heart throb with an admiring delight, which found relief only in an involuntary tear. What an inconsistent riddle is the human heart!" — *Ibid.* pp. 260 — 261.

In the interior of the country there are large tracts of waste lands, and a very scanty and unsettled population.

"On the route I took, there was only one inhabited village in fifty-five miles; the spots named for halting-places were in small valleys, green with young corn, and under cultivation, but neglected sadly. A few straw huts, blackened and beat down by rain, with rude and broken implements of husbandry lying about, and a few of those round hardened thrashing-floors tell the traveller that some wandering families, of a rude unsettled people, visit these vales at sowing time and harvest; and labour indolently at the necessary, but despised, task of the peaceful ryot." — *Ibid.* p. 300.

"I enjoyed my march through these wilds greatly. Now you wound through narrow and deeply-wooded glens; now ascended ghauts, or went down the mouths of passes; now skirted the foot of a mountain; now crossed a small plain covered with the tall jungled-grass, from which, roused by your horse tramp, the neelgaū looked upon you; then flying

with active bound, or pausing doubtful trot, joined the more distant herd. You continually cross clear sparkling rivulets, with rocky or pebbly beds; and you hear the voice of waters among all the woody hills around you. There was a sort of thrill, too, at knowing these jungles were filled with all the ferocious beasts known in India (except elephants, which are not found here), and at night, in hearing their wild roars and cries. I saw, one morning, on the side of a hill, about 500 yards from me, in an open glade near the summit, a lioness pass along, and my guide said there were many in these jungles."

We should like to have added his brilliant account of several native festivals, both Hindu and Mahometan, and his admirable descriptions of the superb monuments at Agra, and the fallen grandeur of Goa: but the extracts we have now given must suffice as specimens of the "Sketches of India"—and the length of them, indeed, we fear, will leave us less room than we could have wished for the "Scenes and Impressions in Egypt and in Italy."

This volume, which is rather larger than the other, contains more than the title promises: and embraces, indeed, the whole history of the author's peregrinations, from his embarkation at Bombay to his landing at Dover. It is better written, we think, than the former. The descriptions are better finished, the reflections bolder, and the topics more varied. There is more of poetical feeling, too, about it; and a more constant vein of allusion to subjects of interest. He left India in December 1822, in an Arab vessel for the Red Sea—and is very happy, we think, in his first sketches of the ship and the voyage.

"Our vessel was one, rude and ancient in her construction as those which, in former and successive ages, carried the rich freights of India for the Ptolemies, the Roman prefects, and the Arabian caliphs of Egypt. She had, indeed, the wheel and the compass; and our nakhoda, with a beard as black and long, and a solemnity as great as that of a magician, daily performed the miracle of taking an observation! But although these "peeping contrivances" of the Giaours have been admitted, yet they build their craft with the same clumsy insecurity, and rig them in the same inconvenient manner, as ever. Our vessel had a lofty broad stern, unmanagable in wearing; one enormous sail on a heavy yard of immense length, which was tardily hoisted by the efforts of some fifty men on a stout mast, placed a little before midships, and raking forwards; her head low, without any bowsprit; and, on the poop, a mizen uselessly small, with hardly canvass enough for a fishing-boat. Our lading was cotton, and the bales were piled up on her decks to a height at once awkward and unsafe. In short, she looked like part of a wharf, towering with bales, accidently detached from its quay, and floating on the waters."—*Scenes in Egypt*, pp. 3, 4.

He then gives a picturesque description of the crew, and the motley passengers—among whom there were some women, who were never seen or heard during the whole course of the voyage. So jealous, indeed, and complete was their seclusion, that though one of them *died* and was committed to the sea during the passage, the event was not known to the crew or passengers for several days after it had occurred. "Not even a husband entered their apartment during the voyage—because the women were mixed: an eunuch who cooked for them, alone had access."

"Abundantly, however," he adds, "was I amused in looking upon the scenes around me, and some there were not readily to be forgotten:—when, at the soft and still hour of sunset, while the full sail presses down the vessel's bows on the golden ocean-path, which swells to meet, and then sinks beneath them,—then, when these Arabs group for their evening sacrifice, bow down with their faces to the earth, and prostrate their bodies in the act of worship—when the broad āmēēn, deeply intoned from many assembled voices, strikes upon the listener's ear—the heart responds, and throbs with its own silent prayer. There is a solemnity and a decency in their worship, belonging, in its very forms, to the age and the country of the Patriarchs; and it is necessary to call to mind all that the Mohammedans are, and have been—all that their prophet taught, and that their Koran enjoins and promises, before we can look, without being strongly moved, on the Mussulman prostrate before his God."—*Ibid.* pp. 13, 14.

They land prosperously at Mocha, of which he gives rather a pleasing account, and again embark with the same fine weather for Djidda—anchoring every night under the rocky shore, and generally indulging the passengers with an hour's ramble among its solitudes. The following poetical and graphic sketch of the camel is the fruit of one of these excursions:—

"The grazing camel, at that hour when the desert reddens with the setting sun, is a fine object to the eye which seeks and feeds on the picturesque—his tall, dark form—his indolent leisurely walk—his ostrich neck, now lifted to its full height, now bent slowly, and far around, with a look of unalarmed inquiry. You cannot gaze upon him, without, by the

readiest and most natural suggestions, reverting in thought to the world's infancy — to the times and possessions of the shepherd kings, their tents and raiment, their journeyings and settlings. The scene, too, in the distance, and the hour, eventide, and the uncommon majesty of that dark, lofty, and irregular range of rocky mountain, which ends in the black cape of Ras el Askar, formed an assemblage not to be forgotten." — *Scenes in Egypt*, p. 42.

At Djidda they had an audience of the Aga, which is well described in the following short passage : —

"Rustan Aga himself was a fine-looking, haughty, martial man, with mustachios, but no beard : he wore a robe of scarlet cloth. Hussein Aga, who sat on his left, had a good profile, a long grizzled beard, with a black ribbon bound over one eye, to conceal its loss. He wore a robe of pale blue. The other person, Araby Jellauny, was an aged and a very plain man. The attendants, for the most part, wore large dark brown dresses, fashioned into the short Turkish vest or jacket, and the large, full, Turkish trowsers; their sashes were crimson, and the heavy ornamented buts of their pistols protruded from them; their crooked scimitars hung in silken cords before them; they had white turbans, large mustachios, but the cheek and chin cleanly shaven. Their complexions were in general very pale, as of men who pass their lives in confinement. They stood with their arms folded, and their eyes fixed on us. I shall never forget them. There were a dozen or more. I saw nothing like this after, not even in Egypt; for Djidda is an excellent government, both on account of its port and its vicinity to Mecca; and Rustan Aga had a large establishment, and was something of a magnifico. He has the power of life and death. A word, a sign from him, and these men, who stand before you in an attitude so respectful, with an aspect so calm, so pale, would smile — and slay you! — Here I first saw the true scribe; well robed, and dressed in turban, trowsers, and soft slipper, like one of rank among the people: his inkstand with its pen-case has the look of a weapon, and is worn like a dagger in the folds of the sash; it is of silver or brass — this was of silver. When summoned to use it, he takes some paper out of his bosom, cuts it into shape with scissors, then writes his letter by dictation, presents it for approval; it is tossed back to him with a haughty and careless air, and the ring drawn off and passed or thrown to him, to affix the seal. He does every thing on his knees, which are tucked up to serve him as a desk." — *Ibid.* pp. 47—49.

They embark, a third time, for Kosseir, and then proceed on camels across the Desert to Thebes. The following account of their progress is excellent — at once precise, picturesque, and poetical : —

"The road through the desert is most wonderful in its features: a finer cannot be imagined. It is wide, hard, firm, winding, for at least two-thirds of the way, from Kosseir to Thebes, between ranges of rocky hills, rising often perpendicularly on either side, as if they had been scarped by art; here, again, rather broken, and overhanging, as if they were the lofty banks of a mighty river, and you traversing its dry and naked bed. Now you are quite landlocked; now again you open on small valleys, and see, upon heights beyond, small square towers. It was late in the evening when we came to our ground, a sort of dry bay; sand, burning sand, with rock and cliff, rising in jagged points, all around — a spot where the waters of ocean might sleep in stillness, or, with the soft voice of their gentlest ripple, lull the storm-worn mariner. The dew of the night before had been heavy; we therefore pitched our tent, and decided on starting, in future, at a very early hour in the morning, so as to accomplish our march before noon. It was dark when we moved off, and even cold. Your camel is impatient to rise ere you are well seated on him; gives a shake, too, to warm his blood, and half dislodges you; marches rather faster than by day, and gives occasionally a hard quick stamp with his broad callous foot. Our moon was far in her wane. She rose, however, about an hour after we started, all red, above the dark hills on our left; yet higher rose, and paler grew, till at last she hung a silvery crescent in the deep blue sky.

"Who passes the desert and says all is barren, all lifeless? In the grey morning you may see the common pigeon, and the partridge, and the pigeon of the rock, alight before your very feet, and come upon the beaten camel-paths for food. They are tame, for they have not learned to fear, or to distrust the men who pass these solitudes. The camel-driver would not lift a stone to them; and the sportsman could hardly find it in his heart to kill these gentle tenants of the desert. The deer might tempt him; I saw but one; far, very far, he caught the distant camel tramp, and paused, and raised and threw back his head to listen, then away to the road instead of from it; but far ahead he crossed it, and then away up a long slope he fleetly stole, and off to some solitary spring which wells, perhaps, where no traveller, no human being, has ever trod." — *Ibid* pp. 71—74.

The emerging from this lonely route is given with equal spirit and freshness of colouring.

"It was soon after daybreak, on the morrow, just as the sun was beginning to give his rich colouring of golden yellow to the white pale sand, that as I was walking alone at some distance far ahead of my companions, my eyes bent on the ground, and lost in thought, their kind and directing shout made me stop, and raise my head, when lo! a green vale, looking through the soft mist of morning, rather a vision than a reality, lay stretched in its narrow length before me. *The land of Egypt!* We hurried panting on

and gazed, and were silent. In an hour we reached the village of Hejazi, situated on the very edge of the Desert. We alighted at a cool, clean serai, having its inner room, with a large and small bath for the Mussulman's ablutions, its kiblah in the wall, and a large brimming water-trough in front for the thirsting camel. We walked forth into the fields, saw luxuriant crops of green bearded wheat, waving with its lights and shadows; stood under the shade of trees, saw fluttering and chirping birds; went down to a well and a water-wheel, and stood, like children, listening to the sound of the abundant and bright-flashing water, as it fell from the circling pots; and marked all around, scattered individually or in small groups, many people in the fields, oxen and asses grazing, and camels too among them."—*Scenes in Egypt*, pp. 80, 81.

All this, however, is inferior to his first eloquent account of the gigantic ruins of Luxore, and the emotions to which they gave rise. We know nothing, indeed, better, in its way, than most of the following passages:—

"Before the grand entrance of this vast edifice, which consists of many separate structures, formerly united in one harmonious design, two lofty obelisks stand proudly pointing to the sky, fair as the daring sculptor left them. The sacred figures and hieroglyphic characters which adorn them, are cut beautifully into the hard granite, and have the sharp finish of yesterday. The very stone looks not discoloured. You see them, as Cambyses saw them, when he stayed his chariot wheels to gaze up at them, and the Persian war-cry ceased before these acknowledged symbols of the sacred element of fire.—Behind them are two colossal figures, in part concealed by the sand; as is the bottom of a choked-up gateway, the base of a massive propylon, and, indeed, their own.—Very noble are all these remains; and on the propylon is a war-scene, much spoken of; but my eyes were continually attracted to the aspiring obelisks, and again and again you turn to look at them, with increasing wonder and silent admiration."—*Ibid.* pp. 86, 87.

"With a quick-beating heart, and steps rapid as my thoughts, I strode away, took the path to the village of Karnac, skirted it, and passing over loose sand, and, among a few scattered date trees, I found myself in the grand alley of the sphinxes, and directly opposite that noble gateway, which has been called triumphal; certainly triumph never passed under one more lofty, or, to my eye, of a more imposing magnificence. On the bold curve of its beautifully projecting cornice, a globe, coloured as of fire, stretches forth long over-shadowing wings of the very brightest azure.—This wondrous and giant portal stands well; alone, detached a little way from the mass of the great ruins, with no columns, walls, or propylæa immediately near. I walked slowly up to it, through the long lines of sphinxes which lay couchant on either side of the broad road (once paved), as they were marshalled by him who planned these princely structures—we know not when. They are of a stone less durable than granite: their general forms are fully preserved, but the detail of execution is, in most of them, worn away.—In those forms, in that couched posture, in the decaying, shapeless heads, the huge worn paws, the little image between them, and the sacred *tau* grasped in its crossed hands, there is something which disturbs you with a sense of awe. In the locality you cannot err; you are on a highway to a heathen temple; one that the Roman came, as you come, to visit and admire, and the Greek before him. And you know that priest and king, lord and slave, the festival throng and the solitary worshipper, trod for centuries where you do: and you know that there has been the crowding flight of the vanquished towards their sanctuary and last hold, and the quick trampling of armed pursuers, and the neighing of the war-horse, and the voice of the trumpet, and the shout, as of a king, among them, all on this silent spot! And you see before you, and on all sides, ruins!—the stones which formed wells and square temple-towers thrown down in vast heaps; or still, in large masses, erect as the builder placed them, and where their material has been fine, their surfaces and corners smooth, sharp, and uninjured by time. They are neither grey nor blackened; like the bones of man, they seem to whiten under the sun of the desert. Here is no lichen, no moss, no rank grass or mantling ivy, no wall-flower or wild fig-tree to robe them, and to conceal their deformities, and bloom above them. No;—all is the nakedness of desolation—the colossal skeleton of a giant fabric standing in the unwatered sand, in solitude and silence."

This we think is very fine and beautiful: but what follows is still better; and gives a clearer, as well as a deeper impression, of the true character and effect of these stupendous remains, than all the drawings and descriptions of Denon and his Egyptian Institute.

"There are no ruins like these ruins. In the first court you pass into you find one large, lofty, solitary column, erected among heaped and scattered fragments, which had formed a colonnade of one-and-twenty like it. You pause awhile, and then move slowly on. You enter a wide portal, and find yourself surrounded by one hundred and fifty columns*, on which I defy any man, sage or savage, to look unmoved. Their vast proportions the better taste of after days rejected and disused; but the still astonishment, the serious gaze, the thickening breath of the awed traveller, are tributes of an admiration not to be checked or frozen by the chilling *rules* of taste.

"We passed the entire day in these ruins; each wandering about alone, as inclination led him. De-

* The central row have the enormous diameter of eleven French feet, the others that of eight.

tailed descriptions I cannot give; I have neither the skill or the patience to count and to measure. I ascended a wing of the great propylon on the west, and sat there long. *I crept round the colossal statues!* I seated myself on a fallen obelisk, and gazed up at the three, yet standing erect amid huge fragments of fallen granite. I sauntered slowly round every part, examining the paintings and hieroglyphics, and listening now and then, not without a smile, to our polite little *cicerone*, as with the air of a condescending *savant*, he pointed to many of the symbols, saying 'this means water,' and 'that means land,' 'this stability,' 'that life,' and 'here is the name of Berenice.'"—*Scenes in Egypt*, pp. 83—92.

"From hence we bade our guide conduct us to some catacombs; he did so, in the naked hill just above. Some are passages, some pits; but, in general, passages in the side of the hill. Here and there you may find a bit of the rock or clay, smoothed and painted, or bearing the mark of a thin fallen coating of composition; but, for the most part, they are quite plain. Bones, rags, and the scattered limbs of skeletons, which have been torn from their coffins, stripped of their grave-clothes, and robbed of the sacred scrolls placed with them in the tomb, lie in or around these 'open sepulchres.' We found nothing; but surely the *very rag* blown to your feet is a relic. May it not have been woven by some damsel under the shade of trees, with the song that lightens labour, twenty centuries ago? or may it not have been carried with a sigh to the tiring-men of the temple by one who brought it to swathe the cold and stiffened limbs of a being loved in life, and mourned and honoured in his death? Yes, it is a relic; and one musing on which a warm fancy might find wherewithal to beguile a long and solitary walk."—*Ibid.* pp. 100, 101.

"We then returned across the plain to our boat, passing and pausing before the celebrated sitting statues so often described. They are seated on thrones, looking to the east, and on the Nile; in this posture they are upwards of fifty feet in height; and their bodies, limbs, and heads, are large, spreading, and disproportioned. These are very awful monuments. They bear the form of man; and there is a something in their very posture which touches the soul: there they sit erect, calm: they have seen generation upon generation swept away, and still their stony gaze is fixed on man toiling and perishing at their feet! 'Twas late and dark ere we reached our home. The day following we again crossed to the western bank, and rode through a narrow hot valley in the Desert, to the tombs of the kings. Your Arab catches at the head of your ass in a wild dreary-looking spot, about five miles from the river, and motions you to alight. On every side of you rise low, but steep hills, of the most barren appearance, covered with loose and crumbling stones, and you stand in a narrow bridle-path, which seems to be the bottom of a natural ravine; you would fancy that you had lost your way; but your guide leads you a few paces forward, and you discover in the side of the hill an opening like the shaft of a mine. At the entrance, you observe that the rock, which is a close-grained, but soft stone, has been cut smooth and painted. He lights your wax torch, and you pass into a long corridor. On either side are small apartments which you stoop down to enter, and the walls of which you find covered with paintings: scenes of life faithfully represented; of *every-day life*, its pleasures, and labours; the instruments of its happiness, and of its crimes! You turn to each other with a delight, not however unmixed with sadness, to mark how much the days of men then passed, as they do to this very hour. You see the labours of agriculture—the sower, the basket, the plough, the steers; and the artist has playfully depicted a calf skipping among the furrows. You have the making of bread, the cooking for a feast; you have a flower-garden, and a scene of irrigation; you see couches, sofas, chairs, and arm-chairs, such as might, this day, adorn a drawing-room in London or Paris; you have vases of every form down to the *common jug* (ay! such as the brown one of Toby Philpot); you have harps, with figures bending over them, and others seated and listening; you have barks, with large, curious, and many-coloured sails; lastly, you have weapons of war, the sword, the dagger, the bow, the arrow, the quiver, spears, helmets, and dresses of honour.—The other scenes on the walls represent processions and mysteries, and all the apartments are covered with them or hieroglyphics. There is a small chamber with the cow of Isis, and there is one large room in an *unfinished* state,—designs chalked off, that were to have been completed on that to-morrow which never came!"—*Ibid.* pp. 104—109.

But we must hurry on. We cannot afford to make an abstract of this book, and indeed can find room but for a few more specimens. He meets with a *Scotch* Mameluke at Cairo; and is taken by Mr. Salt to the presence of Ali Pacha. He visits the pyramids of course, describes rapidly and well the whole process of the visit—and thus moralizes the conclusion:—

"He who has stood on the summit of the most ancient, and yet the most mighty monument of his power and pride ever raised by man, and has looked out and round to the far horizon, where Lybia and Arabia lie silent, and hath seen, at his feet, *the land of Egypt* dividing their dark solitudes with a narrow vale, beautiful and green, the mere enamelled setting of one solitary shining river, must receive impressions which he can never convey, for he cannot define them to himself.

"They are the tombs of Cheops and Cephrenes, says the Grecian. They are the tombs of Seth and Enoch, says the wild and imaginative Arabian; an English traveller, with a mind warmed, perhaps, and misled by his heart, tells you that the large pyramid *may* have contained the ashes of the patriarch Joseph.

It is all this which constitutes the very charm of a visit to these ancient monuments. You smile, and your smile is followed and reproved by a sigh. One thing *you* know — that the chief, and the philosopher and the poet of the times of old, men 'who mark fields as they pass with their own mighty names,' have certainly been here; that Alexander has spurred his war-horse to its base; and Pythagoras, with naked foot, has probably stood upon its summit."—*Scenes in Egypt*, pp. 158, 159.

Cairo is described in great detail, and frequently with great feeling and eloquence. He saw a *live* cameleopard there—very beautiful and gentle. One of his most characteristic sketches, however, is that of the female slave market.

"We stopped before the gate of a large building, and, turning, entered a court of no great size, with a range of apartments all round; open doors showed that they were dark and wretched. At them, or before them, stood or sat small groups of female slaves; also from within these chambers, you might catch the moving eyes and white teeth of those who shunned the light. There was a gallery above with other rooms, and slave girls leaning on the rail—laughter, all laughter! — their long hair in numerous falling curls, white with fat; their faces, arms, and bosoms shining with grease. Exposure in the market is the moment of their joy. Their cots, their country, the breast that gave them suck, the hand that led their tottering steps not forgotten, but resigned, given up, as things gone for ever, left in another world. The toils and terrors of the wide desert, the hard and scanty fare, the swollen foot, the whip, the scalding tear, the curse; all, all are behind: hope meets them again here; and paints some master kind; some mistress gentle; some babe or child to win the heart of; — as bond-women they may bear a son, and live and die the contented inmates of some quiet harem."—*Ibid.* pp. 178, 179.

He does not think much of Ali's new Institute—though he was assured by one of the tutors that its pupils were to be taught "every thing!" We have learned, from unquestionable authority, that from this *every thing*, all that relates to Politics, Religion, and Philosophy, is expressly excluded; and that little is proposed to be taught but the elements of the useful arts. There is a scanty library of European books, almost all French, — the most conspicuous backed, "Victoires des Français;" — and besides these, "Les Liaisons Dangereuses!" — only *one* book in English, though not ill-chosen — "Malcolm's Persia." He was detained at Alexandria in a time of plague — and, after all, was obliged to return, when four days at sea, to land two sick men, and perform a new quarantine of observation.

There is an admirable description of Valetta, and the whole island — and then of Syracuse and Catania; but we can give only the night ascent to Ætna — and that rather for the scene of the Sicilian cottage, than for the sketch of the mighty mountain: —

"It was near ten o'clock when the youth who led the way stopped before a small dark cottage in a by-lane of Nicolosi, the guide's he said it was, and hailed them. The door was opened; a light struck; and the family was roused, and collected round me; a grey-headed old peasant and his wife; two hardy, plain, dark young men, brothers (one of whom was in his holiday gear, new breeches, and red garters, and flowered waistcoat, and clean shirt, and shining buttons); a girl of sixteen, handsome; a 'mountain-girl beaten with winds,' looking curious, yet fearless and 'chaste as the hardened rock on which she dwelt;' and a boy of twelve, an unconscious figure in the group, fast slumbering in his clothes on the hard floor. Glad were they of the dollar-bringing stranger, but surprised at the excellenza's fancy for coming at that hour; cheerfully, however, the gay youth stripped off his holiday-garb, and put on a dirty shirt and thick brown clothes, and took his cloak and went to borrow a mule (for I found, by their consultation, that there was some trick, this not being the regular privileged guide family). During his absence the girl brought me a draught of wine, and all stood round with welcoming and flattering laughings, and speeches in Sicilian, which I did not understand, but which gave me pleasure, and made me look on their dirty and crowded cottage as one I had rather trust to, if I knocked at it even without a dollar, than the lordliest mansion of the richest noble in Sicily.

"For about four miles, your mule stumbles along safely over a bed of lava, lying in masses on the road; then you enter the woody region; the wood is open, of oaks, not large, yet good-sized trees, growing amid fern; and, lastly, you come out on a soft barren soil, and pursue the ascent till you find a glistering white crust of snow of no depth, cracking under your mule's tread; soon after, you arrive at a stone cottage, called Casa Inglese, of which my guide had not got the key; here you dismount, and we tied up our mules close by, and scrambling over huge blocks of lava, and up the toilsome and slippery ascent of the cone, I sat me down on ground all hot, and smoking with sulphureous vapour, which has for the first few minutes the effect of making your eyes smart, and water; of oppressing and taking away your breath. It yet wanted half an hour to the break of day, and I wrapped my cloak close round me to guard me from the keen air, which came up over the white cape of snow that lay spread at the foot of the smoking cone where I was seated.

"The earliest dawn gave to my view the awful crater, with its two deep mouths, from one whereof there issued large volumes of thick white smoke, pressing up in closely crowding clouds; and all around, you saw the earth loose, and with crisped, yellow-mouthed small cracks, up which came little, light, thin wreaths of smoke that soon dissipated in the upper air, &c.—And when you turn to gaze downwards, and see the golden sun come up in light and majesty to bless the waking millions of your fellows, and the dun vapours of the night roll off below, and capes, and hills, and towns, and the wide ocean are seen as through a thin unearthly veil; your eyes fill, and your heart swells; all the blessings you enjoy, all the innocent pleasures you find in your wanderings, that preservation, which, in storm, and in battle, and mid the pestilence, was mercifully given to your half-breathed prayer, all rush in a moment on your soul."—*Scenes in Egypt, &c.*, pp. 253—257.

The following brief sketch of the rustic auberges of Sicily is worth preserving, as well as the sentiment with which it closes:—

"The chambers of these rude inns would please, at first, any one. Three or four beds (mere planks upon iron trestles), with broad, yellow-striped, coarse mattresses, turned up on them; a table and chairs of wood, blackened by age, and of forms belonging to the past century; a daub or two of a picture, and two or three coloured prints of Madonnas and saints: a coarse table cloth, and coarser napkin; a thin blue-tinted drinking glass; dishes and plates of a striped, dirty-coloured, pimply ware; and a brass lamp with three mouths, a shape common to Delhi, Cairo, and Madrid, and as ancient as the time of the Etruscans themselves.

"To me it had another charm; it brought Spain before me, the peasant and his cot, and my chance billets among that loved and injured people. Ah! I will not dwell on it; but this only I will venture to say, they err greatly, grossly, who fancy that the Spaniard, the most patiently brave and resolutely persevering man, as a man, on the continent of Europe, will wear long any yoke he feels galling and detestable."—*Ibid.* pp. 268, 269.

The picture of Naples is striking; and reminds us in many places of Mad. de Staël's splendid sketches from the same subjects in Corrinne. But we must draw to a close now with our extracts; and shall add but one or two more, peculiarly characteristic of the gentle mind and English virtues of the author.

"I next went into the library, a noble room, and a vast collection. I should much like to have seen those things which are shown here, especially the handwriting of Tasso. I was led as far, and into the apartment where they are shown. I found priests reading, and men looking as if they were learned. I was confused at the creaking of my boots; I gave the hesitating look of a wish, but I ended by a blush, bowed, and retired. I passed again into the larger apartment, and I felt composed as I looked around. Why life, thought I, would be too short for any human being to read these folios; but yet, if safe from the pedant's frown, one could have a vast library to range in, there is little doubt that, with a love of truth, and a thirsting for knowledge, the man of middle age, who regretted his early closed lexicon, might open it again with delight and profit. While thus musing, in stamped two travellers,—my countrymen, my bold, brave countrymen — not intellectual, I could have sworn, or Lavater is a cheat —

'Pride is their port, defiance in their eye:' —

They strode across to confront the doctors, and demanded to see those sights to which the book directed, and the grinning *domestique de place* led them. I envied them, and yet was angry with them; however, I soon bethought me, such are the men who are often sterling characters, true hearts. They will find no seduction in a southern sun! but back to the English girl they love best, to be liked by her softer nature the better for having seen Italy, and taught by her gentleness to speak about it pleasingly, and prize what they have seen! — Such are the men whom our poor men like, — who are generous masters and honest voters, faithful husbands and kind fathers; who, if they make us smiled at abroad in peace, make us feared in war, and any one of whom is worth to his country far more than a dozen mere sentimental wanderers."—*Ibid.* pp. 296—298.

"Always on quitting the museum it is a relief to drive somewhere, that you may relieve the mind and refresh the sight with a view of earth and ocean. The view from the Belvedere, in the garden of St. Martino, close to the fortress of St. Elmo, is said to be unequalled in the world. I was walking along the cloister to it, when I heard voices behind me, and saw an English family — father, mother, with daughter and son, of drawing-room and university ages. I turned aside that I might not intrude on them, and went to take my gaze when they came away from the little balcony. I saw no features; but the dress, the gentle talking, and the quietude of their whole manner, gave me great pleasure. A happy domestic English family! parents travelling to delight, improve, and *protect* their children; younger ones at home perhaps, who will sit next summer on the shady lawn, and listen as Italy is talked over, and look at prints, and turn over a sister's sketch-book, and beg a brother's journal. Magically varied is the grandeur of the scene — the pleasant city; its broad bay; a little sea that knows no storms; its garden neighbourhood; its famed Vesuvius, not looking either vast, or dark, or dreadful — all bright and smiling, garmented with vineyards below, and its brow barren, yet not without a hue of that ashen or slaty blueness which improves a mountain's aspect; and far behind, stretched in their full bold forms, the shadowy Apen-

nines. Gaze and go back, English! Naples, with all its beauties and its pleasures, its treasury of ruins, and recollections, and fair works of art; its soft music and balmy airs cannot make *you* happy; may gratify the gaze of taste, but never suit the habits of your mind. There are many homeless solitary Englishmen who might sojourn longer in such scenes, and be soothed by them; but to become dwellers, settled residents, would be, even for them, impossible." — *Scenes in Egypt, &c.*, pp. 301—303.

We must break off here — though there is much temptation to go on. But we have now shown enough of these volumes to enable our readers to judge safely of their character — and it would be unfair, perhaps, to steal more from their pages. We think we have extracted impartially; and are sensible, at all events, that we have given specimens of the faults as well as the beauties of the author's style. His taste in writing certainly is not unexceptionable. He is seldom quite simple or natural, and sometimes very *fade* and affected. He has little bits of inversions in his sentences, and small exclamations and ends of ordinary verse dangling about them, which we often wish away — and he talks rather too much of himself, and his ignorance, and humility, while he is turning those fine sentences, and laying traps for our applause. But, in spite of all these things, the books are very interesting and instructive; and their merits greatly outweigh their defects. If the author has occasional failures, he has frequent felicities; — and, independent of the many beautiful and brilliant passages which he has furnished for our delight, has contrived to breathe over all his work a spirit of kindliness and contentment, which, if it does not minister (as it ought) to our improvement, must at least disarm our censure of all bitterness.

WARBURTON.

(January, 1809.)

Letters from a late eminent Prelate to one of his Friends 4to. pp. 380. Kidderminster: 1808.

Warburton, we think, was the last of our *Great* Divines — the last, perhaps, of any profession, among us, who united profound learning with great powers of understanding, and, along with vast and varied stores of acquired knowledge, possessed energy of mind enough to wield them with ease and activity. The days of the Cudworths and Barrows — the Hookers and Taylors, are long gone by. Among the other divisions of intellectual labour to which the progress of society has given birth, the business of reasoning, and the business of collecting knowledge, have been, in a great measure, put into separate hands. Our scholars are now little else than pedants, and antiquaries, and grammarians, — who have never exercised any faculty but memory; and our reasoners are, for the most part, but slenderly provided with learning; or, at any rate, make but a slender use of it in their reasonings. Of the two, the reasoners are by far the best off; and, upon many subjects, have really profited by the separation. Argument from authority is, in general, the weakest and the most tedious of all arguments; and learning, we are inclined to believe, has more frequently played the part of a bully than of a fair auxiliary; and been oftener used to frighten people than to convince them, — to dazzle and overawe, rather than to guide and enlighten. A modern writer would not, if he could, reason as Barrow and Cudworth often reason; and every reader, even of Warburton, must have felt that his learning often encumbers rather than assists his progress, and, like shining armour, adds more to his terrors than to his strength. The true theory of this separation may be, therefore, that scholars who are capable of reasoning, have ceased to make a parade of their scholarship; while those who have nothing else must continue to set it forward — just as gentlemen now-a-days keep their gold in their pockets, instead of wearing it on their clothes — while the fashion of laced suits still prevails among their domestics. There are individuals, however, who still think that a man of rank looks most dignified in cut velvet and embroidery, and that one who is not a gentleman can now counterfeit that appearance a little too easily. We do not presume to settle so weighty a dispute; — we only take the liberty of observing, that Warburton lived to see the fashion go out; and was almost the last native gentleman who appeared in a full trimmed coat.

He was not only the last of our reasoning scholars, but the last also, we think, of our

powerful polemics. This breed too, we take it, is extinct; — and we are not sorry for it. Those men cannot be much regretted, who, instead of applying their great and active faculties in making their fellows better or wiser, or in promoting mutual kindness and cordiality among all the virtuous and enlightened, wasted their days in wrangling upon idle theories; and in applying, to the speculative errors of their equals in talents and in virtue, those terms of angry reprobation which should be reserved for vice and malignity. In neither of these characters, therefore, can we seriously lament that Warburton is not likely to have any successor.

The truth is, that this extraordinary person was a Giant in literature — with many of the vices of the Gigantic character. Strong as he was, his excessive pride and overweening vanity were perpetually engaging him in enterprises which he could not accomplish; while such was his intolerable arrogance towards his opponents, and his insolence towards those whom he reckoned as his inferiors, that he made himself very generally and deservedly odious, and ended by doing considerable injury to all the causes which he undertook to support. The novelty and the boldness of his manner — the resentment of his antagonists — and the consternation of his friends, insured him a considerable share of public attention at the beginning: but such was the repulsion of his moral qualities as a writer, and the fundamental unsoundness of most of his speculations, that he no sooner ceased to write, than he ceased to be read or inquired after, — and lived to see those erudite volumes fairly laid on the shelf, which he fondly expected to carry down a growing fame to posterity.

The history of Warburton, indeed, is uncommonly curious, and his fate instructive. He was bred an attorney at Newark; and probably derived, from his early practice in that capacity, that love of controversy, and that habit of scurrility, for which he was afterwards distinguished. His first literary associates were some of the heroes of the Dunciad; and his first literary adventure the publication of some poems, which well entitled him to a place among those worthies. He helped "pilfering Tibbalds" to some notes upon Shakspeare; and spoke contemptuously of Mr. Pope's talents, and severely of his morals, in his letters to Concannen. He then hired his pen to prepare a volume on the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery; and having now entered the church, made a more successful endeavour to magnify his profession, and to attract notice to himself by the publication of his once famous book on "the Alliance between Church and State," in which all the presumption and ambition of his nature was first made manifest.

By this time, however, he seems to have passed over from the party of the Dunces to that of Pope; and proclaimed his conversion pretty abruptly, by writing an elaborate defence of the Essay on Man, from some imputations which had been thrown on its theology and morality. Pope received the services of this voluntary champion with great gratitude; and Warburton having now discovered that he was not only a great poet, but a very honest man, continued to cultivate his friendship with great assiduity, and with very notable success: for Pope introduced him to Mr. Murray, who made him preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and to Mr. Allen of Prior Park, who gave him his niece in marriage, — obtained a bishoprick for him, — and left him his whole estate. In the mean time, he published his "Divine Legation of Moses," — the most learned, most arrogant, and most absurd work, which had been produced in England for a century: — and his editions of Pope and of Shakspeare, in which he was scarcely less outrageous and fantastical. He replied to some of his answerers in a style full of insolence and brutal scurrility; and not only poured out the most tremendous abuse on the infidelities of Bolingbroke and Hume, but found occasion also to quarrel with Drs. Middleton, Lowth, Jortin, Leland, and indeed almost every name distinguished for piety and learning in England. At the same time, he indited the most highflown adulation to Lord Chesterfield, and contrived to keep himself in the good graces of Lord Mansfield and Lord Hardwicke; — while in the midst of affluence and honours, he was continually exclaiming against the barbarity of the age in rewarding genius so frugally, and in not calling in the aid of the civil magistrate to put down fanaticism and infidelity. The public, however, at last, grew weary of these blustering novelties. The bishop, as

old age stole upon him, began to doze in his mitre; and though Dr. Richard Hurd, with the true spirit of an underling, persisted in keeping up the petty traffic of reciprocal encomiums, yet Warburton was lost to the public long before he sunk into dotage, and lay dead as an author for many years of his natural existence.

We have imputed this rapid decline of his reputation, partly to the unsoundness of his general speculations, and chiefly to the offensiveness of his manner. The fact is admitted even by those who pretend to regret it; and, whatever Dr. Hurd may have thought, it must have had other causes than the decay of public virtue and taste.

In fact, when we look quietly and soberly over the vehement and imposing treatises of Warburton, it is scarcely possible not to perceive, that almost every thing that is original in his doctrine or propositions is erroneous; and that his great gifts of learning and argumentation have been bestowed on a vain attempt to give currency to untenable paradoxes. His powers and his skill in controversy may indeed conceal, from a careless reader, the radical fallacy of his reasoning; and as, in the course of the argument, he frequently has the better of his adversaries upon incidental and collateral topics, and never fails to make his triumph resound over the whole field of battle, it is easy to understand how he should, for a while, have got the credit of a victory, which is now generally adjudged to his opponents. The object of "the Divine Legation," for instance, is to prove that the mission of Moses was certainly from God, — because his system is the only one which does *not* teach the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments! And the object of "the Alliance" is to show, that the Church (that is, as he explains it, all the adherents of the Church of England) is entitled to a legal *establishment*, and the protection of a *test-law*, — because it constitutes *a separate society* from that which is concerned in the civil government, and, being equally sovereign and independent, is therefore entitled to treat with it on a footing of perfect equality. The sixth book of Virgil, we are assured, in the same peremptory manner, contains merely the description of the mysteries of Eleusis; and the badness of the New Testament Greek is a conclusive proof both of the eloquence and the inspiration of its authors. These fancies, it appears to us, require no refutation; and, dazzled and astonished as we are at the rich and variegated tissue of learning and argument with which their author has invested their extravagance, we conceive that no man of a sound and plain understanding can ever mistake them for truths, or waver in the least degree, from the conviction which his own reflection must afford of their intrinsic absurdity.

The case is very nearly the same with his subordinate general propositions; which, in so far as they are original, are all brought forward with the parade of great discoveries, and yet appear to us among the most futile and erroneous of modern speculations. We are tempted to mention two, which we think we have seen referred to by later writers with some degree of approbation, and which, at any rate, make a capital figure in all the fundamental philosophy of Warburton. The one relates to the necessary imperfection of human laws, as dealing in Punishments only, and not in Rewards also. The other concerns his notion of the ultimate foundation of moral Obligation.

The very basis of his argument for the necessity of the doctrine of a future state to the well-being of society, is, that, by human laws, the conduct of men is only controlled by the fear of punishment, and not excited by the hope of reward. *Both* these sanctions, however, he contends, are necessary to regulate our actions, and keep the world in order; and, therefore, legislators, not finding rewards in this world, have always been obliged to connect it with a future world, in which they have held out that they would be bestowed on all deservers. It is scarcely possible, we believe, to put this most important doctrine on a more injudicious foundation; and if this were the only ground either for believing or inculcating the doctrine of a future state, we should tremble at the advantages which the infidel would have in the contest. We shall not detain our readers longer, than just to point out three obvious fallacies in this, the most vaunted and confident, perhaps, of all the Warburtonian dogmata. In the *first* place, it is obvious that *disorders* in society can scarcely be said to be prevented by the hope of future rewards: the

proper use of that doctrine being, not to repress vice, but to console affliction. Vice and disorder can only be quelled by the dread of future punishment — whether in this world or the next; while it is obvious that the despondency and distress which may be soothed by the prospect of future bliss, are not *disorders* within the purview of the legislator. In the *second* place, it is obviously not true that human laws are *necessarily* deficient in the article of providing rewards. In many instances, their enactments have this direct object; and it is obvious, that if it was thought essential to the well-being of society, they *might* reward quite as often as they punish. But, in the *third* place, the whole argument proceeds upon a gross and unaccountable misapprehension of the nature and object of legislation; — a very brief explanation of which will show, both that the temporal rewards of virtue are just as sure as the temporal punishments of vice, and at the same time explain why the law has so seldom interfered to enforce the former. The law arose from human feelings and notions of justice; and those feelings and notions were, of course, before the law, which only came in aid of their deficiency. The natural and necessary effect of kind and virtuous conduct is, to excite love, gratitude, and benevolence; — the effect of injury and vice is to excite resentment, anger, and revenge. While there was no law and no magistrate, men must have acted upon those feelings, and acted upon them in their whole extent. He who rendered kindness, received kindness; and he who inflicted pain and suffering, was sooner or later overtaken by retorted pain and suffering. Virtue *was rewarded* therefore, and vice punished, at all times; and both, we must suppose, in the same measure and degree. The reward of virtue, however, produced no disturbance or disorder; and, after society submitted to regulation, was very safely left in the hands of gratitude and sympathetic kindness. But it was far otherwise with the punishment of vice. Resentment and revenge tended always to a dangerous excess, — were liable to be assumed as the pretext for unprovoked aggression, — and, at all events, had a tendency to reproduce revenge and resentment, in an interminable series of violence and outrage. The law, therefore, took *this* duty into its own hands. It did not invent, or impose for the first time, that sanction of punishment, which was coeval with vice and with society, and is implied, indeed, in the very notion of injury: — it only transferred the right of applying it from the injured individual to the public; and tempered its application by more impartial and extensive views of the circumstances of the delinquency. But if the punishment of vice be not ultimately derived from law, neither is the reward of virtue; and although human passions made it necessary for law to undertake the regulation of that punishment, it evidently would not add to its perfection, to make it also the distributer of rewards; unless it could be shown, that a similar disorder was likely to arise from leaving these to the individuals affected. It is obvious, however, not only that there is no likelihood of such a disorder, but that such an interference would be absurd and impracticable. It is true, therefore, that human laws do in general provide punishments only, and not rewards; but it is not true that they are, on this account, imperfect or defective; or that human conduct is not actually regulated by the love of happiness, as much as by the dread of suffering. The doctrine of a future state adds, no doubt, prodigiously to *both* these motives; but it is a rash, a presumptuous, and, we think, a most shortsighted and narrow view of the case, to suppose, that it is chiefly the impossibility of rewarding virtue on Earth, that has led legislators to secure the peace of society, by referring it for its recompense to Heaven.

The other dogma to which we alluded, is advanced with equal confidence and pretension; and is, if possible, still more shallow and erroneous. Speculative moralists had been formerly contented with referring moral obligation, either to a moral sense, or to a perception of utility; — Warburton, without much ceremony, put both these together: but his grand discovery is, that even this tie is not strong enough; and that the idea of moral obligation is altogether incomplete and imperfect, unless it be made to rest also on *the Will of a Superior*. There is no point in all his philosophy, of which he is more vain than of this pretended discovery; and he speaks of it, we are persuaded, twenty times, without once suspecting the gross fallacy which it in-

volves. The fallacy is not, however, in stating an erroneous proposition — for it is certainly true, that the command of a superior will generally constitute an obligation: it lies altogether in supposing that this is a separate or additional ground of obligation, — and in not seeing that this vaunted discovery of *a third* principle for the foundation of morality, was in fact nothing but an individual instance or exemplification of the principle of utility.

Why are we bound by the will of a superior? — evidently for no other reason, than because superiority implies a *power* to affect our *happiness;* and the expression of will assures us, that our happiness will be affected by our disobedience. An obligation is something which constrains or induces us to act; — but there neither is nor can be any other motive for the actions of rational and sentient beings, than the love of happiness. It is the desire of happiness — well or ill understood — seen widely or narrowly, — that necessarily dictates all our actions, and is at the bottom of all our conceptions of morality or duty: and the will of a superior can only constitute a ground of obligation, by connecting itself with this single and universal agent. If it were possible to disjoin the idea of our own happiness or suffering from the idea of a superior, it is obvious, that we should no longer be under any obligation to conform to the will of that superior. If we should be equally secure of happiness — in mind and in body — in time and in eternity, by disobeying his will, as by complying with it, it is evidently altogether inconceivable, that the expression of that will should impose any obligation upon us: and although it be true that we cannot suppose such a case, it is not the less a fallacy to represent the will of a superior as a third and additional ground of obligation, newly discovered by this author, and superadded to the old principle of a regard to happiness or utility. We take these instances of the general unsoundness of all Warburton's peculiar doctrines, from topics on which he is generally supposed to have been less extravagant than on any other. Those who wish to know his feats in criticism, may be referred to the Canons of Mr. Edwards; and those who admire the originality of his Dissertation on the Mysteries, are recommended to look into the *Eleusis* of *Meursius.*

Speculations like these could never be popular; and were not likely to attract the attention, even of the studious, longer than their novelty, and the glare of erudition and originality which was thrown around them, protected them from deliberate consideration. But the real cause of the public alienation from the works of this writer, is undoubtedly to be found in the revolting arrogance of his general manner, and the offensive coarseness of his controversial invectives. These, we think, must be confessed to be somewhat worse than mere error in reasoning, or extravagance in theory. They are not only offences of the first magnitude against good taste and good manners, but are likely to be attended with pernicious consequences in matters of much higher importance. Though we are not disposed to doubt of the sincerity of this reverend person's abhorrence for vice and infidelity, we are seriously of opinion, that his writings have been substantially prejudicial to the cause of religion and morality; and that it is fortunate for both, that they have now fallen into general oblivion.

They have produced, in the first place, all the mischief of a conspicuous, and, in some sense, a successful example of genius and learning, associated with insolence, intolerance, and habitual contumely and outrage. All men who are engaged in controversy are apt enough to be abusive and insulting, — and clergymen, perhaps, rather more apt than others. It is an intellectual warfare, in which, as in other wars, it is *natural,* we suspect, to be ferocious, unjust, and unsparing: but experience and civilization have tempered this vehemence, by gentler and more generous maxims, — and introduced a law of honourable hostility, by which the fiercer elements of our nature are mastered and controlled. No greater evil, perhaps, can be imagined, than the violation of this law from any quarter of influence and reputation; — yet the Warburtonians may be said to have used their best endeavours to introduce the use of poisoned weapons, and to abolish the practice of giving quarter, in the fields of controversy. Fortunately, their example has not been generally followed; and the sect itself, though graced with mitres, and

other trophies of worldly success, has perished, we think, in consequence of the experiment.

A second, and perhaps a still more formidable mischief, arose from the discredit which was brought on the priesthood, and indeed upon religion in general, by this interchange of opprobrious and insulting accusations among its ministers. If the abuse was justifiable, then the church itself gave shelter to folly and wickedness, at least as great as was to be found under the banners of infidelity; — if it was not justifiable, then it was apparent that abuse by those holy men was no proof of demerit in those against whom it was directed; and the unbelievers, of course, were furnished with an objection to the sincerity of those invectives of which they themselves were the objects.

This applies to those indecent expressions of violence and contempt, in which Warburton and his followers were accustomed to indulge, when speaking of their Christian and clerical opponents. But the greatest evil of all, we think, arose from the intemperance, coarseness, and acrimony of their remarks, even on those who were enemies to revelation. There is, in all well-constituted minds, a natural feeling of indulgence towards those errors of opinion, to which, from the infirmity of human reason, all men are liable, and of compassion for those whose errors have endangered their happiness. It must be the natural tendency of all candid and liberal persons, therefore, to regard unbelievers with pity, and to reason with them with mildness and forbearance. Infidel writers, we conceive, may generally be allowed to be actual unbelievers; for it is difficult to imagine what other motive than a sincere persuasion of the truth of their opinions, could induce them to become objects of horror to the respectable part of any community, by their disclosure. From what vices of the heart, or from what defects in the understanding, their unbelief may have originated, it may not always be easy to determine; but it seems obvious that, for the unbelief itself, they are rather to be pitied than reviled; and that the most effectual way of persuading the public that their opinions are refuted out of a regard to human happiness, is to treat their authors (whose happiness is most in danger) with some small degree of liberality and gentleness. It is also pretty generally taken for granted, that a very angry disputant is usually in the wrong; that it is not a sign of much confidence in the argument, to take advantage of the unpopularity or legal danger of the opposite doctrine; and that, when an unsuccessful and unfair attempt is made to discredit the general ability or personal worth of an antagonist, no great reliance is understood to be placed on the argument by which he may be lawfully opposed.

It is needless to apply these observations to the case of the Warburtonian controversies. There is no man, we believe, however he may be convinced of the fallacy and danger of the principles maintained by Lord Bolingbroke, by Voltaire, or by Hume, who has not felt indignation and disgust at the brutal violence, the affected contempt, and the flagrant unfairness with which they are treated by this learned author, — who has not, for a moment, taken part with them against so ferocious and insulting an opponent, and wished for the mortification and chastisement of the advocate, even while impressed with the greatest veneration for the cause. We contemplate this scene of orthodox fury, in short, with something of the same emotions with which we should see a heretic subjected to the torture, or a freethinker led out to the stake by a zealous inquisitor. If this, however, be the effect of such illiberal violence, even on those whose principles are settled, and whose faith is confirmed by habit and reflection, the consequences must obviously be still more pernicious for those whose notions of religion are still unformed and immature, and whose minds are open to all plausible and liberal impressions. Take the case, for instance, of a young man who has been delighted with the eloquence of Bolingbroke, and the sagacity and ingenuity of Hume; — who knows, moreover, that the one lived in intimacy with Pope, and Swift, and Atterbury, and almost all the worthy and eminent persons of his time; — and that the other was the cordial friend of Robertson and Blair, and was irreproachably correct and amiable in every relation of life; — and who, perceiving with alarm the tendency of some of their speculations, applies to Warburton for an antidote to the poison he may have imbibed. In Warburton he will then

read, that Bolingbroke was a paltry driveller —Voltaire a pitiable scoundrel — and Hume a puny dialectician, who ought to have been set on the pillory, and whose heart was as base and corrupt as his understanding was contemptible! Now, what, we would ask any man of common candour and observation, is the effect likely to be produced on the mind of any ingenuous and able young man by this style of confutation? Infallibly to make him take part with the reviled and insulted literati, — to throw aside the right reverend confuter with contempt and disgust, — and most probably to conceive a fatal prejudice against the cause of religion itself — thus unhappily associated with coarse and ignoble scurrility. He must know to a certainty, in the first place, that *the contempt* of the orthodox champion is either affected, or proceeds from most gross ignorance and incapacity; — since the abilities of the reviled writers is proved, not only by his own feeling and experience, but by the suffrage of the public and of all men of intelligence. He must think, in the second place, that the imputations of their *moral worth* are false and calumnious, both from the fact of their long friendship with the purest and most exalted characters of their age, and from the obvious irrelevancy of this topic in a fair refutation of their errors; — and then, applying the ordinary maxims by which we judge of a disputant's cause, from his temper and his fairness, he disables both the judgment and the candour of his instructor, and conceives a strong prejudice in favour of the cause which has been attacked in a manner so unwarrantable.

We have had occasion, oftener than once, to trace an effect like this, from this fierce and overbearing aspect of orthodoxy; — and we appeal to the judgment of all our readers, whether it be not the very effect which it is calculated to produce on all youthful minds of any considerable strength and originality. It is to such persons, however, and to such only, that the refutation of infidel writers ought to be addressed. There is no need to write books against Hume and Voltaire for the use of the learned and orthodox part of the English clergy. Such works are necessarily supposed to be intended for the benefit of young persons, who have either contracted some partiality for those seductive writers, or are otherwise in danger of being misled by them. It is to be presumed, therefore, that they know and admire their real excellencies; — and it might consequently be inferred, that they will not listen with peculiar complacency to a refutation of their errors, which sets out with a torrent of illiberal and unjust abuse of their talents and characters.

We are convinced, therefore, that the bullying and abusive tone of the Warburtonian school, even in its contention with infidels, has done more harm to the cause of religion, and alienated more youthful and aspiring minds from the true faith, than any other error into which zeal has ever betrayed orthodoxy. It may afford a sort of vindictive delight to the zealots who stand in no need of the instruction of which it should be the vehicle; but it will, to a certainty, revolt and disgust all those to whom that instruction was necessary, — enlist all the generous feelings of their nature on the side of infidelity, — and make piety and reason itself appear like prejudice and bigotry. We think it fortunate, therefore, upon the whole, that the controversial writings of Warburton have already passed into oblivion, — since, even if we thought more highly than we do of the substantial merit of his arguments, we should still be of opinion that they were likely to do more mischief than the greater part of the sophistries which it was their professed object to counteract and discredit.

These desultory observations have carried us so completely away from the book, by the title of which they were suggested, that we have forgotten to announce to our readers, that it contains a series of familiar letters, addressed by Warburton to Doctor (afterwards Bishop) Hurd, from the year 1749, when their acquaintance commenced, down to 177[illegible] when the increasing infirmities of the former put a stop to the correspondence. Some little use was made of these letters in the life of his friend, which Bishop Hurd published, after a very long delay, in 1794; but the treasure was hoarded up, in the main, till the death of that prelate; soon after which, the present volume was prepared for publication, in obedience to the following intimation prefixed to the original collection, and now printed in the front of the book: —

"These letters give so true a picture of the writer's character, and are, besides, so worthy of him in all respects, (I mean, if the reader can forgive the playfulness of his wit in some instances, and the partiality of his friendship in many more,) that, in honour of his memory, I would have them published after my death, and the profits arising from the sale of them, applied to the benefit of the Worcester Infirmary."

The tenor of this note, as well as the name and the memory of Warburton, excited in us no small curiosity to peruse the collection; and, for a moment, we entertained a hope of finding this intractable and usurping author softened down, in the gentler relations of private life, to something of a more amiable and engaging form; and when we found his right reverend correspondent speaking of the playfulness of his wit, and the partiality of his friendships, we almost persuaded ourselves, that we should find, in these letters, not only many traits of domestic tenderness and cordiality, but also some expressions of regret for the asperities with which, in the heat and the elation of controversy, he had insulted all who were opposed to him. It seemed natural, too, to expect that along with the confessions of an author's vanity, we should meet with some reflections on his own good fortune, and some expressions of contentment and gratitude for the honours and dignities which had been heaped upon him. In all this, however, we have been painfully disappointed. The arrogance and irritability of Warburton was never more conspicuous than in these Letters, — nor his intolerance of opposition, and his preposterous estimate of his own merit and importance. There is some wit — good and bad — scattered through them; and diverse fragments of criticism: but the staple of the correspondence is his own praise, and that of his friend, whom he magnifies and exalts, indeed, in a way that is very diverting. To him, and his other dependants and admirers, and their patrons, he is kind and complimentary to excess; but all the rest of the world he regards with contempt and indifference. The age is a good age, or a bad age, according as it applauds or neglects the Divine Legation and the Commentary on Horace. Those who write against these works are knaves and drivellers,—and will meet with their reward in the contempt of another generation, and the tortures of another world! Bishoprics and Chancellorships, on the other hand, are too little for those who extol or defend them; — and Government is reviled for leaving the press open to Bolingbroke, and tacitly blamed for not setting Mr. Hume on the pillory.

The natural connection of the subject with the general remarks which we have already premised, leads us to begin our extracts with a few specimens of that savage asperity towards Christians and Philosophers, upon which we have felt ourselves called on to pass so decided a sentence of reprobation. In a letter, dated in 1749, we have the following passage about Mr. Hume: —

"I am strongly tempted, too, to have a stroke at Hume in parting. He is the author of a little book, called Philosophical Essays; in one part of which he argues against the being of a God, and in another (very needlessly you will say) against the possibility of miracles. *He has crowned the liberty of the Press.* And yet he has a considerable post under the government! I have a great mind to do justice on his arguments against miracles, which I think might be done in few words. But does he deserve notice? Is he known amongst you? Pray answer me these questions; for if his own weight keeps him down, *I should be sorry to contribute to his advancement — to any place but the Pillory.*" — P. 11.

In another place, he is pleased to say, under date of 1757, when Mr. Hume's reputation for goodness, as well as genius, was fully established: —

"There is an epidemic madness amongst us; today we burn with the feverish heat of Superstition; to-morrow we stand fixed and frozen in Atheism. Expect to hear that the churches are all crowded next Friday; and that on Saturday they buy up Hume's new Essays; the first of which (and please you) is *The Natural History of Religion*, for which I will trim the rogue's jacket, at least sit upon his skirts, as you will see when you come hither, and find his margins scribbled over. In a word, the Essay is to establish an Atheistic naturalism, like Bolingbroke; and he goes upon one of B.'s capital arguments, that Idolatry and Polytheism were before the worship of the one God. It is full of absurdities; and here I come in with him; for *they show themselves knaves:* but, as you well observe, to do their business, is to show them *fools.* They say this man has several moral qualities. It may be so. But there are vices of the mind as well as body; *and a Wickeder Heart, and more determined to do public Mischief, I think I never knew.*" — P. 175.

It is natural and very edifying, after all this, to find him expressing the most unmea-

sured contempt, even for the historical works of this author, and gravely telling his beloved friend, who was hammering out a puny dialogue on the English constitution, "As to Hume's History, you need not fear being forestalled by a thousand *such* writers. But the fear was natural, as I have often felt, and as often experienced to be absurd!" We really were not aware, either that this *History* was generally looked upon as an irreligious publication; or that there was reason to suspect that Dr. Robertson had no warm side to religion, more than his friend. Both these things, however, may be learned from the following short paragraph: —

"Hume has outdone himself in this new history, in showing his contempt of religion. This is one of those proof charges which Arbuthnot speaks of in his treatise of *political lying*, to try how much the public will bear. *If this history be well received, I shall conclude that there is even an end of all pretence to religion.* But I should think it will not: because I fancy the good reception of Robertson's proceeded from the *decency* of it."—P. 207.

The following is the liberal commentary which this Christian divine makes upon Mr. Hume's treatment of Rousseau: —

"It is a truth easily discoverable from his writings, that Hume could have but one motive in bringing him over (for he was under the protection of Lord Mareshal) and *that was, cherishing a man whose writings were as mischievous to society as his own.* The merits of the two philosophers are soon adjusted. There is an immense distance between their natural genius: none at all in *their excessive vanity;* and much again in their good faith. Rousseau's warmth has made him act the madman in his philosophical inquiries, so that he oft saw not the mischief which he did: *Hume's coldness made him not only see but rejoice in his.* But it is neither parts nor logic that has made either of them philosophers, but *Infidelity* only. For which, to be sure, they both equally deserve a PENSION."—Pp. 286, 287.

After all this, it can surprise us very little to hear him call Voltaire *a scoundrel* and *a liar;* and, in the bitterness of his heart, qualify Smollett by the name of "a vagabond Scot, who wrote nonsense," — because people had bought 10,000 copies of his History, while the Divine Legation began to lie heavy on the shelves of his bookseller. It may be worth while, however, to see how this orthodox prelate speaks of the church and of churchmen. The following short passage will give the reader some light upon the subject; and also serve to exemplify the bombastic adulation which the reverend correspondents interchanged with each other, and the coarse but robust wit by which Warburton was certainly distinguished.

"You were made for higher things: and my greatest pleasure is, that you give me a hint you are impatient to pursue them. What will not such a capacity and such a pen do, either to shame or to improve a miserable age! The church, like the Ark of Noah, is worth saving; not for the sake of *the unclean beasts and vermin that almost filled it,* and probably made most noise and clamour in it, but for the little corner of rationality, that was as much distressed by the stink within, as by the tempest without."—Pp. 83, 84.

In another place, he says, "I am serious upon it. I am afraid that both you and I shall outlive common sense, as well as learning, in our reverend brotherhood;" and afterwards complains, that he has laboured all his life to support the cause of the clergy, and been repaid with nothing but ingratitude. In the close of another letter on the same subject, he says, with a presumption which the event has already made half ridiculous, and half melancholy, "Are not you and I finely employed? — but, *Serimus arbores, alteri quæ seculo prosunt.*"

But these are only general expressions, arising, perhaps, from spleen or casual irritation. Let us inquire how he speaks of individuals. It would be enough, perhaps, to say, that except a Dr. Balguy, we do not remember his saying any thing respectful of a single clergyman throughout the whole volume. The following is a pretty good specimen of the treatment which was reserved for such of them as dared to express their dissent from his paradoxes and fancies: —

"What could make that important blockhead (you know whom) preach against me at St. James's? He never met me at Court, or at Powis or Newcastle-House. And what was it to him, whether the Jews had a future life? *It might be well for such as him, if the Christians had none neither!* Nor, *I dare say, does he much trouble himself about the matter,* while he stands foremost amongst you, in the new *Land of Promise;* which, however, to the mortification of these modern Jews, is a little distant from that of *performance.*"—P. 65.

Now, this is not said in jest, but in fierce anger and resentment; and really affords as

wonderful a picture of the temper and liberality of a Christian divine, as some of the disputes among the grammarians do of the irritability of a mere man of letters. The contempt, indeed, with which he speaks of his answerers, who were in general learned divines, is equally keen and cutting with that which he evinces towards Hume and Bolingbroke. He himself knew ten thousand faults in his work; but *they* have never found *one* of them. Nobody has ever answered him yet, but at their own expense; and some poor man whom he mentions "must share in the silent contempt with which I treat my answerers." This is his ordinary style in those *playful* and affectionate letters. Of known and celebrated individuals, he talks in the same tone of disgusting arrogance and animosity. Dr. Lowth, the learned and venerable Bishop of London, had occasion to complain of some misrepresentations in Warburton's writings, relating to the memory of his father; and, after some amicable correspondence, stated the matter to the public in a short and temperate pamphlet. Here is the manner in which he is treated for it in this Episcopal correspondence:—

"All you say about Lowth's pamphlet breathes the purest spirit of friendship. His *wit* and his *reasoning*, *God knows*, *and I also* (as a certain critic said once in a matter of the like great importance), are much below the qualities that deserve those names. But the strangest thing of all, is *this man's boldness* in publishing my letters without my leave or knowledge. I remember several long letters passed between us. And I remember you saw the letters. But I have so totally forgot the contents, that I am at a loss for the meaning of these words.

"In a word, you are right.—If he expected an answer, he will certainly find himself disappointed: though I believe I could make as good sport with this *Devil of a vice, for the public diversion*, as ever was made with him, in the old *Moralities*."—Pp. 273, 274.

Among the many able men who thought themselves called upon to expose his errors and fantasies, two of the most distinguished were Jortin and Leland. Dr. Jortin had objected to Warburton's theory of the Sixth Æneid; and Dr. Leland to his notion of the Eloquence of the Evangelists; and both with great respect and moderation. Warburton would not, or could not answer;—but his faithful esquire was at hand; and two anonymous pamphlets from the pen of Dr. Richard Hurd, were sent forth, to extol Warburton, and his paradoxes, beyond the level of a mortal; to accuse Jortin of envy, and to convict Leland of ignorance and error. Leland answered for himself; and, in the opinion of all the world, completely demolished his antagonist. Jortin contented himself with laughing at the weak and elaborate irony of the Bishop's anonymous champion, and with wondering at his talent for perversion. Hurd never owned either of these malignant pamphlets;—and in the life of his friend, no notice whatever was taken of this inglorious controversy. What would have been better forgotten, however, for their joint reputation, is injudiciously brought back to notice in the volume now before us;—and Warburton is proved by his letters to have entered fully into all the paltry keenness of his correspondent, and to have indulged a feeling of the most rancorous hostility towards both these excellent and accomplished men. In one of his letters he says, "I will not tell you how much I am obliged to you for this *correction* of Leland. I have desired Colonel Harvey to get it reprinted in Dublin, which I think but a proper return for Leland's favour in London." We hear nothing more, however, on this subject, after the publication of Dr. Leland's reply.

With regard to Jortin, again, he says, "Next to the pleasure of seeing myself so finely praised, is the satisfaction I take in seeing Jortin mortified. I know to what degree it will do it; and he deserves to be mortified. One thing I in good earnest resented for its baseness," &c. In another place, he talks of his "mean, low, and ungrateful conduct;" and adds, "Jortin is as vain as he is dirty, to imagine that I am obliged to him," &c. And, after a good deal more about his "mean, low envy," "the rancour of his heart," his "self-importance," and other good qualities, he speaks in this way of his death,—

"I see by the papers that Jortin is dead. His overrating his abilities, and the public's underrating them, made *so gloomy a temper eat*, as the ancients expressed it, *his own heart*. If his death distresses his own family, I shall be heartily sorry for *this accident of mortality*. If not, *there is no loss—even to himself!*"—P. 340.

That the reader may judge how far controversial rancour has here distorted the features

of an adversary, we add part of an admirable character of Dr. Jortin, drawn by one who had good occasion to know him, as it appeared in a work in which keenness, candour, and erudition are very singularly blended. "He had a heart which never disgraced the powers of his understanding. With a lively imagination and an elegant taste, he united the artless and amiable negligence of a schoolboy. Wit without ill-nature, and sense without effort, he could, at will, scatter on every subject; and, in every book, the writer presents us with a near and distinct view of the man. He had too much discernment to confound difference of opinion with malignity or dulness; and too much candour to insult where he could not persuade. He carried with him into every subject which he explored, a solid greatness of soul, which could spare an inferior, though in the offensive form of an adversary, and endure an equal, with or without the sacred name of a friend." *

Dr. Middleton, too, had happened to differ from some of Warburton's opinions on the origin of Popish ceremonies; and accordingly he is very charitably represented as having *renounced his religion* in a pet, on account of the discourtesy of his brethren in the church. It is on an occasion no less serious and touching, than the immediate prospect of this learned man's death, who had once been his friend, that he gives vent to this liberal imputation:

"Had he had, *I will not say piety*, but greatness of mind enough not to suffer the pretended injuries of some churchmen to *prejudice him against religion*, I should love him living, and honour his memory when dead. But, good God! that man, for the discourtesies done him by his miserable fellow-creatures, should be *content to divest himself of the true viaticum*, the comfort, the solace, the asylum, &c. &c. is perfectly astonishing. I believe no one (all things considered) has suffered more from the low and vile passions of the high and low amongst our brethren than myself. Yet, God forbid," &c. — Pp. 40, 41.

When divines of the Church of England are spoken of in this manner, it may be supposed that Dissenters and Laymen do not meet with any better treatment. Priestley, accordingly, is called "a wretched fellow;" and Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, in spite of considerable temptations to the contrary, had spoken with great respect of him, both in his preface to Shakspeare and in his notes, is thus rewarded by the meek and modest ecclesiastic for his forbearance:

"The remarks he makes in every page on my commentaries, are *full of insolence* and *malignant reflections*, which, had they not in them as much *folly* as *malignity*, I should have had reason to be offended with. As it is, I think myself obliged to him in thus setting before the public so many of *my* notes with *his* remarks upon them; for, though I have no great opinion of that trifling part of the public, which pretends to judge of this part of literature, in which boys and girls decide, yet *I think nobody can be mistaken in this comparison*; though I think their thoughts have never yet extended thus far as to reflect, that to discover the corruption in an author's text, and by a happy sagacity to restore it to sense, is no easy task: but when the discovery is made, then to cavil at the conjecture, to propose an equivalent, and *defend nonsense*, by producing, out of the thick darkness it occasions, a weak and faint glimmering of sense (which has been the business of *this Editor* throughout) is the *easiest*, as well as *dullest* of all literary efforts." — Pp. 272, 273.

It is irksome transcribing more of these insolent and vindictive personalities; and we believe we have already extracted enough, to satisfy our readers as to the probable effect of this publication, in giving the world a just impression of the amiable, playful, and affectionate character of this learned prelate. It is scarcely necessary, for this purpose, to refer to any of his pathetic lamentations over his own age, as a "*barbarous* age," an "*impious* age," and "a *dark* age," — to quote his murmurs at the ingratitude with which his own labours had been rewarded; or, indeed, to do more than transcribe his sage and magnanimous resolution, in the year 1768, "to begin to live *for himself* — having already lived for others longer than they had deserved of him." This worthy and philanthropic person had by this time preached and written himself into a bishopric and a fine estate; and, at the same time, indulged himself in every sort of violence and scurrility against those from whose opinions he dissented. In these circumstances, we really are not aware either how he could have lived more for himself, or less for others, than he had been all along doing. But we leave now the painful task of commenting upon this book, as a memorial of his character; and

* See preface to *Two Tracts* by a Warburtonian, p. 194.

gladly turn to those parts of it, from which our readers may derive more unmingled amusement.

The wit which it contains is generally strong and coarse, with a certain mixture of profanity which does not always seem to consort well with the episcopal character. There are some allusions to the Lady of Babylon, which we dare not quote in our Presbyterian pages. The reader, however, may take the following:—

"Poor Job! It was his eternal fate to be persecuted by his friends. His three comforters passed sentence of condemnation upon him; and he has been executing *in effigie* ever since. He was first bound to the stake by a long catena of Greek Fathers; then tortured by Pineda; then strangled by Caryl; and afterwards cut up by Westley, and anatomised by Garnet. Pray don't reckon me amongst his hangmen. I only acted the tender part of his wife, and was for making short work with him! But he was ordained, I think, by a fate like that of Prometheus, to lie still upon his dunghill, and have his brains sucked out by owls. One Hodges, a head of Oxford, now threatens us with a new *Auto de Fè*."—P. 22.

We have already quoted one assimilation of the Church to the Ark of Noah. This idea is pursued in the following passage, which is perfectly characteristic of the force, the vulgarity, and the mannerism of Warburton's writing:—

"You mention Noah's Ark. I have really forgot what I said of it. But I suppose I compared the Church to it, as many a grave divine has done before me.—The rabbins make the giant Gog or Magog contemporary with Noah, and convinced by his preaching; so that he was disposed to take the benefit of the ark. But here lay the distress; it by no means suited his dimensions. Therefore, as he could not enter in, he contented himself to ride upon it astride. And though you must suppose that, in that stormy weather, he was more than half-boots over, he kept his seat and dismounted safely, when the ark landed on Mount Ararat. Image now to yourself this illustrious Cavalier mounted on his *hackney*: and see if it does not bring before you the Church, bestrid by some lumpish minister of state, who turns and winds it at his pleasure. The only difference is, that Gog believed the preacher of righteousness and religion."—Pp. 87, 88.

The following is in a broader and more ambitious style,—yet still peculiar and forcible. After recommending a tour round St. James's Park, as far more instructive than the grand tour, he proceeds,—

"This is enough for any one who only wants to study men for his use. But if our aspiring friend would go higher, and study human nature, in and for itself, he must take a much larger tour than that of Europe. He must first go and catch her undressed, nay, quite naked, in North America, and at the Cape of Good Hope. He may then examine how she appears cramped, contracted, and buttoned close up in the strait tunic of law and custom, as in China and Japan; or spread out, and enlarged above her common size, in the long and flowing robe of enthusiasm amongst the Arabs and Saracens; or, lastly, as she flutters in the old rags of worn-out policy and civil government, and almost ready to run back naked to the deserts, as on the Mediterranean coast of Africa. These, tell him, are the grand scenes for the true philosopher, for the citizen of the world, to contemplate. The *Tour of Europe* is like the entertainment that Plutarch speaks of, which Pompey's host of Epirus gave him. There were many dishes, and they had a seeming variety; but when he came to examine them narrowly, he found them all made out of one hog, and indeed nothing but *pork* differently disguised.

"Indeed I perfectly agree with you, that a scholar by profession, who knows how to employ his time in his study, for the benefit of mankind, would be more than fantastical, he would be mad, to go rambling round Europe, though his fortune would permit him. For to travel with profit, must be when his faculties are at the height, his studies matured, and all his reading fresh in his head. But to waste a considerable space of time, at such a period of life, is worse than suicide. Yet, for all this, the knowledge of human nature (the only knowledge, in the largest sense of it, worth a wise man's concern or care) can never be well acquired without seeing it under all its disguises and distortions, arising from absurd governments and monstrous religions, in every quarter of the globe. Therefore, I think a collection of the best voyages no despicable part of a philosopher's library. Perhaps there will be found more dross in this sort of literature, even when selected most carefully, than in any other. But no matter for that; such a collection will contain a great and solid treasure."—Pp. 111, 112.

These, we think, are favourable specimens of wit, and of power of writing. The bad jokes, however, rather preponderate. There is one brought in, with much formality, about his suspicions of *the dunces* having stolen *the lead* off the roof of his coachhouse; and two or three absurd little anecdotes, which seem to have no pretensions to pleasantry—but that they are narratives, and have no serious meaning.

To pass from wit, however, to more serious matters, we find, in this volume, some very striking proofs of the extent and diligence of this author's miscellaneous reading, particularly in the lists and characters of the authors

to whom he refers his friends as authorities for a history of the English constitution. In this part of his dialogues, indeed, it appears that Hurd has derived the whole of his learning, and most of his opinions, from Warburton. The following remarks on the continuation of Clarendon's History are good and liberal: —

"Besides that business, and age, and misfortunes had perhaps sunk his spirit, the *Continuation* is not so properly the history of the first six years of Charles the Second, as an anxious apology for the share himself had in the administration. This has hurt the composition in several respects. Amongst others, he could not, with decency, allow his pen that scope in his delineation of the chief characters of the court who were all his personal enemies, as he had done in that of the enemies to the King and monarchy in the grand rebellion. The endeavour to keep up a show of candour, and especially to prevent the appearance of a rancorous resentment, has deadened his colouring very much, besides that it made him sparing in the use of it; else, his inimitable pencil had attempted, at least, to do justice to Bennet, to Berkley, to Coventry, to the nightly cabal of facetious memory, to the Lady, and, if his excessive loyalty had not intervened, to his infamous master himself. With all this, I am apt to think there may still be something of what I said of the nature of the subject. Exquisite virtue and enormous vice afford a fine field for the historian's genius. And hence Livy and Tacitus are, in their way, perhaps equally entertaining. But the little intrigues of a selfish court, *about carrying, or defeating this or that measure, about displacing this and bringing in that minister,* which interest no body very much but the parties concerned, can hardly be made very striking by any ability of the relator. If Cardinal de Retz has succeeded, his scene was busier, and of another nature from that of Lord Clarendon."—P. 217.

His account of Tillotson seems also to be fair and judicious.

"As to the Archbishop, he was certainly a virtuous, pious, humane, and moderate man; which last quality was a kind of rarity in those times. I think the sermons published in his lifetime are fine moral discourses. They bear, indeed, the character of their author, — simple, elegant, candid, clear, and rational. No orator, in the Greek and Roman sense of the word, like Taylor; nor a discourser, in their sense, like Barrow; — free from their irregularities, but not able to reach their heights; on which account I prefer them infinitely to him. You cannot sleep with Taylor; you cannot forbear thinking with Barrow; but you may be much at your ease in the midst of a long lecture from Tillotson, clear, and rational, and equable as he is. Perhaps the last quality may account for it." — Pp. 93, 94.

The following observations on the conduct of the comic drama were thrown out for Mr. Hurd's use, while composing his treatise. We think they deserve to be quoted, for their clearness and justness: —

"As those intricate Spanish plots have been in use, and have taken both with us and with some French writers for the stage, and have much hindered the main end of Comedy, would it not be worth while to give them a word, as it would tend to the further illustration of your subject? On which you might observe, that when these unnatural plots are used, the mind is not only entirely drawn off from the characters by those surprising turns and revolutions, but characters have no opportunity even of being *called out* and displaying themselves; for the actors of all characters *succeed* and are *embarrassed* alike, when the instruments for carrying on designs are only *perplexed apartments, dark entries, disguised habits, and ladders of ropes.* The comic plot is, and must indeed be, carried on by *deceit.* The Spanish scene does it by deceiving the man *through his senses;* — Terence and Moliere, by deceiving him *through his passions and affections.* And this is the right way; for the character is *not* called out under the first species of deceit, — under the second the character does *all.*" — P. 57.

There are a few of Bishop Hurd's own letters in this collection; and as we suppose they were selected with a view to do honour to his memory, we think it our duty to lay one of them at least before our readers. Warburton had slipped in his garden and hurt his arm, whereupon thus inditeth the obsequious Dr. Hurd: —

"I thank God that I can now, with some assurance, congratulate with myself on the prospect of your Lordship's safe and speedy recovery from your *sad disaster.*

"Mrs. Warburton's last letter was a cordial to me; and, as the ceasing of intense pain, so this abatement of the fears I have been tormented with for three or four days past, gives *a certain alacrity to my spirits,* of which your Lordship may *look* to feel the effects in a long letter!

"And now, supposing, as I trust I may do, that your Lordship will be in no great pain when you receive this letter, I am tempted to begin, as friends usually do when such accidents *befal,* with my reprehensions rather than condolence. I have often wondered why your Lordship should *not use a cane* in your walks! which might *haply* have prevented this misfortune; especially considering that Heaven, I suppose, the better to keep its sons in some sort of equality, has thought fit to make your outward sight by many degrees less perfect than your inward. Even I, a young and stout son of the church, rarely

trust my firm steps into my garden, without some support of this kind! How improvident, then, was it in a father of the church to commit his unsteadfast footing to this hazard!" &c. — P. 251.

There are many pages written with the same vigour of sentiment and expression, and in the same tone of manly independence.

We have little more to say of this curious volume. Like all Warburton's writings, it bears marks of a powerful understanding and an active fancy. As a memorial of his personal character, it must be allowed to be at least faithful and impartial; for it makes us acquainted with his faults at least, as distinctly as with his excellences; and gives, indeed, the most conspicuous place to the former. It has few of the charms, however, of a collection of letters; — no anecdotes — no traits of simplicity or artless affection; — nothing of the softness, grace, or negligence of Cowper's correspondence — and little of the lightness or the elegant prattlement of Pope's or Lady Mary Wortley's. The writers always appear busy, and even laborious persons, — and persons who hate many people, and despise many more. — But they neither appear very happy, nor very amiable; and, at the end of the book, have excited no other interest in the reader, than as the authors of their respective publications.

LORD CHARLEMONT.

(November, 1811.)

Memoirs of the Political and Private Life of James Caulfield, Earl of Charlemont, Knight of St. Patrick, &c. &c. By Francis Hardy, Esq., Member of the House of Commons in the three last Parliaments of Ireland. 4to. pp. 436. London: 1810.*

This is the life of a Gentleman, written by a Gentleman; — and, considering the tenor of many of our late biographies, this of itself is no slight recommendation. But it is, moreover, the life of one who stood foremost in the political history of Ireland for fifty years preceding her Union, — that is, for the whole period during which Ireland had a history or politics of her own — written by one who was a witness and a sharer in the scene, — a man of fair talents and liberal views, — and distinguished, beyond all writers on recent politics that we have yet met with, for the handsome and indulgent terms in which he speaks of his political opponents. The work is enlivened, too, with various anecdotes and fragments of the correspondence of persons eminent for talents, learning, and political services in both countries; and with a great number of characters, sketched with a very powerful, though somewhat too favourable hand, of almost all who distinguished themselves, during this momentous period, on the scene of Irish affairs.

From what we have now said, the reader will conclude that we think very favourably of this book: and we do think it both entertaining and instructive. But (for there is always a *but* in a Reviewer's praises) it has also its faults and imperfections; and these, alas! so great and so many, that it requires all the good nature we can catch by sympathy from the author, not to treat him now and then with a terrible and exemplary severity. He seems, in the first place, to have begun and ended his book, without ever forming an idea of the distinction between private and public history; and sometimes tells us stories about Lord Charlemont, and about people who were merely among his accidental acquaintance, far too long to find a place even in a biographical memoir; — and sometimes enlarges upon matters of general history, with which Lord Charlemont has no other connexion, than that they happened during his life, with a minuteness which would not be tolerated in a professed annalist. The biography again is broken, not only by large patches of historical matter, but by miscellaneous reflections, and anecdotes of all manner of persons; while, in the historical part, he successively makes the most unreasonable presumptions on the reader's knowledge, his ignorance, and his curiosity, — overlaying him, at one time, with anxious and uninteresting details, and, at another, omitting even such general and summary notices of the progress of events as are necessary to connect his occasional narratives and reflections.

* I reprint only those parts of this paper which relate to the personal history of Lord Charlemont, and some of his contemporaries: — with the exception of one brief reference to the revolution of 1782, which I retain chiefly to introduce a remarkable letter of Mr. Fox's on the formation and principles of the new government of that year.

The most conspicuous and extraordinary of his irregularities, however, is that of his style; — which touches upon all the extremes of composition, almost in every page, or every paragraph; — or rather, is entirely made up of those extremes, without ever resting for an instant in a medium, or affording any pause for softening the effects of its contrasts and transitions. Sometimes, and indeed most frequently, it is familiar, loose, and colloquial, beyond the common pitch of serious conversation; at other times by far too figurative, rhetorical, and ambitious, for the sober tone of history. The whole work indeed bears more resemblance to the animated and versatile *talk* of a man of generous feelings and excitable imagination, than the mature production of an author who had diligently corrected his manuscript for the press, with the fear of the public before his eyes. There is a spirit about the work, however,—independent of the spirit of candour and indulgence of which we have already spoken, — which redeems many of its faults; and, looking upon it in the light of a memoir by an intelligent contemporary, rather than a regular history or profound dissertation, we think that its value will not be injured by a comparison with any work of this description that has been recently offered to the public.

The part of the work which relates to Lord Charlemont individually,—though by no means the least interesting, at least in its adjuncts and digressions, — may be digested into a short summary. He was born in Ireland in 1728; and received a private education, under a succession of preceptors, of various merit and assiduity. In 1746 he went abroad, without having been either at a public school or an university; and yet appears to have been earlier distinguished, both for scholarship and polite manners, than most of the ingenuous youths that are turned out by these celebrated seminaries. He remained on the Continent no less than nine years; in the course of which, he extended his travels to Greece, Turkey, and Egypt; and formed an intimate and friendly acquaintance with the celebrated David Hume, whom he met both at Turin and Paris — the President Montesquieu — the Marchese Maffei — Cardinal Albani — Lord Rockingham — the Duc de Nivernois — and various other eminent persons. He had rather a dislike to the French national character; though he admired their literature, and the general politeness of their manners.

In 1755 he returned to his native country, at the age of twenty-eight; an object of interest and respect to all parties, and to all individuals of consequence in the kingdom. His intimacy with Lord John Cavendish naturally disposed him to be on a good footing with his brother, who was then Lord Lieutenant; and "the outset of his politics," as he has himself observed, "gave reason to suppose that his life would be much more courtly than it proved to be." The first scene of profligacy and court intrigue, however, which he witnessed, determined him to act a more manly part — "to be a Freeman," as Mr. Hardy says, "in the purest sense of the word, opposing the court or the people indiscriminately, whenever he saw them adopting erroneous or mischievous opinions." To this resolution, his biographer adds, that he had the virtue and firmness to adhere; and the consequence was, that he was uniformly in opposition to the court for the long remainder of his life!

Though very regular in his attendance on the Irish Parliament, he always had a house in London, where he passed a good part of the winter, till 1773; when feelings of patriotism and duty induced him to transfer his residence almost entirely to Ireland. The polish of his manners, however, and the kindness of his disposition, — his taste for literature and the arts, and the unsuspected purity and firmness of his political principles, had before this time secured him the friendship of almost all the distinguished men who adorned England at this period. With Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Beauclerk — Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Sir William Chalmers — and many others of a similar character — he was always particularly intimate. During the Lieutenancy of the Earl of Northumberland, in 1772, he was, without any solicitation, advanced to the dignity of an Earl; and was very much distinguished and consulted during the short period of the Rockingham administration; — though neither at that time, nor at any other, invested with any official situation. In 1768 he married; and in 1780 he was chosen General of the Irish Volunteers, and conducted himself in that delicate and most important

command, with a degree of temper and judgment, liberality and firmness, which we have no doubt contributed, more than any thing else, both to the efficacy and the safety of that most perilous but necessary experiment. The rest of his history is soon told. He was the early patron and the constant friend of Mr. Grattan; and was the means of introducing the celebrated Single-Speech Hamilton to the acquaintance of Mr. Burke. Though very early disposed to relieve the Catholics from a part of their disabilities, he certainly was doubtful of the prudence, or propriety, of their more recent pretensions. He was from first to last a zealous, active, and temperate advocate for parliamentary reform. He was averse to the Legislative Union with Great Britain. He was uniformly steady to his principles, and faithful to his friends; and seems to have divided the latter part of his life pretty equally between those elegant studies of literature and art by which his youth had been delighted, and those patriotic duties to which he had devoted his middle age. The sittings of the Irish Academy, over which he presided from its first foundation, were frequently held at Charlemont House;—and he always extended the most munificent patronage to the professors of art, and the kindest indulgence to youthful talents of every description. His health had declined gradually from about the year 1790, — and he died in August 1799,—esteemed and regretted by all who had had any opportunity of knowing him, in public or in private, as a friend or as an opponent. — Such is the sure reward of honourable sentiments, and mild and steady principles!

To this branch of the history belongs a considerable part of the anecdotes and characters with which the book is enlivened; and, in a particular manner, those which Mr. Hardy has given, in Lord Charlemont's own words, from the private papers and memoirs which have been put into his hands. His Lordship appears to have kept a sort of journal of every thing interesting that befel him through life, and especially during his long residence on the Continent. From this document Mr. Hardy has made copious extracts, in the earlier part of his narrative; and the general style of them is undoubtedly very creditable to the noble author, — a little tedious, perhaps, now and then, — and generally a little too studiously and maturely composed for the private memoranda of a young man of talents; — but always in the style and tone of a gentleman, and with a character of rationality, and calm indulgent benevolence, that is infinitely more pleasing than sallies of sarcastic wit, or periods of cold-blooded speculation.

One of the first characters that appears on the scene is our excellent countryman, the celebrated David Hume, whom Lord Charlemont first met with at Turin, in the year 1750: — and of whom he has given an account rather more entertaining, we believe, than accurate. We have no doubt, however, that it records with perfect fidelity the impression which he then received from the appearance and conversation of that distinguished philosopher. But, with all our respect for Lord Charlemont, we cannot allow a young Irish Lord, on his first visit at a foreign court, to have been precisely the person most capable of appreciating the value of such a man as David Hume; — and though there is a great fund of truth in the following observations, we think they illustrate the character and condition of the person who makes them, fully as much as that of him to whom they are applied.

"Nature, I believe, never formed any man more unlike his real character than David Hume. The powers of physiognomy were baffled by his countenance; nor could the most skilful, in that science, pretend to discover the smallest trace of the faculties of his mind, in the unmeaning features of his visage. His face was broad and fat, his mouth wide, and without any other expression than that of imbecility. His eyes, vacant and spiritless; and the corpulence of his whole person was far better fitted to communicate the idea of a turtle-eating alderman, than of a refined philosopher. His speech, in English, was rendered ridiculous by the broadest Scotch accent; and his French was, if possible, still more laughable; so that wisdom, most certainly, never disguised herself before in so uncouth a garb. Though now near fifty years old he was healthy and strong; but his health and strength, far from being advantageous to his figure, instead of manly comeliness, had only the appearance of rusticity. His wearing an uniform added greatly to his natural awkwardness; for he wore it like a grocer of the trained bands. Sinclair was a lieutenant-general, and was sent to the courts of Vienna and Turin as a military envoy, to see that their quota of troops was furnished by the Austrians and Piedmontese. It was therefore thought necessary that his secretary should appear to be an officer; and Hume was accordingly disguised in scarlet.

"Having thus given an account of his exterior, it is but fair that I should state my good opinion of his character. Of all the philosophers of his sect, none, I believe, ever joined more real benevolence to its mischievous principles, than my friend Hume. His love to mankind was universal, and vehement; and there was no service he would not cheerfully have done to his fellow-creatures, excepting only that of suffering them to save their souls in their own way. He was tender-hearted, friendly, and charitable in the extreme."—Pp. 8, 9.

His Lordship then tells a story in illustration of the philosopher's benevolence, which we have no other reason for leaving out — but that we know it not to be true; and concludes a little dissertation on the pernicious effects of his doctrines, with the following little anecdote; of the authenticity of which also, we should entertain some doubts, did it not seem to have fallen within his own personal knowledge.

"He once professed himself the admirer of a young, most beautiful, and accomplished lady, at Turin, who only laughed at his passion. One day he addressed her in the usual common-place strain, that he was *abimé, anéanti.* — '*Oh! pour anéanti,*' replied the lady, '*ce n'est en effet qu'une opération très-naturelle de votre systême.*'" — P. 10.

The following passages are from a later part of the Journal: but indicate the same turn of mind in the observer: —

"Hume's *fashion* at Paris, when he was there as Secretary to Lord Hertford, was truly ridiculous; and nothing ever marked, in a more striking manner, the whimsical genius of the French. No man, from his manners, was surely less formed for their society, or less likely to meet with their approbation; but that flimsy philosophy which pervades and deadens even their most licentious novels, was then the folly of the day. Freethinking and English frocks were the fashion, and the Anglomanie was the *ton du pais.* From what has been already said of him, it is apparent that his conversation to strangers, and particularly to Frenchmen, could be little delightful; and still more particularly, one would suppose, to Frenchwomen. And yet, no lady's toilette was complete without Hume's attendance! At the opera, his broad, unmeaning face was usually seen *entre deux jolis minois.* The ladies in France give the ton, and the ton, at this time, was deism; a species of philosophy ill suited to the softer sex, in whose delicate frame weakness is interesting, and timidity a charm. But the women in France were deists, as with us they were charioteers. How my friend Hume was able to endure the encounter of these French female Titans, I know not. In England, either his philosophic pride, or his conviction that infidelity was ill suited to women, made him always averse from the initiation of ladies into the mysteries of his doctrine."—Pp. 121, 122.

"Nothing," adds his Lordship in another place, "ever showed a mind more truly beneficent than Hume's whole conduct with regard to Rousseau. That story is too well known to be repeated; and exhibits a striking picture of Hume's heart, whilst it displays the strange and unaccountable vanity and madness of the French, or rather Swiss moralist. When first they arrived together from France, happening to meet with Hume in the Park, I wished him joy of his pleasing connexion; and particularly hinted, that I was convinced he must be perfectly happy in his new friend, as their religious opinions were, I believed, nearly similar. 'Why no, man,' said he, 'in that you are mistaken. Rousseau is not what you think him. He has a hankering after the Bible; and, indeed, is little better than a Christian, in a way of his own!'"—P. 120.

"In London, where he often did me the honour to communicate the manuscripts of his additional Essays, before their publication, I have sometimes, in the course of our intimacy, asked him, whether he thought that, if his opinions were universally to take place, mankind would not be rendered more unhappy than they now were; and whether he did not suppose, that the curb of religion was necessary to human nature? 'The objections,' answered he, 'are not without weight; but error never can produce good; and truth ought to take place of all considerations.' He never failed, indeed, in the midst of any controversy, to give its due praise to every thing tolerable that was either said or written against him. His sceptical turn made him doubt, and consequently dispute every thing; yet was he a fair and pleasant disputant. He heard with patience, and answered without acrimony. Neither was his conversation at any time offensive, even to his more scrupulous companions. His good sense, and good nature, prevented his saying any thing that was likely to shock; and it was not till he was provoked to argument, that, in mixed companies, he entered into his favourite topics."—P. 123.

Another of the eminent persons of whom Lord Charlemont has recorded his impressions in his own hand, was the celebrated Montesquieu; of whose acquaintance he says, and with some reason, he was more vain, than of having seen the pyramids of Egypt. He and another English gentleman paid their first visit to him at his seat near Bourdeaux; and the following is the account of their introduction:—

"The first appointment with a favourite mistress could not have rendered our night more restless than this flattering invitation; and the next morning we set out so early, that we arrived at his villa before he was risen. The servant showed us into his library; where the first object of curiosity that presented itself

was a table, at which he had apparently been reading the night before, a book lying upon it open, turned down, and a lamp extinguished. Eager to know the nocturnal studies of this great philosopher, we immediately flew to the book. It was a volume of Ovid's Works, containing his Elegies; and open at one of the most gallant poems of that master of love! Before we could overcome our surprise, it was greatly increased by the entrance of the president, whose appearance and manner was totally opposite to the idea which we had formed to ourselves of him. Instead of a grave, austere philosopher, whose presence might strike with awe such boys as we were, the person who now addressed us, was a gay, polite, sprightly Frenchman, who, after a thousand genteel compliments, and a thousand thanks for the honour we had done him, desired to know whether we would not breakfast; and upon our declining the offer, having already eaten at an inn not far from the house, 'Come, then,' says he, 'let us walk; the day is fine, and I long to show you my villa, as I have endeavoured to form it according to the English taste, and to cultivate and dress it in the English manner.' Following him into the farm, we soon arrived at the skirts of a beautiful wood, cut into walks, and paled round, the entrance to which was barricaded with a moveable bar, about three feet high, fastened with a padlock. 'Come,' said he, searching in his pocket, 'it is not worth our while to wait for the key; you, I am sure, can leap as well as I can, and this bar shall not stop me.' So saying, he ran at the bar, and fairly jumped over it, while we followed him with amazement, though not without delight, to see the philosopher likely to become our playfellow."—Pp. 32, 33.

"In Paris I have frequently met him in company with ladies, and have been as often astonished at the politeness, the gallantry, and sprightliness of his behaviour. In a word, the most accomplished, the most refined *petit maître* of Paris, could not have been more amusing, from the liveliness of his chat, nor could have been more inexhaustible in that sort of discourse, which is best suited to women, than this venerable philosopher of seventy years old. But at this we shall not be surprised, when we reflect, that the profound author of L'Esprit des Loix was also author of the Persian Letters, and of the truly gallant Temple de Guide."—P. 36.

The following opinion, from such a quarter, might have been expected to have produced more effect than it seems to have done, on so warm an admirer as Lord Charlemont: —

"In the course of our conversations, Ireland, and its interests, have often been the topic; and upon these occasions, I have always found him an advocate for an incorporating Union between that country and England. 'Were I an Irishman,' said he, 'I should certainly wish for it; and, as a general lover of liberty, I sincerely desire it; and for this plain reason, that an inferior country, connected with one much her superior in force, can never be certain of the permanent enjoyment of constitutional freedom, unless she has, by her representatives, a proportional share in the legislature of the superior kingdom.'"—*Ibid.*

Of Lord Charlemont's English friends and associates, none is represented, perhaps, in more lively and pleasing colours than Topham Beauclerk; to the graces of whose conversation even the fastidious Dr. Johnson has borne such powerful testimony. Lord Charlemont, and indeed all who have occasion to speak of him, represent him as more accomplished and agreeable in society, than any man of his age — of exquisite taste, perfect good-breeding, and unblemished integrity and honour. Undisturbed, too, by ambition, or political animosities, and at his ease with regard to fortune, he might appear to be placed at the very summit of human felicity, and to exemplify that fortunate lot to which common destinies afford such various exceptions.

But there is no such lot. This happy man, so universally acceptable, and with such resources in himself, was devoured by *ennui!* and probably envied, with good reason, the condition of one half of those laborious and discontented beings who looked up to him with envy and admiration. He was querulous, Lord Charlemont assures us — indifferent, and internally contemptuous to the greater part of the world; — and, like so many other accomplished persons, upon whom the want of employment has imposed the heavy task of self-occupation, he passed his life in a languid and unsatisfactory manner; absorbed sometimes in play, and sometimes in study; and seeking, in vain, the wholesome exercise of a strong mind, in desultory reading or contemptible dissipation. His Letters, however, are delightful; and we are extremely obliged to Mr. Hardy, for having favoured us with so many of them. It is so seldom that the pure, animated, and unrestrained language of polite conversation can be found in a printed book, that we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing a considerable part of the specimens before us; which, while they exemplify, in the happiest manner, the perfect style of a gentleman, serve to illustrate, for more reflecting readers, the various sacrifices that are generally required for the formation of the envied character to which that style belongs. A very interesting

essay might be written on the unhappiness of those from whom nature and fortune seem to have removed all the causes of unhappiness: — and we are sure that no better assortment of proofs and illustrations could be annexed to such an essay, than some of the following passages.

"I have been but once at the club since you left England; where we were entertained, us usual, by Dr. Goldsmith's absurdity. Mr. V. can give you an account of it. Sir Joshua intends painting your picture over again; so you may set your heart at rest for some time: it is true, it will last so much the longer; but then you may wait these ten years for it. Elmsly gave me a commission from you about Mr. Walpole's frames for prints, which is perfectly unintelligible: I wish you would explain it, and it shall be punctually executed. The Duke of Northumberland has promised me a pair of his new pheasants for you; but you must wait till all the crowned heads in Europe have been served first. I have been at the review at Portsmouth. If you had seen it, you would have owned, that it is a very pleasant thing to be a King. It is true, —— made a job of the claret to ——, who furnished the first tables with vinegar, under that denomination. Charles Fox said, that Lord S—wich should have been impeached! What an abominable world do we live in! that there should not be above half a dozen honest men *in* the world, and that one of those should live in Ireland. You will, perhaps, be shocked at the small portion of honesty that I allot to your country: but a sixth part is as much as comes to its share; and, for any thing I know to the contrary, the other five may be in Ireland too; for I am sure I do not know where else to find them.

"I am rejoiced to find by your letter that Lady C. is as you wish. I have yet remaining so much benevolence towards mankind, as to wish that there may be a son of yours, educated by you, as a specimen of what mankind ought to be. Goldsmith, the other day, put a paragraph into the newspapers, in favour of Lord Mayor Townshend. The same night we happened to sit next to Lord Shelburne, at Drury Lane. I mentioned the circumstance of the paragraph to him. He said to Goldsmith, that he hoped that he had mentioned nothing about Malagrida in it. 'Do you know,' answered Goldsmith, 'that I never could conceive the reason why they call you Malagrida; *for* Malagrida was a very good sort of man.' You see plainly what he meant to say; but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says, that this story is a picture of Goldsmith's whole life. Johnson has been confined for some weeks in the Isle of Skye. We hear that he was obliged to swim over to the main land, taking hold of a cow's tail. Be that as it may, Lady Di. has promised to make a drawing of it. Our poor club is in a miserable decay: unless you come and relieve it, it will certainly expire. Would you imagine, that Sir Joshua Reynolds is extremely anxious to be a member of Almack's. You see what noble ambition will make a man attempt. That den is not yet opened, consequently I have not been there; so, for the present, I am clear upon that score. I suppose your confounded Irish politics take up your whole attention at present: but we cannot do without you. If you do not come here, I will bring all the club over to Ireland, to live with you, and that will drive you here in your own defence. Johnson shall spoil your books, Goldsmith pull your flowers, and Boswell talk to you. Stay then if you can. Adieu, my dear Lord." —Pp. 176—178.

"I saw a letter from Foote, the other day, with an account of an Irish tragedy. The subject is Manlius; and the last speech which he makes, when he is pushed off from the Tarpeian Rock, is, 'Sweet Jesus, where am I going?' Pray send me word if this is true. We have a new comedy here, which is good for nothing. Bad as it is, however, it succeeds very well, and has almost killed Goldsmith with envy. I have no news, either literary or political, to send you. Every body, except myself, and about a million of vulgars, are in the country. I am closely confined, as Lady Di. expects to be so every hour." — P. 178.

"Why should you be vexed to find that mankind are fools and knaves? I have known it so long, that every fresh instance of it amuses me, provided it does not immediately affect my friends or myself. Politicians do not seem to me to be much greater rogues than other people; and, as their actions affect, in general, private persons less than other kinds of villany do, I cannot find that I am so angry with them. It is true, that the leading men in both countries at present, are, I believe, the most corrupt, abandoned people in the nation. But now that I am upon this worthy subject of human nature, I will inform you of a few particulars relating to the discovery of Otaheite."—P. 180.

"There is another curiosity here, — Mr. Bruce. His drawings are the most beautiful things you ever saw, and his adventures more wonderful than those of Sinbad the sailor, — and, perhaps, nearly as true. I am much more afflicted with the account you send me of your health, than I am at the corruption of your ministers. I always hated politics; and I now hate them ten times worse; as I have reason to think that they contribute towards your ill health. You do me great justice in thinking, that whatever concerns you, must interest me; but as I wish you most sincerely to be perfectly happy, I cannot bear to think that the villanous proceedings of others should make you miserable: for, in that case, undoubtedly you will never be happy. Charles Fox is a member at the Turk's Head; but not till he was a patriot; and you know, if one repents, &c. There is nothing new, but Goldsmith's retaliation, which you certainly have seen. Pray tell Lady Charlemont, from me, that I desire she may keep you from politics, as they do children from sweetmeats, that make them sick." — Pp. 181, 182.

We look upon these extracts as very interesting and valuable; but they have turned out to be so long, that we must cut short this branch of the history. We must add, however, a part of Lord Charlemont's account of Mr. Burke, with whom he lived in habits of the closest intimacy, and continual correspondence, till his extraordinary breach with his former political associates in 1792. Mr. Hardy does not exactly know at what period the following paper, which was found in Lord Charlemont's handwriting, was written.

"This most amiable and ingenious man was private secretary to Lord Rockingham. It may not be superfluous to relate the following anecdote, the truth of which I can assert, and which does honour to him and his truly noble patron. Soon after Lord Rockingham, upon the warm recommendation of many friends, had appointed Burke his Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle informed him, that he had unwarily taken into his service a man of dangerous principles, and one who was by birth and education a papist and a jacobite; a calumny founded upon Burke's Irish connexions, which were most of them of that persuasion, and upon some juvenile follies arising from those connexions. The Marquis, whose genuine Whiggism was easily alarmed, immediately sent for Burke, and told him what he had heard. It was easy for Burke, who had been educated at the University at Dublin, to bring testimonies to his Protestantism; and with regard to the second accusation, which was wholly founded on the former, it was soon done away; and Lord Rockingham, readily and willingly disabused, declared that he was perfectly satisfied of the falsehood of the information he had received, and that he no longer harboured the smallest doubt of the integrity of his principles; when Burke, with an honest and disinterested boldness, told his Lordship that it was now no longer possible for him to be his secretary; that the reports he had heard would probably, even unknown to himself, create in his mind such suspicions, as might prevent his thoroughly confiding in him; and that no earthly consideration should induce him to stand in that relation with a man who did not place entire confidence in him. The Marquis, struck with this manliness of sentiment, which so exactly corresponded with the feelings of his own heart, frankly and positively assured him, that what had passed, far from leaving any bad impression on his mind, had only served to fortify his good opinion; and that, if from no other reason, he might rest assured, that from his conduct upon that occasion alone, he should ever esteem, and place in him the most unreserved confidential trust — a promise which he faithfully performed. It must, however, be confessed, that his early habits and connexions, though they could never make him swerve from his duty, had given his mind an almost constitutional bent towards the Popish party. Prudence is, indeed, the only virtue he does not possess; from a total want of which, and from the amiable weaknesses of an excellent heart, his estimation in England, though still great, is certainly diminished." — Pp. 343, 344.

We have hitherto kept Mr. Hardy himself so much in the background, that we think it is but fair to lay before the reader the sequel which he has furnished to the preceding notice of Lord Charlemont. The passage is perfectly characteristic of the ordinary colloquial style of the book, and of the temper of the author.

"Thus far Lord Charlemont. Something, though slight, may be here added. Burke's disunion, and final rupture with Mr. Fox, were attended with circumstances so distressing, so far surpassing the ordinary limits of political hostility, that the mind really aches at the recollection of him. But let us view him, for an instant, in better scenes, and better hours. He was social, hospitable, of pleasing access, and most agreeably communicative. One of the most satisfactory days, perhaps, that I ever passed in my life, was going with him, *tête-à-tête*, from London to Beconsfield. He stopped at Uxbridge, whilst his horses were feeding; and, happening to meet some gentlemen, of I know not what militia, who appeared to be perfect strangers to him, he entered into discourse with them at the gateway of the inn. His conversation, at that moment, completely exemplified what Johnson said of him — 'That you could not meet Burke for half an hour under a shed, without saying that he was an extraordinary man.' He was, on that day, altogether, uncommonly instructive and agreeable. Every object of the slightest notoriety, as we passed along, whether of natural or local history, furnished him with abundant materials for conversation. The House at Uxbridge, where the treaty was held during Charles I.'s time; the beautiful and undulating grounds of Bulstrode, formerly the residence of Chancellor Jefferies; and Waller's tomb in Beconsfield churchyard, which, before we went home, we visited, and whose character, as a gentleman, a poet, and an orator, he shortly delineated, but with exquisite felicity of genius, altogether gave an uncommon interest to his eloquence; and, although one-and-twenty years have now passed since that day, I retain the most vivid and pleasing recollection of it. He reviewed the characters of many statesmen. — Lord Bath's, whom, I think, he personally knew, and that of Sir Robert Walpole, which he pourtrayed in nearly the same words which he used with regard to that eminent man, in his appeal from the Old Whigs to the New. He talked much of the great Lord Chatham; and, amidst a variety of particulars concerning him and his family, stated that his sister, Mrs. Anne Pitt, used often, in her altercations with him, to say, 'That he knew nothing whatever except Spenser's Fairy Queen.' 'And,' continued Mr. Burke, 'no

matter how that was said; but whoever relishes, and reads Spencer as he ought to be read, will have a strong hold of the English language.' These were his exact words. Of Mrs. Anne Pitt he said, that she had the most agreeable and uncommon talents, and was, beyond all comparison, the most perfectly eloquent person he had ever heard speak. He always, as he said, lamented that he did not put on paper a conversation he had once with her; on what subject I forget. The richness, variety, and solidity of her discourse, absolutely astonished him."*

Certainly no nation ever obtained such a deliverance by such an instrument, and hurt itself so little by the use of it; and, if the Irish Revolution of 1782 shows, that power and intimidation may be lawfully employed to enforce rights which have been refused to supplication and reason, it shows also the extreme danger of this method of redress, and the necessity there is for resorting to every precaution in those cases where it has become indispensable. Ireland was now saved from all the horrors of a civil war, only by two circumstances; — the first, that the great military force which accomplished the redress of her grievances, had not been originally raised or organized with any view to such an interference; and was chiefly guided, therefore, by men of loyal and moderate characters, who had taken up arms for no other purpose but the defence of their country against foreign invasion: — the other, that the just and reasonable demands to which these leaders ultimately limited their pretensions, were addressed to a liberal and enlightened administration, — too just to withhold, when in power, what they had laboured to procure when in opposition, — and too magnanimous to dread the effect of conceding, even to armed petitioners, what was clearly and indisputably their due.

It was the moderation of their first demands, and the generous frankness with which they were so promptly granted, that saved Ireland in this crisis. The volunteers were irresistible, while they asked only for their country what all the world saw she was entitled to: but they became impotent the moment they demanded more. They were deserted, at that moment, by all the talent and the respectability which had given them, for a time, the absolute dominion of the country. The concession of their just rights operated like a talisman in separating the patriotic from the factious: and when the latter afterwards attempted to invade the lofty regions of legitimate government, they were smitten with instantaneous discord and confusion, and speedily dispersed and annihilated from the face of the land. These events are big with instruction to the times that have come after; and read an impressive lesson to those who have now to deal with discontents and conventions in the same country.

But if it be certain that the salvation of Ireland was then owing to the mild, liberal, and enlightened councils of the Rockingham administration as a body, it is delightful to see, in some of the private letters which Mr. Hardy has printed in the volume before us, how cordially the sentiments professed by this ministry were adopted by the eminent men who presided over its formation. There are letters to Lord Charlemont, both from Lord Rockingham himself, and from Mr. Fox, which would almost reconcile one to a belief in the possibility of ministerial fairness and sincerity. We should like to give the whole of them here; but as our limits will not admit of that, we must content ourselves with some extracts from Mr. Fox's first letter after the new ministry was formed, — for the tone and style of which, we fear, few precedents have been left in the office of the Secretary of State.

"My dear Lord,—If I had had occasion to write to you a month ago, I should have written with great confidence that you would believe me perfectly sincere, and would receive any thing that came from me with the partiality of an old acquaintance, and one who acted upon the same political *principles*. I hope you will now consider me in the same light; but I own I write with much more diffidence, as I am much more sure of your kindness to me personally, than of your inclination to listen with favour to any thing that comes from a Secretary of State. The principal business of this letter is to inform you, that the Duke of Portland is appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Colonel Fitzpatrick his secretary; and, when I have said this, I need not add, that I feel myself, on every private as well as public account, most peculiarly interested in the success of their administration. That their persons and characters are not disagreeable to

* I here omit the long abstract which originally followed, of the Irish parliamentary and public history, from 1750 to the period of the Union, together with all the details of the great Volunteer Association in 1780, and its fortunate dissolution in 1782 — to which remarkable event the paragraph which now follows in the text refers.

your Lordship, I may venture to assure myself, without being too sanguine; and I think myself equally certain, that there are not in the world two men whose general way of thinking upon political subjects is more exactly consonant to your own. It is not, therefore, too much to desire and hope, that you will at least look upon the administration of such men with rather a more favourable eye, and incline to trust them rather more than you could do most of those who have been their predecessors."—"The particular time of year at which this change happens, is productive of many great inconveniences, especially as it will be very difficult for the Duke of Portland to be at Dublin before your Parliament meets; but I cannot help hoping that all reasonable men will concur in removing some of these difficulties, and that a short adjournment will not be denied, if asked. I do not throw out this as knowing from any authority that it will be proposed, but as an idea that suggests itself to me! and in order to show that I wish to talk with you, and consult with you in the same frank manner in which I should have done before I was in this situation, so very new to me. I have been so used to think ill of all the ministers whom I did know, and to suspect those whom I did not, that when I am obliged to call myself a minister, I feel as if I put myself into a very suspicious character; but I do assure you I am the very same man, in all respects, that I was when you knew me, and honoured me with some share in your esteem — that I maintain the same opinions, and act with the same people.

"Pray make my best compliments to Mr. Grattan, and tell him, that the Duke of Portland and Fitzpatrick are thoroughly impressed with the importance of his approbation, and will do all they can to deserve it. I do most sincerely hope, that he may hit upon some line that may be drawn honourably and advantageously for both countries; and that, when that is done, he will show the world that there may be a government in Ireland, of which he is not ashamed to make a part. That country can never prosper, where what should be the ambition of men of honour, is considered as a disgrace."—Pp. 217—219.

The following letter from Mr. Burke in the end of 1789, will be read with more interest, when it is recollected that he published his celebrated Reflections on the French Revolution, but a few months after.

"My dearest Lord,—I think your Lordship has acted with your usual zeal and judgment in establishing a Whig club in Dublin. These meetings prevent the evaporation of principle in individuals, and give them joint force, and enliven their exertions by emulation. You see the matter in its true light; and with your usual discernment. Party is absolutely necessary at this time. I thought it always so in this country, ever since I have had any thing to do in public business; and I rather fear, that there is not virtue enough in this period to support party, than that party should become necessary, on account of the want of virtue to support itself by individual exertions. As to us here, our thoughts of every thing at home are suspended by our astonishment at the wonderful spectacle, which is exhibited in a neighbouring and rival country. What spectators, and what actors! England gazing with astonishment at a French struggle for liberty, and not knowing whether to blame or to applaud. The thing, indeed, though I thought I saw something like it in progress for several years, has still somewhat in it paradoxical and mysterious. The spirit it is impossible not to admire; but the whole Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner. It is true, that this may be no more than a sudden explosion: if so, no indication can be taken from it; but if it should be *character*, rather than accident, then that people are not fit for liberty — and must have a strong hand, like that of their former masters, to coerce them. Men must have a certain fund of natural *moderation* to qualify them for freedom; else it becomes noxious to themselves, and a perfect nuisance to every body else. What will be the event, it is hard, I think, still to say. To form a solid constitution, requires wisdom as well as spirit; and whether the French have wise heads among them, or, if they possess such, whether they have authority equal to their wisdom, is yet to be seen. In the mean time the progress of this whole affair is one of the most curious matters of speculation that ever was exhibited."—Pp. 321, 322.

We should now take our leave of Mr. Hardy; — and yet it would not be fair to dismiss him from the scene entirely, without giving our readers one or two specimens of his gift of drawing characters; in the exercise of which he generally rises to a sort of quaint and brilliant conciseness, and displays a degree of acuteness and fine observation that are not to be found in the other parts of his writing. His greatest fault is, that he does not abuse any body, — even where the dignity of history, and of virtue, call loudly for such an infliction. Yet there is something in the tone of all his delineations, that satisfies us that there is nothing worse than extreme good nature at the bottom of this forbearance. Of Philip Tisdall, who was Attorney-General when Lord Charlemont first came into Parliament, he says: —

"He had an admirable and most superior understanding; an understanding matured by years — by long experience — by habits with the best company from his youth — with the bar, with Parliament, with the State. To this strength of intellect was added a constitutional philosophy, or apathy, which never suffered him to be carried away by attachment to any party, even his own. He saw men and things so clearly; he understood so well the whole farce and

fallacy of life, that it passed before him like a scenic representation; and, till almost the close of his days, he went through the world with a constant sunshine of soul, and an inexorable gravity of feature. His countenance was never gay, and his mind was never gloomy. He was an able speaker, as well at the bar as in the House of Commons, though his diction was very indifferent. He did not speak so much at length as many of his parliamentary coadjutors, though he knew the whole of the subject much better than they did. He was not only a good speaker in Parliament, but an excellent manager of the House of Commons. He never said too much: and he had great merit in what he did not say; for Government was never committed by him. He plunged into no difficulty; nor did he ever suffer his antagonist to escape from one."—Pp. 78, 79.

Of Hussey Burgh, afterwards Lord Chief Baron, he observes: —

"To those who never heard him, as the fashion of this world in eloquence as in all things soon passes away, it may be no easy matter to convey a just idea of his style of speaking. It was sustained by great ingenuity, great rapidity of intellect, luminous and piercing satire; in refinement abundant, in simplicity sterile. The classical allusions of this orator, for he was most truly one, were so apposite, they followed each other in such bright and varied succession, and, at times, spread such an unexpected and triumphant blaze around his subject, that all persons, who were in the least tinged with literature, could never be tired of listening to him; and when in the splendid days of the Volunteer Association, alluding to some coercive English laws, and to that institution, then in its proudest array, he said, in the House of Commons, 'That such laws were sown like dragons' teeth — and sprung up in armed men,' the applause which followed, and the glow of enthusiasm which he kindled in every mind, far exceed my powers of description." —Pp. 140, 141.

Of Gerard Hamilton, he gives us the following characteristic anecdotes: —

"The uncommon splendour of his eloquence, which was succeeded by such inflexible taciturnity in St. Stephen's Chapel, became the subject, as might be supposed, of much, and idle speculation. The truth is, that all his speeches, whether delivered in London or Dublin, were not only prepared, but studied, with a minuteness and exactitude, of which those who are only used to the carelessness of modern debating can scarcely form any idea. Lord Charlemont, who had been long and intimately acquainted with him, previous to his coming to Ireland, often mentioned that he was the only speaker, among the many he had heard, of whom he could say, with certainty, that all his speeches, however long, were *written and got by heart.* A gentleman, well known to his Lordship and Hamilton, assured him, that he heard Hamilton repeat, no less than three times, an oration, which he afterwards spoke in the House of Commons, and which lasted almost three hours. As a debater, therefore, he became as useless to his political patrons as Addison was to Lord Sunderland; and, if possible, he was more scrupulous in composition than even that eminent man. Addison would stop the press to correct the most trivial error in a large publication; and Hamilton, as I can assert, on indubitable authority, would recall the footman, if, on recollection, any word, in his opinion, was misplaced or improper, in the slightest note to a familiar acquaintance."—Pp. 60, 61.

No name is mentioned in these pages with higher or more uniform applause, than that of Henry Grattan. But that distinguished person still lives: and Mr. Hardy's delicacy has prevented him from attempting any delineation, either of his character or his eloquence. We respect his forbearance, and shall follow his example: — yet we cannot deny ourselves the gratification of extracting one sentence from a letter of Lord Charlemont, in relation to that parliamentary grant, by which an honour was conferred on an individual patriot, without place or official situation of any kind, and merely for his personal merits and exertions, which has in other cases been held to be the peculiar and appropriate reward of triumphant generals and commanders. When the mild and equable temperament of Lord Charlemont's mind is recollected, as well as the caution with which all his opinions were expressed, we do not know that a wise ambition would wish for a prouder or more honourable testimony than is contained in the following short sentences:

"Respecting the grant, I know with certainty that Grattan, though he felt himself flattered by the *intention,* looked upon the act with the deepest concern, and did all in his power to deprecate it. As it was found impossible to defeat the design, all his friends, and I among others, were employed to lessen the sum. It was accordingly decreased by one half, and that principally by his positive declaration, through us, that, if the whole were insisted on, he would refuse all but a few hundreds, which he would retain as an honourable mark of the goodness of his country. By some, who look only into themselves for information concerning human nature, this conduct will probably be construed into hypocrisy. To such, the excellence and pre-eminency of virtue, and the character of Grattan, are as invisible and incomprehensible, as the brightness of the sun to a man born blind."—P. 237.

PRISON DISCIPLINE.

(SEPTEMBER, 1818.)

An Inquiry whether Crime and Misery are produced or prevented by our present System of Prison Discipline. Illustrated by Descriptions of the Borough Compter, Tothill Fields Prison, the Jail at St. Albans, the Jail at Guildford, the Jail at Bristol, the Jails at Bury and Ilchester, the Maison de Force at Ghent, the Philadelphia Prison, the Penitentiary at Millbank, and the Proceedings of the Ladies' Committee at Newgate. By THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON. 8vo. Pp. 171. London: 1818.

THERE are two classes of subjects which naturally engage the attention of public men, and divide the interest which society takes in their proceedings. The one may, in a wide sense, be called Party Politics — the other Civil or Domestic Administration. To the former belong all questions touching political rights and franchises — the principles of the Constitution — the fitness or unfitness of ministers, and the interest and honour of the country, as it may be affected by its conduct and relations to foreign powers, either in peace or war. The latter comprehends most of the branches of political economy and statistics, and all the ordinary legislation of internal police and regulation; and, besides the two great heads of Trade and Taxation, embraces the improvements of the civil Code — the care of the Poor — the interests of Education, Religion, and Morality — and the protection of Prisoners, Lunatics, and others who cannot claim protection for themselves. This distinction, we confess, is but coarsely drawn — since every one of the things we have last enumerated may, in certain circumstances, be made an occasion of party contention. But what we mean is, that they are not its natural occasions, and do not belong to those topics, or refer to those principles, in relation to which the great Parties of a free country necessarily arise. One great part of a statesman's business may thus be considered as Polemic — and another as Deliberative; his main object in the first being to discomfit and expose his opponents — and, in the second, to discover the best means of carrying into effect ends which all agree to be desirable.

Judging *à priori* of the relative importance or agreeableness of these two occupations, we should certainly be apt to think that the latter was by far the most attractive and comfortable in itself, as well as the most likely to be popular with the community. The fact, however, happens to be otherwise: for such is the excitement of a public contest for influence and power, and so great the prize to be won in those honourable lists, that the highest talents are all put in requisition for that department, and all their force and splendour reserved for the struggle: and indeed, when we consider that the object of this struggle is nothing less than to put the whole power of administration into the hands of the victors, and thus to enable them not only to engross the credit of carrying through all those beneficial arrangements that may be called for by the voice of the country, but to carry them through *in their own way*, we ought not perhaps to wonder, that, in the eagerness of this pursuit, which is truly that of *the means to all ends*, some of the ends themselves should, when separately presented, appear of inferior moment, and excite far less interest or concern.

But, though this apology may be available in some degree to the actors, it still leaves us at a loss to account for the corresponding sentiments that are found in the body of the people, who are but lookers on for the most part in this great scene of contention — and can scarcely fail to perceive, one would imagine, that their immediate interests were often postponed to the mere gladiatorship of the parties, and their actual service neglected, while this fierce strife was maintained as to who should be allowed to serve them. In such circumstances, we should naturally expect to find, that the popular favourites would not be the leaders of the opposite political parties, but those who, without regard to party, came forward to suggest and promote measures of admitted utility — and laboured directly to enlarge the enjoyments and advantages of the people, or to alleviate the pressure of their necessary sufferings. That it is not so in fact and reality, must be ascribed, we think, partly to the sympathy which, in a country like this, men of all conditions take in the party feelings of their political favourites, and the sense they have of the great importance of their success and the general prevalence of their principles; and partly, no doubt, and in a greater

degree, to that less justifiable but very familiar principle of our nature, by which we are led, on so many other occasions, to prefer splendid accomplishments to useful qualities, and to take a much greater interest in those perilous and eventful encounters, where the prowess of the champions is almost all that is to be proved by the result, than in those humbler labours of love or wisdom, by which the enjoyments of the whole society are multiplied or secured.

There is a reason, no doubt, for this also — and a wise one — as for every other general law to which its great Author has subjected our being: but it is not the less true, that it often operates irregularly, and beyond its province, — as may be seen in the familiar instance of the excessive and pernicious admiration which follows all great achievements in war, and makes military fame so dangerously seducing, both to those who give and to those who receive it. It is undeniably true, as Swift said long ago, that he who made two blades of grass to grow where one only grew before, was a greater benefactor to his country than all the heroes and conquerors with whom its annals are emblazed; and yet it would be ludicrous to compare the fame of the most successful improver in agriculture with that of the most inconsiderable soldier who ever signalized his courage in an unsuccessful campaign. The inventors of the steam engine and the spinning-machine have, beyond all question, done much more in our own times, not only to increase the comforts and wealth of their country, but to multiply its resources and enlarge its power, than all the Statesmen and Warriors who have affected during the same period to direct its destiny; and yet, while the incense of public acclamation has been lavished upon the latter — while wealth and honours, and hereditary distinctions, have been heaped upon them in their lives, and monumental glories been devised to perpetuate the remembrance of their services, the former have been left undistinguished in the crowd of ordinary citizens, and permitted to close their days, unvisited by any ray of public favour or national gratitude, — for no other reason that can possibly be suggested, than that their invaluable services were performed without noise or contention in the studious privacy of benevolent meditation, and without any of those tumultuous accompaniments that excite the imagination, or enflame the passions of observant multitudes.

The case, however, is precisely the same with the different classes of those who occupy themselves with public interests. He who thunders in popular assemblies, and consumes his antagonists in the blaze of his patriotic eloquence, or withers them with the flash of his resistless sarcasm, immediately becomes, not merely a leader in the senate, but an idol in the country at large; — while he who by his sagacity discovers, by his eloquence recommends, and by his laborious perseverance ultimately effects, some great improvement in the condition of large classes of the community, is rated, by that ungrateful community, as a far inferior personage; and obtains, for his nights and days of successful toil, a far less share even of the cheap reward of popular applause than is earned by the other, merely in following the impulses of his own ambitious nature. No man in this country ever rose to a high political station, or even obtained any great personal power and influence in society, merely by originating in Parliament measures of internal regulation, or conducting with judgment and success improvements, however extensive, that did not affect the interests of one or other of the two great parties in the state. Mr. Wilberforce may perhaps be mentioned as an exception; and certainly the greatness, the long endurance, and the difficulty of the struggle, which he at last conducted to so glorious a termination, have given him a fame and popularity which may be compared, in some respects, with that of a party leader. But even Mr. Wilberforce would be at once demolished in a contest with the leaders of party; and could do nothing, out of doors, by his own individual exertions; while it is quite manifest, that the greatest and most meritorious exertions to extend the reign of justice by the correction of our civil code — to ameliorate the condition of the poor — to alleviate the sufferings of the prisoner, — or, finally, to regenerate the minds of the whole people by an improved system of education, will never give a man half the power or celebrity that may be secured, at any time, by a brilliant speech on a motion of censure, or a flaming

harangue on the boundlessness of our resources, and the glories of our arms.

It may be conjectured already, that with all due sense of the value of party distinctions, and all possible veneration for the talents which they call most prominently into action, we are inclined to think that this estimate of public services might be advantageously corrected; and that the objects which would exclusively occupy our statesmen if they were all of one mind upon constitutional questions, ought more frequently to take precedence of the contentions to which those questions give rise. We think there is, of late, a tendency to such a change in public opinion. The nation, at least, seems at length heartily sick of those heroic vapourings about our efforts for the salvation of Europe,—which seem to have ended in the restoration of old abuses abroad, and the imposition of new taxes at home; — and about the vigour which was required for the maintenance of our glorious constitution, — which has most conspicuously displayed itself in the suspension of its best bulwarks, and the organization of spy systems and vindictive persecutions, after the worst fashion of arbitrary governments; — and seems disposed to require, at the hands of its representatives, some substantial pledge of their concern for the general welfare, by an active and zealous co-operation in the correction of admitted abuses, and the redress of confessed wrongs.

It is mortifying to the pride of human wisdom, to consider how much evil has resulted from the best and least exceptionable of its boasted institutions — and how those establishments that have been most carefully devised for the repression of guilt, or the relief of misery, have become themselves the fruitful and pestilent sources both of guilt and misery, in a frightful and disgusting degree. Laws, without which society could not exist, become, by their very multiplication and refinement, a snare and a burden to those they were intended to protect, and let in upon us the hateful and most intolerable plagues, of pettifogging, chicanery, and legal persecution. Institutions for the relief and prevention of poverty have the effect of multiplying it tenfold — hospitals for the cure of diseases become centres of infection. The very police, which is necessary to make our cities habitable, give birth to the odious vermin of informers, thief-catchers, and suborners of treachery; — and our prisons, which are meant chiefly to reform the guilty and secure the suspected, are converted into schools of the most atrocious corruption, and dens of the most inhuman torture.

Those evils and abuses, thus arising out of intended benefits and remedies, are the last to which the attention of ordinary men is directed — because they arise in such unexpected quarters, and are apt to be regarded as the unavoidable accompaniments of indispensable institutions. There is a selfish delicacy which makes us at all times averse to enter into details of a painful and offensive nature; and an indolent sort of optimism, by which we naturally seek to excuse our want of activity, by charitably presuming that things are as well as they can easily be made, and that it is inconceivable that any *very flagrant* abuses should be permitted by the worthy and humane people who are more immediately concerned in their prevention. To this is added a fear of giving offence to those same worthy visitors and superintendants — and a still more potent fear of giving offence to his Majesty's Government; — for though no administration can really have any interest in the existence of such abuses, or can be suspected of wishing to perpetuate them from any love for them or their authors, yet it is but too true that most long-established administrations have looked with an evil eye upon the detectors and redressors of all sorts of abuses, however little connected with politics or political persons — *first*, because they feel that their long and undisturbed continuance is a tacit reproach on their negligence and inactivity, in not having made use of their great opportunities to discover and correct them — *secondly*, because all such corrections are *innovations* upon old usages and establishments, and practical admissions of the flagrant imperfection of those boasted institutions, towards which it is their interest to maintain a blind and indiscriminate veneration in the body of the people — and, *thirdly*, because, if general abuses affecting large classes of the community are allowed to be exposed and reformed in any one department, the people might get accustomed to look for the redress of all similar abuses in other departments, — and reform would cease to be

a word of terror and alarm (as most ministers think it ought to be) to all loyal subjects.

These, no doubt, are formidable obstacles; and therefore it is that gross abuses have been allowed to subsist so long. But they are so far from being insurmountable, that we are perfectly persuaded that nothing more is necessary to ensure the effectual correction, or mitigation at least, of all the evils to which we have alluded, than to satisfy the public, 1st, of their existence and extent — and, 2dly, of there being means for their effectual redress and prevention. Evils that are directly connected with the power of the existing administration — abuses of which they are themselves the authors or abettors, or of which they have the benefit, can only be corrected by their removal from office — and are substantially irremediable, however enormous, while they continue in power. All questions as to them, therefore, belong to the department of party politics, and fall within the province of the polemical statesman. But with regard to all *other* plain violations of reason, justice, or humanity, it is comfortable to think that we live in such a stage of society as to make it impossible that they should be allowed to subsist many years, after their mischief and iniquity have been made manifest to the sense of the country at large. Public opinion, which is still potent and formidable even to Ministerial corruption, is *omnipotent* against all inferior malversations — and the invaluable means of denunciation and authoritative and irresistible investigation which we possess in our representative legislature, puts it in the power of any man of prudence, patience, and respectability in that House, to bring to light the most secret, and to shame the most arrogant delinquent, and to call down the steady vengeance of public execration, and the sure light of public intelligence, for the repression and redress of all public injustice.

The charm is in the little word PUBLICITY! — And it is cheering to think how many wonders have already been wrought by that precious Talisman. If the House of Commons was of no other use but as an organ for proclaiming and inquiring into all alleged abuses, and making public the results, under the sanction of names and numbers which no man dares to suspect of unfairness or inattention, it would be enough to place the country in which it existed far above all terms of comparison with any other, ancient or modern, in which no such institution had been devised. Though the great work is done, however, by that House and its committees — though it is there only that the mischief can be denounced with a voice that reaches to the utmost borders of the land — and there only that the seal of unquestioned and unquestionable authority can be set to the statements which it authenticates and gives out to the world; — there is still room, and need too, for the humbler ministry of inferior agents, to circulate and enforce, to repeat and expound, the momentous facts that have been thus collected, and upon which the public must ultimately decide. It is this unambitious, but useful function that we now propose to perform, in laying before our readers a short view of the very interesting facts which are detailed in the valuable work of which the title is prefixed, and in the parliamentary papers to which it refers.

Prisons are employed for the confinement and security of at least three different descriptions of persons: — first, of those who are *accused* of crimes and offences, but have not yet been brought to trial; 2dly, of those who have been *convicted*, and are imprisoned preparatory to, or as a part of, their punishment; and, 3dly, of *debtors*, who are neither convicted nor accused of any crime whatsoever. In both the first classes, and even in that least entitled to favour, there is room for an infinity of distinctions — from the case of the boy arraigned or convicted for a slight assault or breach of the peace, up to that of the bloody murderer or hardened depredator, or veteran leader of the house-breaking gang. All these persons must indeed be imprisoned — for so the law has declared; but, under that sentence, we humbly conceive there is no warrant to inflict on them any *other* punishment — any thing more than a restraint on their personal freedom. This, we think, is strictly true of *all* the three classes we have mentioned; but it will scarcely be disputed, at all events, that it is true of the first and the last. A man may avoid the penalties of crime, by avoiding all criminality: but no man can be secure against false accusation; and to condemn him who is only suspected, is to commence his punishment while

his crime is uncertain. Nay, it is not only uncertain, as to all who are untried, but it is the fixed presumption of the law that the suspicion is unfounded, and that a trial will establish his innocence. We suppose there are not less than ten or fifteen thousand persons taken up yearly in Great Britain and Ireland on suspicion of crimes, of whom certainly there are not two thirds convicted; so that, in all likelihood, there are not fewer than *seven or eight thousand innocent* persons placed annually in this painful predicament — whose very imprisonment, though an unavoidable, is beyond all dispute a very lamentable evil; and to which no unnecessary addition can be made without the most tremendous injustice.

The debtor, again, seems entitled to at least as much indulgence. "He may," says Mr. Buxton, "have been reduced to his inability to satisfy his creditor by the visitation of God, — by disease, by personal accidents, by the failure of reasonable projects, by the largeness or the helplessness of his family. His substance, and the substance of his creditor, may have perished together in the flames, or in the waters. Human foresight cannot always avert, and human industry cannot always repair, the calamities to which our nature is subjected; — surely, then, some debtors are entitled to compassion." — P. 4. Of the number of debtors at any one time in confinement in these kingdoms, we have no means of forming a conjecture; but beyond all doubt they amount to many thousands, of whom probably one half have been reduced to that state by venial errors, or innocent misfortune.

Even with regard to the convicted, we humbly conceive it to be clear, that where no special severity is enjoined by the law, any additional infliction beyond that of mere coercion, is illegal. If the greater delinquents alone were subjected to such severities, there might be a colour of equity in the practice; but, in point of fact, they are inflicted according to the state of the prison, the usage of the place, or the temper of the jailor; — and, in all cases, they are inflicted indiscriminately on the whole inmates of each unhappy mansion. Even it were otherwise, " Who," says Mr. B., " is to apportion this variety of wretchedness? The Judge, who knows nothing of the interior of the jail; or the jailor, who knows nothing of the transactions of the Court? The law can easily suit its penalties to the circumstances of the case. It can adjudge to one offender imprisonment for one day; to another for twenty years: but what ingenuity would be sufficient to devise, and what discretion could be trusted to inflict, modes of imprisonment with similar variations?" — P. 8.

But the truth is, that all inflictions, beyond that of mere detention, are clearly illegal. Take the common case of fetters — from Bracton down to Blackstone, all our lawyers declare the use of them to be contrary to law. The last says, in so many words, that "the law will not justify jailors in fettering a prisoner, unless where he is unruly or has attempted an escape;" and, even in that case, the practice seems to be questionable — if we can trust to the memorable reply of Lord Chief Justice King to certain magistrates, who urged their necessity for safe custody — " let them build their walls higher." Yet has this matter been left, all over the kingdom, as a thing altogether indifferent, to the pleasure of the jailor or local magistrates; and the practice accordingly has been the most capricious and irregular that can well be imagined.

" In *Chelmsford*, for example, and in *Newgate*, all *accused* or convicted of felony are ironed. — At *Bury*, and at *Norwich*, all are without irons. — At *Abingdon* the untried are not ironed. — At *Derby*, none *but* the untried are ironed! — At *Cold-bath-fields*, none but the untried, and those sent for re-examination, are ironed. — At *Winchester*, all before trial are ironed; and those sentenced to transportation after trial. — At *Chester*, those alone of bad character are ironed, whether tried or untried." — Pp. 68, 69.

But these are trifles. The truth of the case is forcibly and briefly stated in the following short sentences: —

"You have no right to deprive a man sentenced to mere imprisonment of pure air, wholesome and sufficient food, and opportunities of exercise. You have no right to debar him from the craft on which his family depends, if it can be exercised in prison. You have no right to subject him to suffering from cold, by want of bed-clothing by night, or firing by day. And the reason is plain, — you have taken him from his home, and have deprived him of the means of providing himself with the necessaries or comforts of life; and therefore you are bound to furnish him with moderate indeed, but suitable accommodation.

" You have, for the same reason, no right to ruin his habits, by compelling him to be idle, his morals,

by compelling him to mix with a promiscuous assemblage of hardened and convicted criminals, or his health, by forcing him at night into a damp unventilated cell, with such crowds of companions, as very speedily render the air foul and putrid, or to make him sleep in close contact with the victims of contagious and loathsome disease, or amidst the noxious effluvia of dirt and corruption. In short, no Judge ever condemned a man to be half starved with cold by day, or half suffocated with heat by night. Who ever heard of a criminal being sentenced to Rheumatism, or Typhus fever? Corruption of morals and contamination of mind are not the remedies which the law in its wisdom has thought proper to adopt." *

The abuses in Newgate, that great receptacle of guilt and misery, constructed to hold about 480 prisoners, but generally containing, of late years, from 800 to 1200, are eloquently set forth in the publication before us, though we have no longer left ourselves room to specify them. It may be sufficient, however, to observe, that the state of the Women's wards was universally allowed to be by far the worst; and that even Alderman Atkins admitted that in that quarter some alteration might be desirable, though, in his apprehension, it was altogether impracticable. Though by no means inclined to adopt the whole of the worthy Alderman's opinions, we may safely say, that we should have been much disposed to agree with him in thinking the subjects of those observations pretty nearly incorrigible, and certainly should not have hesitated to pronounce the change which has actually been made upon them altogether impossible. Mrs. Fry, however, knew better of what both she and they were capable; and, strong in the spirit of compassionate love, and of that charity that hopeth all things, and believeth all things, set herself earnestly and humbly to that arduous and revolting task, in which her endeavours have been so singularly blessed and effectual. This heroic and affectionate woman is the wife, we understand, of a respectable banker in London; and both she and her husband belong to the Society of Friends — that exemplary sect, which is the first to begin and the last to abandon every scheme for the practical amendment of their fellow-creatures — and who have carried into all their schemes of reformation a spirit of practical wisdom, of magnanimous patience, and merciful indulgence, which puts to shame the rashness, harshness, and precipitation of sapient ministers, and presumptuous politicians. We should like to lay the whole account of her splendid campaign before our readers; but our limits will no longer admit of it. However, we shall do what we can; and, at all events, no longer withhold them from a part at least of this heart-stirring narrative.

"About four years ago, Mrs. Fry was induced to visit Newgate, by the representations of its state made by some persons of the Society of Friends.

"She found the female side in a situation which no language can describe. Nearly *three hundred women*, sent there for every gradation of crime, some untried, and some under sentence of death, were crowded together in the two wards and two cells, which are now appropriated to the untried, and which are found quite inadequate to contain even this diminished number with any tolerable convenience. Here they saw their friends, and kept their multitudes of children; and they had no other place for cooking, washing, eating, and sleeping.

"They all slept on the floor; at times one hundred and twenty in one ward, without so much as a mat for bedding; and many of them were very nearly naked. She saw them openly drinking spirits; and her ears were offended by the most terrible imprecations. Every thing was filthy to excess, and the smell was quite disgusting. Every one, even the Governor, was reluctant to go amongst them. He persuaded her to leave her watch in the office, telling her that his presence would not prevent its being torn from her! She saw enough to convince her that every thing bad was going on. In short, in giving me this account, she repeatedly said — 'All I tell thee is a faint picture of the reality; the filth, the closeness of the rooms, the ferocious manners and expressions of the women towards each other, and the abandoned wickedness which every thing bespoke, are quite indescribable.'"—Pp. 117—119.

Her design, at this time, was confined to the instruction of about seventy children, who were wandering about in this scene of horror; and for whom even the most abandoned of their wretched mothers thanked her with tears of gratitude for her benevolent intentions! while several of the younger women flocked about her, and entreated, with the most pathetic eagerness, to be admitted to her intended school. She now applied to the Governor, and had an interview with the two

* I do not now reprint the detailed statements which formed the bulk of this paper, as originally published; and retain only the account of the marvellous reformation effected in Newgate, by the heroic labours of Mrs. Fry and her sisters of charity — of which I think it a duty to omit nothing that may help to perpetuate the remembrance.

Sheriffs and the Ordinary, who received her with the most cordial approbation; but fairly intimated to her "their *persuasion that her efforts would be utterly fruitless.*" After some investigation, it was officially reported, that there was no vacant spot in which the school could be established; and an ordinary philanthropist would probably have retired disheartened from the undertaking. Mrs. Fry, however, mildly requested to be admitted once more alone among the women, that she might conduct the search for herself. Difficulties always disappear before the energy of real zeal and benevolence: an empty cell was immediately discovered, and the school was to be opened the very day after.

"The next day she commenced the school, in company with a young lady, who then visited a prison for the first time, and who since gave me a very interesting description of her feelings upon that occasion. The railing was crowded with half-naked women, struggling together for the front situations with the most boisterous violence, and begging with the utmost vociferation. She felt as if she was going into a den of wild beasts; and she well recollects quite shuddering when the door closed upon her, and she was locked in, with such a herd of novel and desperate companions. This day, however, the school surpassed their utmost expectations: their only pain arose from the numerous and pressing applications made by young women, who longed to be taught and employed. The narrowness of the room rendered it then impossible to yield to these requests: but they tempted these ladies to project a school for the employment of the tried women, for teaching them to read and to work.

"When this intention was mentioned to the friends of these ladies, it appeared at first so visionary and unpromising, that it met with very slender encouragement: they were told that the certain consequence of introducing work would be, that it would be stolen: that though such an experiment might be reasonable enough, if made in the country, among women who had been accustomed to hard labour, it was quite hopeless, when tried upon those who had been so long habituated to vice and idleness. In short, it was predicted, and by many, too, whose wisdom and benevolence added weight to their opinions, that those who had set at defiance the law of the land, with all its terrors, would very speedily revolt from an authority which had nothing to enforce it; and nothing more to recommend it than its simplicity and gentleness. But the noble zeal of these unassuming women was not to be so repressed; and feeling that their design was intended for the good and the happiness of others, they trusted that it would receive the guidance and protection of Him, who often is pleased to accomplish the highest purposes by the most feeble instruments.

"With these impressions, they had the boldness to declare, that if a committee could be found who would share the labour, and a matron who would engage never to leave the prison, day or night, they would undertake to try the experiment, that is, they would themselves *find employment* for the women, *procure the necessary money*, till the city could be induced to relieve them, and be answerable for the safety of the property committed into the hands of the prisoners.

"The committee *immediately presented itself*; it consisted of the wife of a clergyman, and eleven (female) members of the Society of Friends. They professed their willingness to suspend every other engagement and avocation, and to devote themselves to Newgate; and in truth, they have performed their promise. With no interval of relaxation, and with but few intermissions from the call of other and more imperious duties, they have since *lived* amongst the prisoners."

Even this astonishing progress could not correct the incredulity of men of benevolence and knowledge of the world. The Reverend Ordinary, though filled with admiration for the exertions of this intrepid and devoted band, fairly told Mrs. F. that her designs, like many others for the improvement of that wretched mansion, "*would inevitably fail.*" The Governor encouraged her to go on — but confessed to his friends, "that he could not see even the *possibility* of her success." But the wisdom of this world is foolishness, and its fears but snares to entangle our feet in the career of our duty. Mrs. F. saw with other eyes, and felt with another heart. She went again to the Sheriffs and the Governor; — near one hundred of the women were brought before them, and with much solemnity and earnestness, engaged to give the strictest obedience to all the regulations of their heroic benefactress. A set of rules was accordingly promulgated, which we have not room here to transcribe; but they imported the sacrifice of all their darling and much cherished vices; — drinking, gaming, card-playing, novel reading, were entirely prohibited — and regular application to work engaged for in every quarter. For the space of one month these benevolent women laboured in private in the midst of their unhappy flock; at the end of that short time they invited the Corporation of London to satisfy themselves, by inspection, of the effect of their pious exertions.

"In compliance with this appointment, the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs, and several of the Aldermen, at-

tended. The prisoners were assembled together; and it being requested that no alteration in their usual practice might take place, one of the ladies read a chapter in the Bible, and then the females proceeded to their various avocations. Their attention during the time of reading, their orderly and sober deportment, their decent dress, the absence of every thing like tumult, noise, or contention, the obedience, and the respect shown by them, and the cheerfulness visible in their countenances and manners, conspired to excite the astonishment and admiration of their visitors.

"Many of these knew Newgate; had visited it a few months before, and had not forgotten the painful impressions made by a scene exhibiting, perhaps, the very utmost limits of misery and guilt.—They now saw, what, without exaggeration, may be called a transformation. Riot, licentiousness, and filth, exchanged for order, sobriety, and comparative neatness in the chamber, the apparel, and the persons of the prisoners. They saw no more an assemblage of abandoned and shameless creatures, half-naked and half-drunk, rather demanding, than requesting charity. The prison no more resounded with obscenity, and imprecations, and licentious songs; and to use the coarse, but the just, expression of one who knew the prison well, 'this hell upon earth' already exhibited the appearance of an industrious manufactory, or a well-regulated family.

"The magistrates, to evince their sense of the importance of the alterations which had been effected, immediately adopted the whole plan as a part of the system of Newgate; empowered the ladies to punish the refractory by short confinement, undertook part of the expense of the matron, and loaded the ladies with thanks and benedictions."—Pp. 130, 131.

We can add nothing to this touching and elevating statement. The story of a glorious victory gives us a less powerful or proud emotion — and thanks and benedictions appear to us never to have been so richly deserved.

"A year," says Mr. Buxton, "has now elapsed since the operations in Newgate began; and those most competent to judge, the late Lord Mayor and the present, the late Sheriffs and the present, the late Governor and the present, various Grand Juries, the Chairman of the Police Committee, the Ordinary, and the Officers of the prison, have all declared their satisfaction, mixed with astonishment, at the alteration which has taken place in the conduct of the females.

"It is true, and the Ladies' Committee are anxious that it should not be concealed, that some of the rules have been occasionally broken. Spirits, they fear, have more than once been introduced; and it was discovered at one period, when many of the ladies were absent, that card-playing had been resumed. But, though truth compels them to acknowledge these deviations, they have been of a very limited extent. I could find but one lady who had heard an oath, and there had not been above half-a-dozen instances of intoxication; and the ladies feel justified in stating, that the rules have generally been observed. The ladies themselves have been treated with uniform respect and gratitude."—Pp. 132, 133.

At the close of a Session, many of the reformed prisoners were dismissed, and many new ones were received — and, under their auspices, card-playing was again introduced. One of the ladies, however, went among them alone, and earnestly and affectionately explained to them the pernicious consequences of this practice; and represented to them how much she would be gratified, if, even from regard to her, they would agree to renounce it.

"Soon after she retired to the ladies' room, one of the prisoners came to her, and expressed, in a manner which indicated real feeling, her sorrow for having broken the rules of so kind a friend, and gave her a pack of cards: four others did the same. Having burnt the cards in their presence, she felt bound to remunerate them for their value, and to mark her sense of their ready obedience by some small present. A few days afterwards, she called the first to her, and telling her intention, produced a neat muslin handkerchief. To her surprise, the girl looked disappointed; and, on being asked the reason, confessed she had hoped that Mrs. ——— would have given her a Bible with her own name written in it! which she should value beyond any thing else, and always keep and read. Such a request, made in such a manner, could not be refused; and the lady assures me that she never gave a Bible in her life, which was received with so much interest and satisfaction, or one, which she thinks more likely to do good. It is remarkable, that this girl, from her conduct in her preceding prison, and in court, came to Newgate with the worst of characters."—P. 134.

The change, indeed, pervaded every department of the female division. Those who were marched off for transportation, instead of breaking the windows and furniture, and going off, according to immemorial usage, with drunken songs and intolerable disorder, took a serious and tender leave of their companions, and expressed the utmost gratitude to their benefactors, from whom they parted with tears. Stealing has also been entirely suppressed; and while upwards of twenty thousand articles of dress have been manufactured, not one has been lost or purloined within the precincts of the prison!

We have nothing more to say; and would not willingly weaken the effect of this impres-

sive statement by any observations of ours. Let us hear no more of the difficulty of regulating provincial prisons, when the prostitute felons of London have been thus easily reformed and converted. Let us never again be told of the impossibility of repressing drunkenness and profligacy, or introducing habits of industry in small establishments, when this great crater of vice and corruption has been thus stilled and purified. And, above all, let there be an end of the pitiful apology of the want of funds, or means, or agents, to effect those easier improvements, when women from the middle ranks of life — when quiet unassuming matrons, unaccustomed to business, or to any but domestic exertions, have, without funds, without agents, without aid or encouragement of any description, trusted themselves within the very centre of infection and despair; and, by opening their hearts only, and not their purses, have effected, by the mere force of kindness, gentleness, and compassion, a labour, the like to which does not remain to be performed, and which has smoothed the way and ensured success to all similar labours. We cannot *envy* the happiness which Mrs. Fry must enjoy from the consciousness of her own great achievements; — but there is no happiness or honour of which we should be so proud to be partakers: and we seem to relieve our own hearts of their share of national gratitude, in thus placing on her simple and modest brow, that truly Civic Crown, which far outshines the laurels of conquest, or the coronals of power — and can only be outshone itself, by those wreaths of imperishable glory which await the champions of Faith and Charity in a higher state of existence.

MEMOIRS OF CUMBERLAND.

(April, 1806.)

Memoirs of Richard Cumberland: written by himself. Containing an Account of his Life and Writings, interspersed with Anecdotes and Characters of the most distinguished Persons of his Time with whom he had Intercourse or Connexion. 4to. Pp. 533. London: 1806.*

We certainly have no wish for the death of Mr. Cumberland; on the contrary, we hope he will live long enough to make a large supplement to these memoirs: but he has embarrassed us a little by publishing this volume in his lifetime. We are extremely unwilling to say any thing that may hurt the feelings of a man of distinguished talents, who is drawing to the end of his career, and imagines that he has hitherto been ill used by the world: but he has shown, in this publication, such an appetite for praise, and such a jealousy of censure, that we are afraid we cannot do our duty conscientiously, without giving him offence. The truth is, that the book has rather disappointed us. We expected it to be extremely amusing; and it is not. There is too much of the first part of the title in it, and too little of the last. Of the life and writings of Richard Cumberland, we hear more than enough; but of the distinguished persons with whom he lived, we have many fewer characters and anecdotes than we could have wished. We are the more inclined to regret this, both because the general style of Mr. Cumberland's compositions has convinced us, that no one could have exhibited characters and anecdotes in a more engaging manner, and because, from what he has put into this book, we actually see that he had excellent opportunities for collecting, and still better talents for relating them. The anecdotes and characters which we have, are given in a very pleasing and animated manner, and form the chief merit of the publication: but they do not occupy one tenth part of it; and the rest is filled with details that do not often interest, and observations that do not always amuse.

Authors, we think, should not generally be encouraged to write their own lives. The genius of Rousseau, his enthusiasm, and the novelty of his plan, have rendered the Confessions, in some respects, the most interesting of books. But a writer, who is in full possession of his senses, who has lived in the world like the men and women who compose it, and whose vanity aims only at the praise of great talents and accomplishments, must not hope to

* I reprint part of this paper — for the sake chiefly of the anecdotes of Bentley, Bubb Dodington, Soame Jenyns, and a few others, which I think remarkable — and very much, also, for the lively and graphic account of the impression of Garrick's new style of acting, as compared with that of Quin and the old schools — which is as good and as curious as Colley Cibber's admirable sketches of Betterton and Booth.

write a book like the Confessions: and is scarcely to be trusted with the delineation of his own character, or the narrative of his own adventures. We have no objection, however, to let authors tell their own story, as an apology for telling that of all their acquaintances; and can easily forgive them for grouping and assorting their anecdotes of their contemporaries, according to the chronology and incidents of their own lives. This is but indulging the painter of a great gallery of worthies with a panel for his own portrait; and though it will probably be the least like of the whole collection, it would be hard to grudge him this little gratification.

Life has often been compared to a journey; and the simile seems to hold better in nothing than in the identity of the rules by which those who write their travels, and those who write their lives, should be governed. When a man returns from visiting any celebrated region, we expect to hear much more of the remarkable things and persons he has seen, than of his own personal transactions; and are naturally disappointed if, after saying that he lived much with illustrious statesmen or heroes, he chooses rather to tell us of his own travelling equipage, or of his cookery and servants, than to give us any account of the character and conversation of those distinguished persons. In the same manner, when at the close of a long life, spent in circles of literary and political celebrity, an author sits down to give the world an account of his retrospections, it is reasonable to stipulate that he shall talk less of himself than of his associates; and natural to complain, if he tells long stories of his schoolmasters and grandmothers, while he passes over some of the most illustrious of his companions with a bare mention of their names.

Mr. Cumberland has offended a little in this way. He has also composed these memoirs, we think, in too diffuse, rambling, and careless a style. There is evidently no selection or method in his narrative: and unweighed remarks, and fatiguing apologies and protestations, are tediously interwoven with it, in the genuine style of good-natured but irrepressible loquacity. The whole composition, indeed, has not only too much the air of conversation: it has sometimes an unfortunate resemblance to the conversation of a professed talker; and we meet with many passages in which the author appears to work himself up to an artificial vivacity, and to give a certain air of smartness to his expression, by the introduction of cant phrases, odd metaphors, and a sort of practised and theatrical originality. The work, however, is well worth looking over, and contains many more amusing passages than we can afford to extract on the present occasion.

Mr. Cumberland was born in 1732; and he has a very natural pride in relating that his paternal great-grandfather was the learned and most exemplary Bishop Cumberland, author of the treatise *De Legibus Naturæ;* and that his maternal grandfather was the celebrated Dr. Richard Bentley. Of the last of these distinguished persons he has given, from the distinct recollection of his childhood, a much more amiable and engaging representation than has hitherto been made public. Instead of the haughty and morose critic and controversialist, we here learn, with pleasure, that he was as remarkable for mildness and kind affections in private life, as for profound erudition and sagacity as an author. Mr. Cumberland has collected a number of little anecdotes that seem to be quite conclusive upon this head; but we rather insert the following general testimony:

"I had a sister somewhat older than myself. Had there been any of that sternness in my grandfather, which is so falsely imputed to him, it may well be supposed we should have been awed into silence in his presence, to which we were admitted every day. Nothing can be further from the truth; he was the unwearied patron and promoter of all our childish sports and sallies; at all times ready to detach himself from any topic of conversation to take an interest and bear his part in our amusements. The eager curiosity natural to our age, and the questions it gave birth to, so teazing to many parents, he, on the contrary, attended to and encouraged, as the claims of infant reason, never to be evaded or abused; strongly recommending, that to all such inquiries answers should be given according to the strictest truth, and information dealt to us in the clearest terms, as a sacred duty never to be departed from. I have broken in upon him many a time in his hours of study, when he would put his book aside, ring his hand-bell for his servant, and be led to his shelves to take down a picture book for my amusement! I do not say that his good-nature always gained its object, as the pictures which his books generally supplied me with were anatomical drawings of dissected bodies,

very little calculated to communicate delight; but he had nothing better to produce; and surely such an effort on his part, however unsuccessful, was no feature of a cynic; a cynic '*should be made of sterner stuff.*'

"Once, and only once, I recollect his giving me a gentle rebuke for making a most outrageous noise in the room over his library, and disturbing him in his studies: I had no apprehension of anger from him, and confidently answered that I could not help it, as I had been at battledore and shuttlecock with Master Gooch, the Bishop of Ely's son. 'And I have been at this sport with his father,' he replied; 'But thine has been the more amusing game; so there's no harm done.'"

He also mentions, that when his adversary Collins had fallen into poverty in his latter days, Bentley, apprehending that he was in some measure responsible for his loss of reputation, contrived to administer to his necessities in a way not less creditable to his delicacy than to his liberality.

The youngest daughter of this illustrious scholar, the Phœbe of Byron's pastoral, and herself a woman of extraordinary accomplishments, was the mother of Mr. Cumberland. His father, who appears also to have been a man of the most blameless and amiable dispositions, and to have united, in a very exemplary way, the characters of a clergyman and a gentleman, was Rector of Stanwick in Northamptonshire at the birth of his son. He went to school, first at Bury St. Edmunds, and afterwards at Westminster. But the most valuable part of his early education was that for which he was indebted to the taste and intelligence of his mother. We insert with pleasure the following amiable paragraph: —

"It was in these intervals from school that my mother began to form both my taste and my ear for poetry, by employing me every evening to read to her, of which art she was a very able mistress. Our readings were, with very few exceptions, confined to the chosen plays of Shakspeare, whom she both admired and understood in the true spirit and sense of the author. With all her father's critical *acumen*, she could trace, and teach me to unravel, all the meanders of his metaphor, and point out where it illuminated, or where it only loaded and obscured the meaning. These were happy hours and interesting lectures to me; whilst my beloved father, ever placid and complacent, sate beside us, and took part in our amusement; his voice was never heard but in the tone of approbation; his countenance never marked but with the natural traces of his indelible and hereditary benevolence."

The effect of these readings was, that the young author, at twelve years of age, produced a sort of drama, called "Shakspeare in the Shades," composed almost entirely of passages from that great writer, strung together and assorted with no despicable ingenuity. But it is more to the purpose to observe that, at this early period of his life, he first saw Garrick, in the character of Lothario; and has left this animated account of the impression which the scene made upon his mind: —

"I have the spectacle even now, as it were, before my eyes. Quin presented himself, upon the rising of the curtain, in a green velvet coat embroidered down the seams, an enormous full-bottomed periwig, rolled stockings, and high-heeled square-toed shoes: with very little variation of cadence, and in a deep full tone, accompanied by a sawing kind of action, which had more of the senate than of the stage in it, he rolled out his heroics with an air of dignified indifference, that seemed to disdain the plaudits that were bestowed upon him. Mrs. Cibber, in a key high pitched, but sweet withal, sung, or rather recitatived, Rowe's harmonious strains, something in the manner of the Improvisatori: it was so extremely wanting in contrast, that though it did not wound the ear, it wearied it; when she had once recited two or three speeches, I could anticipate the manner of every succeeding one. It was like a long old legendary ballad of innumerable stanzas, every one of which is sung to the same tune, eternally chiming in the ear without variation or relief. Mrs. Pritchard was an actress of a different cast, had more nature, and of course more change of tone and variety both of action and expression. In my opinion, the comparison was decidedly in her favour. But when, after long and eager expectation, I first beheld little Garrick, then young and light, and alive in every muscle and in every feature, come bounding on the stage, and pointing at the wittol Altamont and heavy-paced Horatio — heavens, what a transition! — it seemed as if a whole century had been stepped over in the transition of a single scene! Old things were done away; and a new order at once brought forward, bright and luminous, and clearly destined to dispel the barbarisms and bigotry of a tasteless age, too long attached to the prejudices of custom, and superstitiously devoted to the illusions of imposing declamation. This heaven-born actor was then struggling to emancipate his audience from the slavery they were resigned to; and though at times he succeeded in throwing in some gleams of new-born light upon them, yet in general they seemed to *love darkness better than light;* and in the dialogue of altercation between Horatio and Lothario, bestowed far the greater *show of hands* upon the master of the old school than upon the founder of the new. I thank my stars, my feelings in those moments led me right; they were those of nature, and therefore could not err."

Some years after this, Mr. Cumberland's father exchanged his living of Stanwick for that of Fulham, in order that his son might have the benefit of his society while obliged to reside in the vicinity of the metropolis. The celebrated Bubb Dodington resided at this time in the neighbouring parish of Hammersmith; and Mr. Cumberland, who soon became a frequent guest at his table, has presented his readers with the following spirited full-length portrait of that very remarkable and preposterous personage:—

"Our splendid host was excelled by no man in doing the honours of his house and table; to the ladies he had all the courtly and profound devotion of a Spaniard, with the ease and gaiety of a Frenchman towards the men. His mansion was magnificent; massy, and stretching out to a great extent of front, with an enormous portico of Doric columns, ascended by a stately flight of steps. There were turrets, and wings too, that went I know not whither, though now levelled with the ground, or gone to more ignoble uses; Vanbrugh, who constructed this superb edifice, seemed to have had the plan of Blenheim in his thoughts, and the interior was as proud and splendid as the exterior was bold and imposing. All this was exactly in unison with the taste of its magnificent owner; who had gilt and furnished the apartments with a profusion of finery, that kept no terms with simplicity, and not always with elegance or harmony of style. Whatever Mr. Dodington's revenue then was, he had the happy art of managing it with such economy, that I believe he made more display at less cost than any man in the kingdom but himself could have done. His town-house in Pall-Mall, and this villa at Hammersmith, were such establishments as few nobles in the nation were possessed of. In either of these he was not to be approached but through a suit of apartments, and rarely seated but under painted ceilings and gilt entablatures. In his villa you were conducted through two rows of antique marble statues, ranged in a gallery floored with the rarest marbles, and enriched with columns of granite and lapis lazuli; his saloon was hung with the finest Gobelin tapestry, and he slept in a bed encanopied with peacock's feathers in the style of Mrs. Montague. When he passed from Pall-Mall to La Trappe it was always in a coach, which I could not but suspect had been his ambassadorial equipage at Madrid, drawn by six fat unwieldy black horses, short-docked, and of colossal dignity. Neither was he less characteristic in apparel than in equipage; he had a wardrobe loaded with rich and flaring suits, each in itself a load to the wearer, and of these I have no doubt but many were coeval with his embassy above mentioned, and every birthday had added to the stock. In doing this he so contrived as never to put his old dresses out of countenance, by any variations in the fashion of the new; in the mean time, his bulk and corpulency gave full display to a vast expanse and profusion of brocade and embroidery, and this, when set off with an enormous tye-periwig and deep-laced ruffles, gave the picture of an ancient courtier in his gala habit, or Quin in his stage dress. Nevertheless, it must be confessed this style, though out of date, was not out of character, but harmonized so well with the person of the wearer, that I remember when he made his first speech in the House of Peers as Lord Melcombe, all the flashes of his wit, all the studied phrases and well-turned periods of his rhetoric, lost their effect, simply because the orator had laid aside his magisterial tie, and put on a modern bag-wig, which was as much out of costume upon the broad expanse of his shoulders, as a cue would have been upon the robes of the Lord-Chief-Justice."

The following, with all our former impressions of his hero's absurdity, rather surpassed our expectations:—

"Of pictures he seemed to take his estimate only by their cost; in fact, he was not possessed of any. But I recollect his saying to me one day in his great saloon at Eastbury, that if he had half a score pictures of a thousand pounds a-piece he would gladly decorate his walls with them; in place of which I am sorry to say he had stuck up *immense patches of gilt leather, shaped into bugle horns,* upon hangings of rich crimson velvet! and round his state bed he displayed a carpeting of gold and silver embroidery, which too glaringly betrayed its derivation from coat, waistcoat, and breeches, by the testimony of pockets, buttonholes, and loops, with other equally incontrovertible witnesses, subpœnaed from the tailor's shopboard! When he paid his court at St. James's to the present queen upon her nuptials, he approached to kiss her hand, decked in an embroidered suit of silk, with lilac waistcoat, and breeches, the latter of which, in the act of kneeling down, forgot their duty and broke loose from their moorings in a very indecorous and uncourtly manner."

"During my stay at Eastbury, we were visited by the late Mr. Henry Fox and Mr. Alderman Beckford; the solid good sense of the former, and the dashing loquacity of the latter, formed a striking contrast between the characters of these gentlemen. To Mr. Fox our host paid all that courtly homage, which he so well knew how to time, and where to apply; to Beckford he did not observe the same attentions, but in the happiest flow of his raillery and wit combated this intrepid talker with admirable effect. It was an interlude truly comic and amusing.—Beckford loud, voluble, self-sufficient, and galled by hits which he could not parry, and probably did not expect, laid himself more and more open in the vehemence of his argument; Dodington lolling in his chair in perfect apathy and self-command, dozing, and even snoring at intervals, in his lethargic way, broke out every now and then into such gleams and flashes of wit and

irony, as by the contrast of his phlegm with the other's impetuosity, made his humour irresistible, and set the table in a roar. He was here upon his very strongest ground."

"He wrote small poems with great pains, and elaborate letters with much terseness of style, and some quaintness of expression: I have seen him refer to a volume of his own verses in manuscript, but he was very shy, and I never had the perusal of it. I was rather better acquainted with his *Diary*, which since his death has been published; and I well remember the temporary disgust he seemed to take, when upon his asking what I would do with it should he bequeath it to my discretion, I instantly replied that I would destroy it. There was a third, which I more coveted a sight of than of either of the above, as it contained a miscellaneous collection of anecdotes, repartees, good sayings, and humorous incidents, of which he was part author and part compiler, and out of which he was in the habit of refreshing his memory, when he prepared himself to expect certain men of wit and pleasantry, either at his own house or elsewhere. Upon this practice, which he did not affect to conceal, he observed to me one day, that it was a compliment he paid to society, when he submitted to steal weapons out of his own armoury for their entertainment."

"I had taken leave of Lord Melcombe the day preceding the coronation, and found him before a looking-glass in his new robes,—practising attitudes, and debating within himself upon the most graceful mode of carrying his coronet in the procession. He was in high glee with his fresh and blooming honours: and I left him in the act of dictating a billet to Lady Hervey, apprising her that a *young lord* was coming to throw himself at her feet."—P. 159.

Mr. Cumberland went to Ireland with Lord Halifax in 1761; and the celebrated Single-Speech Hamilton went as chief secretary. His character is well drawn in the following sentences:—

"He spoke well, but not often, in the Irish House of Commons. He had a striking countenance, a graceful carriage, great self-possession and personal courage: he was not easily put out of his way by any of those unaccommodating repugnances that men of weaker nerves, or more tender consciences, might have stumbled at, or been checked by: he could mask the passions that were natural to him, and assume those that did not belong to him: he was indefatigable, meditative, mysterious: his opinions were the result of long labour and much reflection, but he had the art of setting them forth as if they were the starts of ready genius and a quick perception: he had as much seeming steadiness as a partisan could stand in need of, and all the real flexibility that could suit his purpose, or advance his interest. He would fain have retained his connexion with Edmund Burke, and associated him to his politics, for he well knew the value of his talents; but in that object he was soon disappointed: the genius of Burke was of too high a caste to endure debasement"—Pp. 169, 170.

In Dublin Mr. Cumberland was introduced to a new and more miscellaneous society than he had hitherto been used to, and has presented his readers with striking sketches of Dr. Pococke and Primate Stone. We are more amused, however, with the following picture of George Faulkner:—

"Description must fall short in the attempt to convey any sketch of that eccentric being to those who have not read him in the notes of Jephson, or seen him in the mimickry of Foote, who, in his portraits of Faulkner, found the only sitter whom his extravagant pencil could not caricature; for he had a solemn intrepidity of egotism, and a daring contempt of absurdity, that fairly outfaced imitation, and, like Garrick's Ode on Shakspeare, which Johnson said 'defied criticism,' so did George, in the original spirit of his own perfect buffoonery, defy caricature. He never deigned to join in the laugh he had raised, nor seemed to have a feeling of the ridicule he had provoked. At the same time that he was pre-eminently, and by preference, the butt and buffoon of the company, he could find openings and opportunities for hits of retaliation which were such left-handed thrusts as few could parry: nobody could foresee where they would fall; nobody, of course, was fore-armed: and as there was, in his calculation, but one supereminent character in the kingdom of Ireland, and he the printer of the Dublin Journal, rank was no shield against George's arrows, which flew where he listed, and hit or missed as chance directed,—he cared not about consequences. He gave good meat and excellent claret in abundance. I sat at his table once from dinner till two in the morning, whilst George swallowed immense potations, with one solitary sodden strawberry at the bottom of the glass,—which he said was recommended to him by his doctor for its cooling properties! He never lost his recollection or equilibrium the whole time, and was in excellent foolery. It was a singular coincidence, that there was a person in company who had received his reprieve at the gallows, and the very judge who had passed sentence of death upon him: but this did not in the least disturb the harmony of the society, nor embarrass any human creature present."—Pp. 174, 175.

At this period of his story he introduces several sketches and characters of his literary friends; which are executed, for the most part, with great force and vivacity. Of Garrick he says,—

"Nature had done so much for him, that he could not help being an actor; she gave him a frame of so manageable a proportion, and from its flexibility so

perfectly under command, that, by its aptitude and elasticity, he could draw it out to fit any sizes of character that tragedy could offer to him, and contract it to any scale of ridiculous diminution, that his Abel Drugger, Scrubb, or Fribble, could require of him to sink it to. His eye, in the mean time, was so penetrating, so speaking; his brow so moveable, and all his features so plastic, and so accommodating, that wherever his mind impelled them, they would go; and before his tongue could give the text, his countenance would express the spirit and the passion of the part he was encharged with."—Pp. 245, 246.

The following picture of Soame Jenyns is excellent:—

"He was the man who bore his part in all societies with the most even temper and undisturbed hilarity of all the good companions whom I ever knew. He came into your house at the very moment you had put upon your card; he dressed himself to do your party honour in all the colours of the jay; his lace indeed had long since lost its lustre, but his coat had faithfully retained its cut since the days when gentlemen embroidered figured velvets with short sleeves, boot cuffs, and buckram shirts. As nature had cast him in the exact mould of an ill made pair of stiff stays, he followed her so close in the fashion of his coat, that it was doubted if he did not wear them. Because he had a protuberant wen just under his poll, he wore a wig that did not cover above half his head. His eyes were protruded like the eyes of the lobster, who wears them at the end of his feelers, and yet there was room between one of these and his nose for another wen, that added nothing to his beauty; yet I heard this good man very innocently remark when Gibbon published his history, that he wondered any body so ugly could write a book.

"Such was the exterior of a man, who was the charm of the circle, and gave a zest to every company he came into: his pleasantry was of a sort peculiar to himself; it harmonized with every thing; it was like the bread to your dinner; you did not perhaps make it the whole, or principal part of your meal, but it was an admirable and wholesome auxiliary to your other viands. Soame Jenyns told you no long stories, engrossed not much of your attention, and was not angry with those that did. His thoughts were original, and were apt to have a very whimsical affinity to paradox in them: he wrote verses upon dancing, and prose upon the origin of evil; yet he was a very indifferent metaphysician, and a worse dancer; ill-nature and personality, with the single exception of his lines upon Johnson, I never heard fall from his lips: those lines I have forgotten, though I believe I was the first person to whom he recited them; they were very bad, but he had been told that Johnson ridiculed his metaphysics, and some of us had just then been making extemporary epitaphs upon each other. Though his wit was harmless, yet the general cast of it was ironical; there was a terseness in his repartees, that had a play of words as well as of thought; as, when speaking of the difference between laying out money upon land, or purchasing into the funds, he said, 'One was principal without interest, and the other interest without principal.' Certain it is he had a brevity of expression, that never hung upon the ear, and you felt the point in the very moment that he made the push."—Pp. 247—249.

Of Goldsmith he says,

"That he was fantastically and whimsically vain, all the world knows; but there was no malice in his heart. He was tenacious to a ridiculous extreme of certain pretensions that did not, and by nature could not, belong to him, and at the same time he was inexcusably careless of the fame which he had powers to command. What foibles he had he took no pains to conceal; and the good qualities of his heart were too frequently obscured by the carelessness of his conduct, and the frivolity of his manners. Sir Joshua Reynolds was very good to him, and would have drilled him into better trim and order for society, if he would have been amenable; for Reynolds was a perfect gentleman, had good sense, great propriety, with all the social attributes, and all the graces of hospitality, equal to any man.

"Distress drove Goldsmith upon undertakings neither congenial with his studies nor worthy of his talents. I remember him, when in his chambers in the Temple, he showed me the beginning of his *Animated Nature*; it was with a sigh, such as genius draws, when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread, and talk of birds and beasts and creeping things, which Pidcock's showman would have done as well. Poor fellow, he hardly knew an ass from a mule, nor a turkey from a goose, but when he saw it on the table."—Pp. 257—259.

"I have heard Dr. Johnson relate with infinite humour the circumstance of his rescuing Goldsmith from a ridiculous dilemma, by the purchase-money of his Vicar of Wakefield, which he sold on his behalf to Dodsley, and, as I think, for the sum of ten pounds only. He had run up a debt with his landlady, for board and lodging, of some few pounds, and was at his wits end how to wipe off the score, and keep a roof over his head, except by closing with a very staggering proposal on her part, and taking his creditor to wife, whose charms were very far from alluring, whilst her demands were extremely urgent. In this crisis of his fate he was found by Johnson, in the act of meditating on the melancholy alternative before him. He showed Johnson his manuscript of the Vicar of Wakefield, but seemed to be without any plan, or even hope, of raising money upon the disposal of it; when Johnson cast his eye upon it, he discovered something that gave him hope, and immediately took it to Dodsley, who paid down the price above mentioned in ready money, and added an eventual condition upon its future sale. Johnson described the precautions he took in concealing the amount of the sum he had in hand, which he prudently ad-

ministered to him by a guinea at a time. In the event he paid off the landlady's score, and redeemed the person of his friend from her embraces."—P. 273.

We will pronounce no general judgment on the literary merits of Mr. Cumberland; but our opinion of them certainly has not been raised by the perusal of these memoirs. There is no depth of thought, nor dignity of sentiment about him; — he is too frisky for an old man, and too gossipping for an historian. His style is too negligent even for the most familiar composition; and though he has proved himself, upon other occasions, to be a great master of good English, he has admitted a number of phrases into this work, which, we are inclined to think, would scarcely pass current even in conversation. "I declare to truth"—"with the greatest pleasure in life"—"she would lead off in her best manner," &c., are expressions which we should not expect to hear in the society to which Mr. Cumberland belongs; — "laid," for lay, is still more insufferable from the antagonist of Lowth and the descendant of Bentley; — "querulential" strikes our ear as exotic; — "locate, location, and locality," for situation simply, seem also to be bad; and "intuition" for observation sounds very pedantic, to say the least of it. Upon the whole, however, this volume is not the work of an ordinary writer; and we should probably have been more indulgent to its faults, if the excellence of some of the author's former productions had not sent us to its perusal with expectations perhaps somewhat extravagant.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

(July, 1803.)

The Works of the Right Honourable Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Including her Correspondence, Poems, and Essays. Published by permission, from her Original Papers. 5 vols. 8vo. London: 1803.

These volumes are so very entertaining that we ran them all through immediately upon their coming into our possession; and at the same time contain so little that is either difficult or profound, that we may venture to give some account of them to our readers without farther deliberation.

The only thing that disappointed us was the memoir of the writer's life, prefixed by the editor to her correspondence. In point of composition it is very tame and inelegant; and rather excites than gratifies the curiosity of the reader, by the imperfect manner in which the facts are narrated. As the letters themselves, however, are arranged in a chronological order, and commonly contain very distinct notices of the writer's situation at their dates, we shall be enabled, by our extracts from them, to give a pretty clear idea of her Ladyship's life and adventures, with very little assistance from the meagre narrative of Mr. Dallaway.

Lady Mary Pierrepoint, eldest daughter of the Duke of Kingston, was born in 1690; and gave, in her early youth, such indications of a studious disposition, that she was initiated into the rudiments of the learned languages along with her brother. Her first years appear to have been spent in retirement; and yet the very first series of letters with which we are presented, indicates a great deal of that talent for ridicule, and power of observation, by which she afterwards became so famous, and so formidable. These letters (about a dozen in number) are addressed to Mrs. Wortley, the mother of her future husband; and along with a good deal of girlish flattery and affectation, display such a degree of easy humour and sound penetration, as is not often to be met with in a damsel of nineteen, even in this age of precocity. The following letter, in 1709, is written upon the misbehaviour of one of her female favourites: —

"My knight-errantry is at an end; and I believe I shall henceforward think freeing of galley-slaves and knocking down windmills, more laudable undertakings than the defence of any woman's reputation whatever. To say truth, I have never had any great esteem for the generality of the fair sex; and my only consolation for being of that gender, has been the assurance it gave me of never being married to any one among them. But I own, at present, I am so much out of humour with the actions of Lady H***, that I never was so heartily ashamed of my petticoats before. My only refuge is, the sincere hope that she is out of her senses; and taking herself for the Queen of Sheba, and Mr. Mildmay for King Solomon, I do not think it quite so ridiculous: but the men, you may well imagine, are not so charitable; and they agree in the kind reflection, that nothing hinders women from playing the fool, but not having it in their power."—Vol. i. pp. 180, 181.

In the course of this correspondence with the mother, Lady Mary appears to have conceived a very favourable opinion of the son; and the next series of letters contains her antenuptial correspondence with that gentleman, from 1710 to 1712. Though this correspondence has interested and entertained us as much at least as any thing in the book, we are afraid that it will afford but little gratification to the common admirers of love-letters. Her Ladyship, though endowed with a very lively imagination, seems not to have been very susceptible of violent or tender emotions, and to have imbibed a very decided contempt for sentimental and romantic nonsense, at an age which is commonly more indulgent. There are no raptures nor ecstasies, therefore, in these letters; no flights of fondness, nor vows of constancy, nor upbraidings of capricious affection. To say the truth, her Ladyship acts a part in the correspondence that is not often allotted to a female performer. Mr. Wortley, though captivated by her beauty and her vivacity, seems evidently to have been a little alarmed at her love of distinction, her propensity to satire, and the apparent inconstancy of her attachments. Such a woman, he was afraid, and not very unreasonably, would make rather an uneasy and extravagant companion to a man of plain understanding and moderate fortune; and he had sense enough to foresee, and generosity enough to explain to her, the risk to which their mutual happiness might be exposed by a rash and indissoluble union. Lady Mary, who probably saw her own character in a different light, and was at any rate biassed by her inclinations, appears to have addressed a great number of letters to him upon this occasion; and to have been at considerable pains to relieve him of his scruples, and restore his confidence in the substantial excellences of her character. These letters, which are written with a great deal of female spirit and masculine sense, impress us with a very favourable notion of the talents and dispositions of the writer; and as they exhibit her in a point of view altogether different from any in which she has hitherto been presented to the public, we shall venture upon a pretty long extract: —

"I will state the case to you as plainly as I can, and then ask yourself if you use me well. I have showed, in every action of my life, an esteem for you that at least challenges a grateful regard. I have even trusted my reputation in your hands; for I have made no scruple of giving you, under my own hand, an assurance of my friendship. After all this, I exact nothing from you: if you find it inconvenient for your affairs to take so small a fortune, I desire you to sacrifice nothing to me: I pretend no tie upon your honour; but, in recompence for so clear and so disinterested a proceeding, must I ever receive injuries and ill usage?

"Perhaps I have been indiscreet: I came young into the hurry of the world; a great innocence, and an undesigning gaiety, may possibly have been construed coquetry, and a desire of being followed, though never meant by me. I cannot answer for the observations that may be made on me. All who are malicious attack the careless and defenceless: I own myself to be both. I know not any thing I can say more to show my perfect desire of pleasing you, and making you easy, than to proffer to be confined with you in what manner you please. Would any woman but me renounce all the world for one? or would any man but you be insensible of such a proof of sincerity?"—Vol. i. pp. 208—210.

"One part of my character is not so good, nor t'other so bad, as you fancy it. Should we ever live together, you would be disappointed both ways; you would find an easy equality of temper you do not expect, and a thousand faults you do not imagine. You think, if you married me, I should be passionately fond of you one month, and of somebody else the next. Neither would happen. I can esteem, I can be a friend; but I don't know whether I can love. Expect all that is complaisant and easy, but never what is fond, in me.

"If you can resolve to live with a companion that will have all the deference due to your superiority of good sense, and that your proposals can be agreeable to those on whom I depend, I have nothing to say against them.

"As to travelling, 'tis what I should do with great pleasure, and could easily quit London upon your account; but a retirement in the country is not so disagreeable to me, as I know a few months would make it tiresome to you. Where people are tied for life, 'tis their mutual interest not to grow weary of one another. If I had all the personal charms that I want, a face is too slight a foundation for happiness. You would soon be tired with seeing every day the same thing. Where you saw nothing else, you would have leisure to remark all the defects; which would increase in proportion as the novelty lessened, which is always a great charm. I should have the displeasure of seeing a coldness, which, though I could not reasonably blame you for, being involuntary, yet it would render me uneasy; and the more, because I know a love may be revived, which absence, inconstancy, or even infidelity, has extinguished: but there is no returning from a dégoût given by satiety."—Vol. i. pp. 212—214.

"I begin to be tired of my humility; I have car-

ried my complaisances to you farther than I ought. You make new scruples: you have a great deal of fancy! and your distrusts, being all of your own making, are more immoveable than if there were some real ground for them. Our aunts and grandmothers always tell us, that men are a sort of animals, that if ever they are constant, 'tis only where they are ill-used. 'Twas a kind of paradox I could never believe; but experience has taught me the truth of it. You are the first I ever had a correspondence with; and, I thank God, I have done with it for all my life. You needed not to have told me you are not what you have been; one must be stupid not to find a difference in your letters. You seem, in one part of your last, to excuse yourself from having done me any injury in point of fortune. Do I accuse you of any?

"I have not spirits to dispute any longer with you. You say you are not yet determined. Let me determine for you, and save you the trouble of writing again. Adieu for ever; make no answer. I wish, among the variety of acquaintance, you may find some one to please you: and can't help the vanity of thinking, should you try them all, you won't find one that will be so sincere in their treatment, though a thousand more deserving, and every one happier."—Vol. i. pp. 219—221.

These are certainly very uncommon productions for a young lady of twenty; and indicate a strength and elevation of character, that does not always appear in her gayer and more ostentatious performances. Mr. Wortley was convinced and re-assured by them; and they were married in 1712. The concluding part of the first volume contains her letters to him for the two following years. There is not much tenderness in these letters; nor very much interest indeed of any kind. Mr. Wortley appears to have been rather indolent and unambitious; and Lady Mary takes it upon her, with all delicacy and judicious management however, to stir him up to some degree of activity and exertion. There is a good deal of election-news and small politics in these epistles. The best of them, we think, is the following exhortation to impudence: —

"I am glad you think of serving your friends. I hope it will put you in mind of serving yourself. I need not enlarge upon the advantages of money; every thing we see, and every thing we hear, puts us in remembrance of it. If it were possible to restore liberty to your country, or limit the encroachments of the prerogative, by reducing yourself to a garret, I should be pleased to share so glorious a poverty with you; but as the world is, and will be, 'tis a sort of duty to be rich, that it may be in one's power to do good; riches being another word for power; towards the obtaining of which, the first necessary qualification is Impudence, and (as Demosthenes said of pronunciation in oratory) the second is impudence, and the third, still, impudence! No modest man ever did, or ever will, make his fortune. Your friend Lord Halifax, R. Walpole, and all other remarkable instances of quick advancement, have been remarkably impudent. The ministry, in short, is like a play at court; there's a little door to get in, and a great crowd without, shoving and thrusting who shall be foremost; people who knock others with their elbows, disregard a little kick of the shins, and still thrust heartily forwards, are sure of a good place. Your modest man stands behind in the crowd, is shoved about by every body, his clothes torn, almost squeezed to death, and sees a thousand get in before him, that don't make so good a figure as himself.

"If this letter is impertinent, it is founded upon an opinion of your merit, which, if it is a mistake, I would not be undeceived. It is my interest to believe (as I do) that you deserve every thing, and are capable of every thing; but nobody else will believe it, if they see you get nothing."—Vol. i. pp. 250—252.

The second volume, and a part of the third, are occupied with those charming letters, written during Mr. Wortley's embassy to Constantinople, upon which the literary reputation of Lady Mary has hitherto been exclusively founded. It would not become us to say any thing of productions which have so long engaged the admiration of the public. The grace and vivacity, the ease and conciseness, of the narrative and the description which they contain, still remain unrivalled, we think, by any epistolary compositions in our language; and are but slightly shaded by a sprinkling of obsolete tittletattle, or womanish vanity and affectation. The authenticity of these letters, though at one time disputed, has not lately been called in question; but the secret history of their first publication has never, we believe, been laid before the public. The editor of this collection, from the original papers, gives the following account of it: —

"In the later periods of Lady Mary's life, she employed her leisure in collecting copies of the letters she had written during Mr. Wortley's embassy, and had transcribed them herself, in two small volumes in quarto. They were, without doubt, sometimes shown to her literary friends. Upon her return to England for the last time, in 1761, she gave these books to a Mr. Sowden, a clergyman of Rotterdam, and wrote the subjoined memorandum on the cover of them: 'These two volumes are given to the Reverend Benjamin Sowden, minister at Rotterdam, to be

disposed of as he thinks proper. This is the will and design of M. Wortley Montagu, December 11. 1761.'

"After her death, the late Earl of Bute commissioned a gentleman to procure them, and to offer Mr. Sowden a considerable remuneration, which he accepted. Much to the surprise of that nobleman and Lady Bute, the manuscripts were scarcely safe in England, when three volumes of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Letters were published by Beckett; and it has since appeared, that a Mr. Cleland was the editor. The same gentleman, who had negotiated before, was again despatched to Holland; and could gain no further intelligence from Mr. Sowden, than that a short time before he parted with the MSS. two English gentlemen called on him to see the Letters and obtained their request. They had previously contrived that Mr. Sowden should be called away during their perusal; and he found on his return that they had disappeared with the books. Their residence was unknown to him; but on the next day they brought back the precious deposit, with many apologies. It may be fairly presumed, that the intervening night was consumed in copying these letters by several amanuenses."—Vol. i. pp. 29—32.

A *fourth* volume of Lady Mary's Letters, published in the same form in 1767, appears now to have been a fabrication of Cleland's; as no corresponding MSS. have been found among her Ladyship's papers, or in the hands of her correspondents.

To the accuracy of her local descriptions, and the justness of her representations of oriental manners, Mr. Dallaway, who followed her footsteps at the distance of eighty years, and resided for several months in the very palace which she had occupied at Pera, bears a decided and respectable testimony; and, in vindication of her veracity in describing the interior of the seraglio, into which no Christian is now permitted to enter, he observes, that the reigning Sultan of the day, Achmed the Third, was notoriously very regardless of the injunctions of the Koran, and that her Ladyship's visits were paid while the court was in a retirement that enabled him to dispense with many ceremonies. We do not observe any difference between these letters in the present edition and in the common copies, except that the names of Lady Mary's correspondents are now given at full length, and short notices of their families subjoined, upon their first introduction. At page 89 of the third volume, there are also two short letters, or rather notes, from the Countess of Pembroke, that have not hitherto been made public; and Mr. Pope's letter, describing the death of the two rural lovers by lightning, is here given at full length; while the former editions only contained her Ladyship's answer, — in which we have always thought that her desire to be smart and witty has intruded itself a little ungracefully into the place of a more amiable feeling.

The next series of letters consists of those written to her sister, the Countess of Mar, from 1723 to 1727. These letters have at least as much vivacity, wit, and sarcasm, as any that have been already published; and, though they contain little but the anecdotes and scandal of the time, will long continue to be read and admired for the brilliancy and facility of the composition. Though Lady Mary is excessively entertaining in this correspondence, we cannot say, however, that she is either very amiable, or very interesting. There is rather a negation of good affection, we think, throughout; and a certain cold-hearted levity, that borders sometimes upon misanthropy, and sometimes on indecency. The style of the following extracts, however, we are afraid has been for some time a dead language.

"I made a sort of resolution, at the beginning of my letter, not to trouble you with the mention of what passes here, since you receive it with so much coldness. But I find it is impossible to forbear telling you the metamorphoses of some of your acquaintance, which appear as wondrous to me as any in Ovid. Would any one believe that Lady H*****ss is a beauty, and in love? and that Mrs. Anastasia Robinson is at the same time a prude and a kept mistress? The first of these ladies is tenderly attached to the polite Mr. M***, and sunk in all the joys of happy love, notwithstanding *she* wants the use of her two hands by a rheumatism, and *he* has an arm that he cannot move. I wish I could tell you the particulars of this amour; which seems to me as curious as that between two oysters, and as well worth the serious attention of the naturalists. The second heroine has engaged half the town in arms, from the nicety of her virtue, which was not able to bear the too near approach of Senesino in the opera; and her condescension in accepting of Lord Peterborough for her champion, who has signalized both his love and courage upon this occasion in as many instances as ever Don Quixote did for Dulcinea. Innumerable have been the disorders between the two sexes on so great an account, besides half the House of Peers being put under arrest. By the Providence of Heaven, and the wise care of his Majesty, no bloodshed ensued. However, things are now tolerably accommodated; and the fair lady rides through the town in the shining berlin of her hero,

not to reckon the more solid advantages of 100*l.* a month, which 'tis said he allows her. I will send you a letter by the Count Caylus, whom, if you do not know already, you will thank me for introducing to you. He is a Frenchman, and no fop; which, besides the curiosity of it, is one of the prettiest things in the world."—Vol. iii. pp. 120—122.

"I write to you at this time piping-hot from the birth-night; my brain warmed with all the agreeable ideas that fine clothes, fine gentlemen, brisk tunes, and lively dances can raise there. It is to be hoped that my letter will entertain you; at least you will certainly have the freshest account of all passages on that glorious day. First, you must know that I led up the ball, which you'll stare at: but what is more, I believe in my conscience I made one of the best figures there: for, to say truth, people are grown so extravagantly ugly, that we old beauties are forced to come out on show-days, to keep the court in countenance. I saw Mrs. Murray there, through whose hands this epistle will be conveyed; I do not know whether she will make the same compliment to you that I do. Mrs. West was with her, who is a great prude, having but two lovers at a time; I think those are Lord Haddington and Mr. Lindsay; the one for use, the other for show.

"The world improves in one virtue to a violent degree — I mean plain dealing. Hypocrisy being, as the Scripture declares, a damnable sin, I hope our publicans and sinners will be saved by the open profession of the contrary virtue. I was told by a very good author, who is deep in the secret, that at this very minute there is a bill cooking up at a hunting seat in Norfolk, to have *not* taken out of the commandments, and clapped into the creed, the ensuing session of Parliament. To speak plainly, I am very sorry for the forlorn state of matrimony; which is now as much ridiculed by our young ladies as it used to be by young fellows: in short, both sexes have found the inconveniences of it; and the appellation of rake is as genteel in a woman as a man of quality: it is no scandal to say Miss ——, the maid of honour, looks very well now she is out again; and Poor Biddy Noel has never been quite well since her last confinement. You may imagine we married women look very silly: we have nothing to excuse ourselves, but that it was done a great while ago, and we were very young when we did it."—Vol. iii. pp. 142—145.

"Sixpenny worth of common sense, divided among a whole nation, would make our lives roll away glibly enough: but then we make laws and we follow customs. By the first we cut off our own pleasures, and by the second we are answerable for the faults and extravagances of others. All these things, and five hundred more, convince me that I have been one of *the condemned* ever since I was born; and in submission to the Divine Justice, I have no doubt but I deserved it, in some pre-existent state. I will still hope, however, that I am only in purgatory; and that after whining and pining a certain number of years, I shall be translated to some more happy sphere, where virtue will be natural, and custom reasonable; that is, in short, where common sense will reign. I grow very devout, as you see, and place all my hopes in the next life, being totally persuaded of the nothingness of this. Don't you remember how miserable we were in the little parlour, at Thoresby? we then thought marrying would put us at once into possession of all we wanted. Then came —— though, after all, I am still of opinion that it is extremely silly to submit to ill-fortune. One should pluck up a spirit and live upon cordials; when one can have no other nourishment. These are my present endeavours; and I run about, though I have five thousand pins and needles in my heart. I try to console myself with a small damsel, who is at present every thing I like — but, alas! she is yet in a white frock. At fourteen she may run away with the butler."—Vol. iii. pp. 178—180.

"I cannot deny but that I was very well diverted on the coronation-day. I saw the procession much at my ease, in a house which I filled with my own company; and then got into Westminster-hall without trouble, where it was very entertaining to observe the variety of airs that all meant the same thing. The business of every walker there was to conceal vanity and gain admiration. For these purposes some languished and others strutted; but a visible satisfaction was diffused over every countenance, as soon as the coronet was clapped on the head. But she that drew the greatest number of eyes was indisputably Lady Orkney. She exposed behind, a mixture of fat and wrinkles; and before, a considerable protuberance, which preceded her. Add to this, the inimitable roll of her eyes, and her grey hairs, which by good fortune stood directly upright, and 'tis impossible to imagine a more delightful spectacle. She had embellished all this with considerable magnificence, which made her look as big again as usual; and I should have thought her one of the largest things of God's making, if my Lady St. J***n had not displayed all her charms in honour of the day. The poor Duchess of M***se crept along with a dozen of black snakes playing round her face; and my Lady P***nd (who has fallen away since her dismission from Court) represented very finely an Egyptian mummy embroidered over with hieroglyphics. In general, I could not perceive but that the old were as well pleased as the young: and I who dread growing wise more than any thing in the world, was overjoyed to find that one can never outlive one's vanity. I have never received the long letter you talk of, and am afraid that you have only fancied that you wrote it."—Vol. iii. pp. 181—183.

In spite of all this gaiety, Lady Mary does not appear to have been happy. Her discreet biographer is silent upon the subject of her connubial felicity; and we have no desire to revive forgotten scandals; but it is a fact, which cannot be omitted, that her Ladyship

went abroad, without her husband, on account of bad health, in 1739, and did not return to England till she heard of his death in 1761. Whatever was the cause of their separation, however, there was no open rupture; and she seems to have corresponded with him very regularly for the first ten years of her absence. These letters, which occupy the latter part of the third volume, and the beginning of the fourth, are by no means so captivating as most of the preceding. They contain but little wit, and no confidential or striking reflections. They are filled up with accounts of her health and her journeys; with short, and general notices of any extraordinary customs she meets with, and little scraps of stale politics, picked up in the petty courts of Italy. They are cold, in short, without being formal; and are gloomy and constrained, when compared with those which were spontaneously written to show her wit, or her affection to her correspondents. She seems extremely anxious to impress her husband with an exalted idea of the honours and distinction with which she was every where received; and really seems more elated and surprised than we should have expected the daughter of an English Duke to be, with the attentions that were shown her by the noblesse of Venice, in particular. From this correspondence we are not tempted to make any extract.

The last series of letters, which extends to the middle of the fifth volume, and comes down to the year 1761, consists of those that were addressed by Lady Mary, during her residence abroad, to her daughter the Countess of Bute. These letters, though somewhat less brilliant than those to the Countess of Mar, have more heart and affection in them than any other of her Ladyship's productions; and abound in lively and judicious reflections They indicate, at the same time, a very great share of vanity; and that kind of contempt and indifference for the world, into which the veterans of fashion are most apt to sink. With the exception of her daughter and her children, Lady Mary seems by this time to have, indeed, attained to the happy state of really caring nothing for any human being; and rather to have beguiled the days of her declining life with every sort of amusement, than to have soothed them with affection or friendship. After boasting of the intimacy in which she lived with all the considerable people in her neighbourhood, she adds, in one of her letters, "The people I see here make no more impression on my mind than the figures on the tapestry, while they are before my eyes. I know one is clothed in blue, and another in red: but out of sight they are so entirely out of memory, that I hardly remember whether they are tall or short."

The following reflections upon an Italian story, exactly like that of Pamela, are very much in character: —

"In my opinion, all these adventures proceed from artifice on one side and weakness on the other. An honest, tender heart is often betrayed to ruin by the charms that make the fortune of a designing head; which, when joined with a beautiful face, can never fail of advancement — except barred by a wise mother, who locks up her daughters from view till nobody cares to look on them. My poor friend the Duchess of Bolton was educated in solitude, with some choice of books, by a saint-like governess: crammed with virtue and good qualities, she thought it impossible not to find gratitude, though she failed to give passion: and upon this plan threw away her estate, was despised by her husband, and laughed at by the public. Polly, bred in an alehouse, and produced on the stage, has obtained wealth and title, and even found the way to be esteemed!" — Vol. iv. pp. 119, 120.

There is some acrimony, and some power of reviling, in the following extract: —

"I have only had time to read Lord Orrery's work, which has extremely entertained, and not at all surprised me, having the honour of being acquainted with him, and knowing him for one of those danglers after wit, who, like those after beauty, spend their whole time in humbly admiring. Dean Swift, by his Lordship's own account, was so intoxicated with the love of flattery, that he sought it amongst the lowest of people, and the silliest of women; and was never so well pleased with any companions as those that worshipped him, while he insulted them. His character seems to me a parallel with that of Caligula; and had he had the same power, he would have made the same use of it. That emperor erected a temple to himself, where he was his own high-priest, preferred *his horse* to the highest honours in the state, professed enmity to the human race, and at last lost his wife by a nasty jest on one of his inferiors, which I dare swear Swift would have made in his place. There can be no worse picture made of the Doctor's morals than he has given us himself in the letters printed by Pope. We see him vain, trifling, ungrateful to the memory of his patron, making a servile court where he had any interested views, and meanly abusive when they were

disappointed; and, as he says (in his own phrase), flying in the face of mankind, in company with his adorer Pope. It is pleasant to consider, that had it not been for the good nature of these very mortals they contemn, these two superior beings were entitled by their birth and hereditary fortune, to be only a couple of link-boys. I am of opinion, however, that their friendship would have continued, though they had remained in the same kingdom. It had a very strong foundation — the love of flattery on one side and the love of money on the other. Pope courted with the utmost assiduity all the old men from whom he could hope a legacy, the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Peterborough, Sir G. Kneller, Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Wycherley, Mr. Congreve, Lord Harcourt, &c., and I do not doubt projected to sweep the Dean's whole inheritance, if he could have persuaded him to throw up his deanery, and come to die in his house; and his general preaching against money was meant to induce people to throw it away, that he might pick it up." — Vol. iv. pp. 142. 147.

Some of the following reflections will appear prophetic to some people; and we really did not expect to find them under the date of 1753.

"The confounding of all ranks, and making a jest of order, has long been growing in England; and I perceive, by the books you sent me, has made a very considerable progress. The heroes and heroines of the age are cobblers and kitchen-wenches. Perhaps you will say I should not take my ideas of the manners of the times from such trifling authors; but it is more truly to be found among them, than from any historian: as they write merely to get money, they always fall into the notions that are most acceptable to the present taste. It has long been the endeavour of our English writers, to represent people of quality as the vilest and silliest part of the nation, being (generally) very low-born themselves. I am not surprised at their propagating this doctrine; but I am much mistaken if this levelling principle does not, one day or other, break out in fatal consequences to the public, as it has already done in many private families." — Vol. iv. pp. 223, 224.

She is not quite so fortunate in her remarks on Dr. Johnson, though the conclusion of the extract is very judicious.

"The Rambler is certainly a strong misnomer: he always plods in the beaten road of his predecessors following the Spectator (with the same pace a pack-horse would do a hunter) in the style that is proper to lengthen a paper. These writers may, perhaps, be of service to the public, which is saying a great deal in their favour. There are numbers of both sexes who never read any thing but such productions; and cannot spare time, from doing nothing, to go through a sixpenny pamphlet. Such gentle readers may be improved by a moral hint, which, though repeated over and over, from generation to generation, they never heard in their lives. I should be glad to know the name of this laborious author. H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife, in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted; and I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are real matters of fact. I wonder, however, that he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth to be both sorry scoundrels. All this sort of books have the same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit in extravagant passions; and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they choose to plunge themselves into; expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, — as much out of nature as fairy treasures." — Vol. iv. pp. 259, 260.

The idea of the following image, we believe, is not quite new; but it is expressed in a very lively and striking manner: —

"The world is past its infancy, and will no longer be contented with spoon-meat. A collective body of men make a gradual progress in understanding, like a single individual. When I reflect on the vast increase of useful as well as speculative knowledge, the last three hundred years has produced, and that the peasants of this age have more conveniences than the first emperors of Rome had any notion of, I imagine we may now be arrived at that period which answers to fifteen. I cannot think we are older; when I recollect the many palpable follies which are still (almost) universally persisted in. Among these I place that of War — as senseless as the boxing of school-boys; and whenever we come to man's estate (perhaps a thousand years hence), I do not doubt it will appear as ridiculous as the pranks of unlucky lads. Several discoveries will then be made, and several truths made clear, of which we have now no more idea than the ancients had of the circulation of the blood, or the optics of Sir Isaac Newton." — Vol. v. pp. 15, 16.

After observing that, in a preceding letter, her Ladyship declares that "it is eleven years since she saw herself in a glass, being so little pleased with the figure she was then beginning to make in it," we shall close these extracts with the following more favourable account of her philosophy: —

"I no more expect to arrive at the age of the Duchess of Marlborough, than to that of Methusalem; neither do I desire it. I have long thought myself useless to the world. I have seen one generation pass away, and it is gone; for I think there are very few of those left that flourished in my youth. You will perhaps call these melancholy reflections;

but they are not so. There is a quiet after the abandoning of pursuits, something like the rest that follows a laborious day. I tell you this for your comfort. It was formerly a terrifying view to me, that I should one day be an old woman. I now find that nature has provided pleasures for every state. Those only are unhappy who will not be contented with what she gives, but strive to break through her laws, by affecting a perpetuity of youth,—which appears to me as little desirable at present as the babies do to you, that were the delight of your infancy. I am at the end of my paper, which shortens the sermon."—Vol. iv. pp. 314, 315.

Upon the death of Mr. Wortley in 1761, Lady Mary returned to England, and died there in October, 1762, in the 73d year of her age. From the large extracts which we have been tempted to make from her correspondence, our readers will easily be enabled to judge of the character and genius of this extraordinary woman. A little spoiled by flattery, and not altogether "undebauched by the world," she seems to have possessed a masculine solidity of understanding, great liveliness of fancy, and such powers of observation and discrimination of character, as to give her opinions great authority on all the ordinary subjects of practical manners and conduct.

After her marriage, she seems to have abandoned all idea of laborious or regular study, and to have been raised to the station of a literary character merely by her vivacity and her love of amusement and anecdote. The great charm of her letters is certainly the extreme ease and facility with which every thing is expressed, the brevity and rapidity of her representations, and the elegant simplicity of her diction. While they unite almost all the qualities of a good style, there is nothing of the professed author in them: nothing that seems to have been composed, or to have engaged the admiration of the writer. She appears to be quite unconscious either of merit or of exertion in what she is doing; and never stops to bring out a thought, or to turn an expression, with the cunning of a practised rhetorician. The letters from Turkey will probably continue to be more universally read than any of those that are now given for the first time to the public; because the subject commands a wider and more permanent interest, than the personalities and unconnected remarks with which the rest of the correspondence is filled. At the same time, the love of scandal and of private history is so great, that these letters will be highly relished, as long as the names they contain are remembered;—and then they will become curious and interesting, as exhibiting a truer picture of the manners and fashions of the time, than is to be found in most other publications.

The Fifth Volume contains also her Ladyship's poems, and two or three trifling papers that are entitled her Essays. Poetry, at least the polite and witty sort of poetry which Lady Mary has attempted, is much more of an art than prose-writing. We are trained to the latter, by the conversation of good society; but the former seems always to require a good deal of patient labour and application. This her Ladyship appears to have disdained; and accordingly, her poetry, though abounding in lively conceptions, is already consigned to that oblivion in which mediocrity is destined, by an irrevocable sentence, to slumber till the end of the world. The Essays are extremely insignificant, and have no other merit, that we can discover, but that they are very few and very short.

Of Lady Mary's friendship and subsequent rupture with Pope, we have not thought it necessary to say any thing; both because we are of opinion that no new lights are thrown upon it by this publication, and because we have no desire to awaken forgotten scandals by so idle a controversy. Pope was undoubtedly a flatterer, and was undoubtedly sufficiently irritable and vindictive; but whether his rancour was stimulated, upon this occasion, by any thing but caprice or jealousy, and whether he was the inventor or the echo of the imputations to which he has given notoriety, we do not pretend to determine. Lady Mary's character was certainly deficient in that cautious delicacy which is the best guardian of female reputation; and there seems to have been in her conduct something of that intrepidity which naturally gives rise to misconstruction, by setting at defiance the maxims of ordinary discretion.

LIFE OF CURRAN.

(May, 1820.)

The Life of the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, late Master of the Rolls in Ireland. By his Son, William Henry Curran, Barrister-at-Law. 8vo. 2 vols. Pp. 970. London: 1819.

This is really a very good book; and not less instructive in its moral and general scope, than curious and interesting in its details. It is a mixture of Biography and History — and avoids the besetting sins of both species of composition — neither exalting the hero of the biography into an idol, nor deforming the history of a most agitated period with any spirit of violence or exaggeration. It is written, on the contrary, as it appears to us, with singular impartiality and temper — and the style is not less remarkable than the sentiments: for though it is generally elegant and spirited, it is without any of those peculiarities which the age, the parentage, and the country of the author, would lead us to expect: — and we may say, indeed, of the whole work, looking both to the matter and the manner, that it has no defects from which it could be gathered that it was written either by a young man — or an Irishman — or by the Son of the person whose history it professes to record — though it has attractions which probably could not have existed under any other conditions. The distracting periods of Irish story are still almost too recent to be fairly delineated — and no Irishman, old enough to have taken a part in the transactions of 1780 or 1798, could well be trusted as their historian — while no one but a native, and of the blood of some of the chief actors, could be sufficiently acquainted with their motives and characters, to communicate that life and interest to the details which shine out in so many passages of the volumes before us. The incidental light which they throw upon the national character and state of society in Ireland, and the continual illustrations they afford of their diversity from our own, is perhaps of more value than the particular facts from which it results; and stamp upon the work the same peculiar attraction which we formerly ascribed to Mr. Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont.

To qualify this extraordinary praise, we must add, that the limits of the private and the public story are not very well observed, nor the scale of the work very correctly regulated as to either; so that we have alternately too much and too little of both: — that the style is rather wordy and diffuse, and the extracts and citations too copious; so that, on the whole, the book, like some others, would be improved by being reduced to little more than half its present size — a circumstance which makes it only the more necessary that we should endeavour to make a manageable abstract of it, for the use of less patient readers.

Mr. Curran's parentage and early life are now of no great consequence. He was born, however, of respectable parents, and received a careful and regular education. He was a little wild at college; but left it with the character of an excellent scholar, and was universally popular among his associates, not less for his amiable temper than his inexhaustible vivacity. He wrote baddish verses at this time, and exercised himself in theological discourses: for his first destination was for the Church; and he afterwards took to the Law, very much to his mother's disappointment and mortification — who was never reconciled to the change — and used, even in the meridian of his fame, to lament what a mighty preacher had been lost to the world, — and to exclaim, that, but for his versatility, she might have died the mother of a Bishop! It was better as it was. Unquestionably he might have been a very great preacher; but we doubt whether he would have been a good parish priest, or even an exemplary bishop.

Irish lawyers are obliged to keep their terms in London; and for the poorer part of them, it seems to be but a dull and melancholy noviciate. Some of his early letters, with which we are here presented, give rather an amiable and interesting picture of young Curran's feelings in this situation — separated at once from all his youthful friends and admirers, and left without money or recommendation in the busy crowds of a colder and more venal people. During the three years he passed in the metropolis, he seems to have entered into no society, and never to have come in contact with a single distinguished individual. He saw Garrick on the stage, and Lord Mansfield

on the bench; and this exhausts his list of illustrious men in London. His only associates seem to have been a few of his countrymen, as poor and forlorn as himself. Yet the life they lived seems to have been virtuous and honourable. They contracted no debts, and committed no excesses.

Curran himself rose early, and read diligently till dinner; and, in the evening, he usually went, as much for improvement as relaxation, to a sixpenny debating club. For a long time, however, he was too nervous and timid to act any other part than that of an auditor, and did not find even the germ of that singular talent which was afterwards improved to such a height, till it was struck out as it were by an accidental collision in this obscure arena. There is a long account of this in the book before us, as it is said to have been repeatedly given by Mr. C. himself—but in a style which we cannot conscientiously applaud. We suspect, indeed, from various passages in these volumes, that the Irish standard of good conversation is radically different from the English; and that a tone of exhibition and effect is still tolerated in that country, which could not be long endured in good society in this. A great proportion of the colloquial anecdotes in this work, confirm us in this belief — and nothing more than the encomium bestowed on Mr. Curran's own conversation, as abounding in "those magical transitions from the most comic turns of thought to the deepest pathos, and for ever bringing a tear into the eye before the smile was off the lip." In this more frigid and fastidious country, we really have no idea of a man talking pathetically in good company, — and still less of good company sitting and crying to him. Nay, it is not even very consonant with our notions, that a gentleman should be "most comical."

As to the taste and character of Mr. Curran's oratory, we may have occasion to say a word or two hereafter. — At present, it is only necessary to remark, that besides the public exercitations now alluded to, he appears to have gone through the most persevering and laborious process of private study, with a view to its improvement — not only accustoming himself to debate imaginary cases alone, with the most anxious attention, but "reciting perpetually before a mirror," to acquire a graceful gesticulation! and studiously imitating the tone and manner of the most celebrated speakers. The authors from whom he chiefly borrowed the matter of these solitary declamations were Junius and Lord Bolingbroke — and the poet he most passionately admired was Thomson. He also used to declaim occasionally from Milton — but, in his maturer age, came to think less highly of that great poet. One of his favourite exercises was the funeral oration of Antony over the body of Cæsar, as it is given by Shakspeare; the frequent recitation of which he used to recommend to his young friends at the Bar, to the latest period of his life.

He was called to the bar in 1775, in his twenty-fifth year — having rather imprudently married two years before — and very soon attained to independence and distinction. There is a very clever little disquisition introduced here by the author, on the very different, and almost opposite taste in eloquence which has prevailed at the Bar of England and Ireland respectively; — the one being in general cold and correct, unimpassioned and technical; the other discursive, rhetorical, and embellished, or encumbered, with flights of fancy and appeals to the passions. These peculiarities the author imputes chiefly to the difference in the national character and general temperament of the two races, and to the unsubdued and unrectified prevalence of all that is characteristic of their country in those classes out of which the juries of Ireland are usually selected. He ascribes them also, in part, to the circumstance of almost all the barristers of distinction having been introduced, very early in life, to the fierce and tumultuary arena of the Irish House of Commons — the government being naturally desirous of recruiting their ranks with as many efficient combatants as possible from persons residing in the metropolis — and Opposition looking, of course, to the same great seminary for the antagonists with whom these were to be confronted.

We cannot say that either of these solutions is to us very satisfactory. There was heat enough certainly, and to spare, in the Irish Parliament; but the barristers who came there had generally kindled with their own fire, before repairing to that fountain. They had formed their manner, in short, and dis-

tinguished themselves by their ardour, before they were invited to display it in that assembly;—and it would be quite as plausible to refer the intemperate warmth of the Parliamentary debates to the infusion of hot-headed gladiators from the Bar, as to ascribe the general over-zeal of the profession to the fever some of them might have caught in the Senate. In England, we believe, this effect has never been observed — and in Ireland it has outlived its supposed causes — the Bar of that country being still (we understand) as rhetorical and impassioned as ever, though its Legislature has long ceased to have an existence.

As to the effects of temperament and national character, we confess we are still more sceptical — at least when considered as the *main* causes of the phenomenon in question. Professional peculiarities, in short, we are persuaded, are to be referred much more to the circumstances of the profession, than to the national character of those who exercise it; and the more redundant eloquence of the Irish Bar is better explained, probably, by the smaller quantity of business in their courts, than by the greater vivacity of their fancy or the warmth of their hearts. We in Scotland have also a forensic eloquence of our own — more speculative, discursive, and ambitious than that of England — but less poetical and passionate than that of Ireland; and the peculiarity might be plausibly ascribed here, also, to the imputed character of the nation, as distinguished for logical acuteness and intrepid questioning of authority, rather than for richness of imagination, or promptitude of feeling.

We do not mean, however, altogether to deny the existence or the operation of these causes — but we think the effect is produced *chiefly* by others of a more vulgar description. The small number of Courts and Judges in England — compared to its great wealth, population, and business — has made brevity and despatch not only important but indispensable qualifications in an advocate in great practice, — since it would be physically impossible either for him or for the Courts to get through their business without them. All mere ornamental speaking, therefore, is not only severely discountenanced, but absolutely debarred; and the most technical, direct, and authoritative views of the case alone can be listened to. But judicial time, to use the language of Bentham, is not of the same high value, either in Ireland or in Scotland; and the pleaders of those countries have consequently given way to that universal love of long-speaking, which, we verily believe, never can be repressed by any thing but the absolute impossibility of indulging it: — while their prolixity has taken a different character, not so much from the temperament of *the speakers*, as from the difference of *the audiences* they have generally had to address. In Ireland, the greater part of their tediousness is bestowed on juries — and their vein consequently has been more popular. With us in Scotland the advocate has to speak chiefly to the Judges — and naturally endeavours, therefore, to make that impression by subtlety, or compass of reasoning, which he would in vain attempt, either by pathos, poetry, or jocularity. — Professional speakers, in short, we are persuaded, will always speak as long as they can be listened to. — The quantity of their eloquence, therefore, will depend on the time that can be afforded for its display — and its quality, on the nature of the audience to which it is addressed.

But though we cannot admit that the causes assigned by this author are the main or fundamental causes of the peculiarity of Irish oratory, we are far from denying that there is much in it of a national character, and indicating something extraordinary either in the temper of the people, or in the state of society among them. There is, in particular, a much greater Irascibility; with its usual concomitants of coarseness and personality, — and a much more theatrical tone, or a taste for forced and exaggerated sentiments, than would be tolerated on this side of the Channel. Of the former attribute, the continual, and, we must say, most indecent altercations that are recorded in these volumes between the Bench and the Bar, are certainly the most flagrant and offensive examples. In some cases the Judges were perhaps the aggressors — but the violence and indecorum are almost wholy on the side of the Counsel; and the excess and intemperance of their replies generally go far beyond any thing for which an apology can be found in the provocation that had been given. A very striking instance occurs in an early

part of Mr. Curran's history, where he is said to have observed, upon an opinion delivered by Judge Robinson, "that he had never met with the law as laid down by his Lordship in any book in his library;" and, upon his Lordship rejoining, somewhat scornfully, "that he suspected his library was very small," the offended barrister, in allusion to the known fact of the Judge having recently published some anonymous pamphlets, thought fit to reply, that "his library might be small, but he thanked Heaven that, among his books, there were none of the wretched productions of the frantic pamphleteers of the day. I find it more instructive, my Lord, to study good works than to compose bad ones! My books may be few, but the title-pages give me the writers' names — my shelf is not disgraced by any of such rank absurdity that their very authors are ashamed to own them." — P. 122. On another occasion, when he was proceeding in an argument with his characteristic impetuosity, the presiding Judge having called to the Sheriff to be ready to take into custody any who should disturb the decorum of the Court, the sensitive counsellor at once applying the notice to himself, is reported to have broken out into the following incredible apostrophe — "Do, Mr. Sheriff," replied Mr. Curran, "go and get ready my dungeon! Prepare a bed of straw for me; and upon that bed I shall to-night repose with more tranquillity than I should enjoy were I sitting upon that bench, with a consciousness that I disgraced it!" — Even his reply to Lord Clare, when interrupted by him in an argument before the Privy Council, seems to us much more petulant than severe. His Lordship, it seems, had admonished him that he was wandering from the question; and Mr. C. after some general observations, replied, "I am aware, my lords, that truth is to be sought only by slow and painful progress: I know also that error is in its nature flippant and compendious; it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and arguments, and perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion." — To Lord Clare, however, Mr. C. had every possible temptation to be intractable and impertinent. But even to his best friends, when placed on the seat of judgment, he could not always forbear a similar petulance. Lord Avonmore was always most kind and indulgent to him — but he too was sometimes in the habit, it seems, of checking his wanderings, and sometimes of too impatiently anticipating his conclusions. Upon one of these occasions, and in the middle of a solemn argument, we are called on to admire the following piece of vulgar and farcical stupidity, as a specimen of Mr. C.'s most judicious pleasantry: —

"Perhaps, my Lord, I am straying; but you must impute it to the extreme agitation of my mind. I have just witnessed so dreadful a circumstance, that my imagination has not yet recovered from the shock.'—His lordship was now all attention.—'On my way to court, my Lord, as I passed by one of the markets, I observed a butcher proceeding to slaughter a calf. Just as his hand was raised, a lovely little child approached him unperceived, and, terrible to relate — I still see the life-blood gushing out — the poor child's bosom was under his hand, when he plunged his knife into—into'——'Into the bosom of the child!' cried out the Judge, with much emotion—'into the *neck of the calf*, my Lord; but your Lordship sometimes anticipates!'"

But this is not quite fair. — There is no more such nonsense in the book — nor any other Iricism so discreditable to the taste either of its hero or its author. There are plenty of traits, however, that make one blush for the degradation, and shudder at the government of that magnificent country. — One of the most striking is supplied by an event in the early part of Mr. C.'s professional history, and one to which he is here said to have been indebted for his first celebrity. A nobleman of great weight and influence in the country — we gladly suppress his name, though it is given in the book — had a mistress, whose brother being a Catholic, had, for some offence, been sentenced to ecclesiastical penance — and the young woman solicited her keeper to use his influence with the priest to obtain a remission. His Lordship went accordingly to the cabin of the aged pastor, who came bareheaded to the door with his missal in his hand: and, after hearing the application, respectfully answered, that the sentence having been imposed by the Bishop, could only be relaxed by the same authority — and that he had no right or power to interfere with it. The noble mediator on this *struck the old man!* and drove him with repeated blows from his presence. The priest then brought his action of damages — but for

a long time could find no advocate hardy enough to undertake his cause! — and when young Curran at last made offer of his services, he was blamed and pitied by all his prudent friends for his romantic and Quixotic rashness.

These facts speak volumes as to the utter perversion of moral feeling that is produced by unjust laws, and the habits to which they give rise. No nation is so brave or so generous as the Irish, — and yet an Irish Nobleman could be guilty of the brutality of striking an aged Ecclesiastic without derogating from his dignity or honour. — No body of men could be more intrepid and gallant than the leaders of the Irish bar; and yet it was thought too daring and presumptuous for any of them to assist the sufferer in obtaining redress for an outrage like this. In England, those things are inconceivable; but the readers of Irish history are aware, that where the question was between Peer and Peasant — and still more when it was between Protestant and Catholic — the barristers had cause for apprehension. It was but about forty years before, that upon a Catholic bringing an action for the recovery of his confiscated estates, the Irish House of Commons publicly voted a resolution, "that all barristers, solicitors, attorneys, and proctors who should be concerned for him, should be considered as public enemies!" This was in 1735. In 1780, however, Mr. C. found the service not quite so dangerous; and by great eloquence and exertion extorted a reluctant verdict, and thirty guineas of damages, from a Protestant Jury. The sequel of the affair was not less characteristic. In the first place, it involved the advocate in a duel with a witness whom he had rather outrageously abused — and, in the next place, it was thought sufficient to justify a public notification to him, on the part of the noble defendant, that his audacity should be punished by excluding him from all professional employment wherever his influence could extend. The insolence of such a communication might well have warranted a warlike reply: but Mr. C. expressed his contempt in a gayer, and not less effectual manner. Pretending to misunderstand the tenor of the message, he answered aloud, in the hearing of his friends, "My good sir, you may tell his Lordship, that it is in vain for him to be proposing terms of accommodation; for after what has happened, I protest I think, while I live, I never can hold a brief for him or one of his family." The threat, indeed, proved as impotent as it was pitiful; for the spirit and talent which the young counsellor had displayed through the whole scene, not only brought him into unbounded popularity with the lower orders, but instantly raised him to a distinguished place in the ranks of his profession.*

We turn gladly, and at once, from this dreadful catastrophe.† Never certainly was short-lived tranquillity — or rather permanent danger so dearly bought. The vengeance of the law followed the havoc of the sword — and here again we meet Mr. C. in his strength and his glory. But we pass gladly over these melancholy trials; in which we are far from insinuating, that there was any reprehensible severity on the part of the Government. When matters had come that length, they had but one duty before them — and they seem to have discharged it (if we except one or two posthumous attainders) with mercy as well as fairness: for after a certain number of victims had been selected, an arrangement was made with the rest of the state prisoners, under which they were allowed to expatriate themselves for life. It would be improper, however, to leave the subject, without offering our tribute of respect and admiration to the singular courage, fidelity, and humanity, with which Mr. C. persisted, throughout these agonizing scenes, in doing his duty to the unfortunate prisoners, and watching over the administration of that law, from the spectacle of whose vengeance there were so many temptations to withdraw. This painful and heroic task he un-

* The greater part of what follows in the original paper is now omitted; as touching on points in the modern history of Ireland which have been sufficiently discussed under preceding titles. I retain only what relates to Mr. Curran personally; or to those peculiarities in his eloquence which refer rather to his country than to the individual: though, for the sake chiefly of connexion, I have made one allusion to the sad and most touching Judicial Tragedy which followed up the deplorable Field scenes of the rebellion of 1798.

† The extinction of the rebellion — by the slaughter of 50,000 of the insurgents, and upwards of 20,000 of the soldiery and their adherents!

dertook — and never blenched from its fulfilment, in spite of the toil and disgust, and the obloquy and personal hazard, to which it continually exposed him. In that inflamed state of the public mind, it is easy to understand that the advocate was frequently confounded with the client; and that, besides the murderous vengeance of the profligate informers he had so often to denounce, he had to encounter the passions and prejudices of all those who chose to look on the defender of traitors as their associate. Instead of being cheered, therefore, as formerly, by the applauses of his auditors, he was often obliged to submit to their angry interruptions; and was actually menaced more than once, in the open court, by the clashing arms and indignant menaces of the military spectators. He had excessive numbers of soldiers, too, billeted on him, and was in many other ways exposed to loss and vexation: but he bore it all, with the courage of his country, and the dignity due to his profession — and consoled himself for the vulgar calumnies of an infuriated faction, in the friendship and society of such men as Lords Moira, Charlemont, and Kilwarden — Grattan, Ponsonby, and Flood.

The incorporating union of 1800 is said to have filled Mr. C. with incurable despondency as to the fate of his country. We have great indulgence for this feeling — but we cannot sympathize with it. The Irish parliament was a nuisance that deserved to be abated — and the British legislature, with all its partialities, and its still more blameable neglects, may be presumed, we think, to be more accessible to reason, to justice, and to shame, than the body which it superseded. Mr. C. was not in Parliament when that great measure was adopted. But, in the course of that year, he delivered a very able argument in the case of Napper Tandy, of which the only published report is to be found in the volumes before us. In 1802, he made his famous speech in Hevey's case, against Mr. Sirr, the town-major of Dublin; which affords a strong picture of the revolting and atrocious barbarities which are necessarily perpetrated, when the solemn tribunals are silenced, and inferior agents entrusted with arbitrary power. The speech, in this view of it, is one of the most striking and instructive in the published volume, which we noticed in our thirteenth volume. During the peace of Amiens, Mr. C. made a short excursion to France, and was by no means delighted with what he saw there. In a letter to his son from Paris, in October, 1802, he says, —

"I am glad I have come here. I entertained many ideas of it, which I have entirely given up, or very much indeed altered. Never was there a scene that could furnish more to the weeping or the grinning philosopher; they well might agree that human affairs were *a sad joke.* I see it every where, and in every thing. The wheel has run a complete round; only changed some spokes and a few 'fellows,' very little for the better, but the axle certainly has not rusted; nor do I see any likelihood of its rusting. At present all is quiet, except the tongue, — thanks to those invaluable protectors of peace, the army!!" — Vol. ii. pp. 206, 207.

The public life of Mr. C. was now drawing to a close. He distinguished himself in 1804 in the Marquis of Headfort's case, and in that of Judge Johnson in 1805: but, on the accession of the Whigs to office in 1806, he was appointed to the situation of Master of the Rolls, and never afterwards made any public appearance. He was not satisfied with this appointment: and took no pains to conceal his dissatisfaction. His temper, perhaps, was by this time somewhat soured by ill health; and his notion of his own importance exaggerated by the flattery of which he had long been the daily object. Perhaps, too, the sudden withdrawing of those tasks and excitements, to which he had been so long accustomed, co-operating with the languor of declining age, may have affected his views of his own situation: but it certainly appears that he was never very gay or good-humoured after his promotion — and passed but a dull and peevish time of it during the remainder of his life. In 1810, he went, for the first time, to Scotland; and we cannot deny our nationality the pleasure of his honest testimony. He writes thus to a friend soon after his arrival on our shore: —

"I am greatly delighted with this country. You see no trace here of the devil working against the wisdom and beneficence of God, and torturing and degrading his creatures. It may seem the romancing of travelling; but I am satisfied of the fact, that the poorest man here has his children taught to read and write, and that in every house is found a Bible, and in almost every house a clock: and the fruits of this are manifest in the intelligence and manners of all ranks. In Scotland, what a work have the four

and twenty letters to show for themselves! — the natural enemies of vice, and folly, and slavery; the great sowers, but the still greater weeders, of the human soil. Nowhere can you see here the cringing hypocrisy of dissembled detestation, so inseparable from oppression: and as little do you meet the hard, and dull, and right-lined angles of the southern visage; you find the notion exact and the phrase direct, with the natural tone of the Scottish muse.

"The first night, at Ballintray, the landlord attended us at supper: he would do so, though we begged him not. We talked to him of the cultivation of potatoes. I said, I wondered at his taking them in place of his native food, oatmeal, so much more substantial. His answer struck me as very characteristic of the genius of Scotland—frugal, tender, and picturesque. 'Sir,' said he, 'we are not so much i' the wrong as you think; the tilth is easy, they are swift i' the cooking, they take little fuel, and then it is pleasant to see the gude wife wi' a' her bairns aboot the pot, and each wi' a potatoe in its hand.'" — Vol. ii. pp. 254—256.

There are various other interesting letters in these volumes, and in particular a long one to the Duke of Sussex, in favour of Catholic Emancipation; but we can no longer afford room for extracts, and must indeed hurry through our abstract of what remains to be noticed of his life. He canvassed the burgh of Newry unsuccessfully in 1812. His health failed very much in 1813; and the year after, he resigned his situation, and came over to London in his way to France. He seems at no time to have had much relish for English society. In one of his early letters, he complains of "the proud awkward sulk" of London company, and now he characterizes it with still greater severity: —

"I question if it is much better in Paris. Here the parade is gross, and cold, and vulgar; there it is, no doubt, more flippant, and the attitude more graceful; but in either place is not Society equally a tyrant and a slave? The judgment despises it, and the heart renounces it. We seek it because we are idle; we are idle because we are silly; and the natural remedy is some social intercourse, of which a few drops would restore; but we swallow the whole phial, and are sicker of the remedy than we were of the disease."— Vol. ii. pp. 337, 338.

And again, a little after, —

"England is not a place for society. It is too cold, too vain, — without pride enough to be humble, drowned in dull fantastical formality, vulgarized by rank without talent, and talent foolishly recommending itself by weight rather than by fashion — a perpetual war between the disappointed pretension of talent and the stupid overweening of affected patronage; means without enjoyment, pursuits without an object, and society without conversation or intercourse: perhaps they manage this better in France — a few days, I think, will enable me to decide." — Vol. ii. pp. 345, 346.

In France, however, he was not much better off — and returned, complaining of a constitutional dejection, "for which he could find no remedy in water or in wine." He rejoices in the downfall of Bonaparte; and is of opinion that the Revolution had thrown that country a century back. In spring 1817, he began to sink rapidly; and had a slight paralytic attack in one of his hands. He proposed to try another visit to France; and still complained of the depression of his spirits: — "he had a mountain of lead (he said) on his heart." Early in October, he had a severe shock of apoplexy; and lingered till the 14th, when he expired in his 68th year.

There is a very able and eloquent chapter on the character of Mr. Curran's eloquence — encomiastic of course, but written with great temper, talent, and discrimination. Its charms and its defects, the learned author refers to the state of genuine passion and vehement emotion in which all his best performances were delivered; and speaks of its effects on his auditors of all descriptions, in terms which can leave no doubt of its substantial excellence. We cannot now enter into these rhetorical disquisitions — though they are full of interest and instruction to the lovers of oratory. It is more within our province to notice, that he is here said to have spoken extempore at his first coming to the Bar; but when his rising reputation made him more chary of his fame, he tried for some time to write down, and commit to memory, the more important parts of his pleadings. The result, however, was not at all encouraging: and he soon laid aside his pen so entirely, as scarcely even to make any notes in preparation. He meditated his subjects, however, when strolling in his garden, or more frequently while idling over his violin; and often prepared, in this way, those splendid passages and groups of images with which he was afterwards to dazzle and enchant his admirers. The only notes he made were often of the metaphors he proposed to employ — and these of the utmost brevity. For the grand peroration, for example, in

H. Rowan's case, his notes were as follows: — "Character of Mr. R. — *Furnace* — *Rebellion* — *smothered* — *Stalks* — *Redeeming Spirit.*" From such slight hints he spoke fearlessly — and without cause for fear. With the help of such a scanty chart, he plunged boldly into the unbuoyed channel of his cause; and trusted himself to the torrent of his own eloquence, with no better guidance than such landmarks as these. It almost invariably happened, however, that the experiment succeeded; "that his own expectations were far exceeded; and that, when his mind came to be more intensely heated by his subject, and by that inspiring confidence which a public audience seldom fails to infuse into all who are sufficiently gifted to receive it, a multitude of new ideas, adding vigour or ornament, were given off; and it also happened, that, in the same prolific moments, and as their almost inevitable consequence, some crude and fantastic notions escaped; which, if they impeach their author's taste, at least leave him the merit of a splendid fault, which none but men of genius can commit." (Pp. 403, 404.) The best explanation of his success, and the best apology for his defects as a speaker, is to be found, we believe, in the following candid passage: —

"The Juries among whom he was thrown, and for whom he originally formed his style, were not fastidious critics; they were more usually men abounding in rude unpolished sympathies, and who were ready to surrender the treasure, of which they scarcely knew the value, to him that offered them the most alluring toys. Whatever might have been his own better taste, as an advocate he soon discovered, that the surest way to persuade was to conciliate by amusing them. With them he found that his imagination might revel unrestrained; that, when once the work of intoxication was begun, every wayward fancy and wild expression was as acceptable and effectual as the most refined wit; and that the favour which they would have refused to the unattractive reasoner, or to the too distant and formal orator, they had not the firmness to withhold, when solicited with the gay persuasive familiarity of a companion. These careless or licentious habits, encouraged by early applause and victory, were never thrown aside; and we can observe, in almost all his productions, no matter how august the audience, or how solemn the occasion, that his mind is perpetually relapsing into its primitive indulgences."—Pp. 412, 418.

The learned author closes this very able and eloquent dissertation with some remarks upon what he says is now denominated the Irish school of eloquence; and seems inclined to deny that its profusion of imagery implies any deficiency, or even neglect of argument. As we had some share, we believe, in imposing this denomination, we may be pardoned for feeling some little anxiety that it should be rightly understood; and beg leave therefore to say, that we are as far as possible from holding, that the greatest richness of imagery necessarily excludes close or accurate reasoning; holding, on the contrary, that it is frequently its most appropriate vehicle and natural exponent — as in Lord Bacon, Lord Chatham, and Jeremy Taylor. But the eloquence we wished to characterize, is that where the figures and ornaments of speech *do* interfere with its substantial object — where fancy is not ministrant but predominant — where the imagination is not merely awakened, but intoxicated — and either overlays and obscures the sense, or frolics and gambols around it, to the disturbance of its march, and the weakening of its array for the contest: — and of this kind, we still humbly think, was the eloquence of Mr. Curran.

His biographer says, indeed, that it is a mistake to call it Irish, because Swift and Goldsmith had none of it — and Milton and Bacon and Chatham had much; and moreover, that Burke and Grattan and Curran had each a distinctive style of eloquence, and ought not to be classed together. How old the style may be in Ireland, we cannot undertake to say — though we think there are traces of it in Ossian. We would observe too, that, though born in Ireland, neither Swift nor Goldsmith were trained in the Irish school, or worked for the Irish market; and we have already said, that it is totally to mistake our conception of the style in question, to ascribe any tincture of it to such writers as Milton, Bacon, or Taylor. There is fancy and figure enough certainly in their compositions: but there is no intoxication of the fancy, and no rioting and revelling among figures — no ungoverned and ungovernable impulse — no fond dalliance with metaphors — no mad and headlong pursuit of brilliant images and passionate expressions — no lingering among tropes and melodies — no giddy bandying of antitheses and allusions — no craving, in short, for per-

petual glitter, and panting after effect, till both speaker and hearer are lost in the splendid confusion, and the argument evaporates in the heat which was meant to enforce it. This is perhaps too strongly put; but there are large portions of Mr. C.'s Speeches to which we think the substance of the description will apply. Take, for instance, a passage, very much praised in the work before us, in his argument in Judge Johnson's case,—an argument, it will be remembered, on a point of law, and addressed, not to a Jury, but to a Judge.

"I am not ignorant that this extraordinary construction has received the sanction of another Court, nor of the surprise and dismay with which it smote upon *the general heart* of the Bar. I am aware that I may have the mortification of being told, in another country, of that unhappy decision; and I foresee in what confusion I shall hang down my head when I am told it. But I cherish, too, the consolatory hope, that I shall be able to tell them, that I had an old and learned friend, whom I would put above *all the sweepings of their Hall* (no great compliment, we should think), who was of a different opinion—who had derived his ideas of civil liberty from the purest fountains of Athens and of Rome—who had fed the youthful vigour of his studious mind with the theoretic knowledge of their wisest philosophers and statesmen—and who had refined that theory into the quick and exquisite sensibility of moral instinct, by contemplating the practice of their most illustrious examples—by dwelling on the *sweet-souled piety of Cimon*—on the *anticipated Christianity of Socrates*—on the *gallant and pathetic patriotism of Epaminondas*—on that pure austerity of Fabricius, whom to move from his integrity would have been more difficult than to have pushed the sun from his course! I would add, that if he had seemed to hesitate, it was but for a moment—that his *hesitation* was like the *passing cloud that floats across the morning sun*, and hides it from the view, and does so for a moment hide it, *by involving the spectator without even approaching the face of the luminary.*—And this soothing hope I draw from the dearest and *tenderest* recollections of my life—from the remembrance of those attic nights, and those refections of the gods, which we have spent with those admired, and respected, and beloved companions, who have gone before us; over whose ashes the most precious tears of Ireland have been shed. [Here Lord Avonmore could not refrain from bursting into tears.] Yes, my good Lord, I see you do not forget them. I see their sacred forms passing in sad review before your memory. I see your *pained and softened fancy* recalling those happy meetings, where the innocent enjoyment of social mirth became expanded into the nobler warmth of social virtue, and the *horizon of the board* became enlarged into the *horizon of man*—where the swelling heart conceived and communicated the pure and generous purpose—where *my slenderer and younger taper* imbibed its borrowed light from the more matured and *redundant fountain of yours.*"—Vol. i. pp. 139—148.

Now, we must candidly confess, that we do not remember ever to have read any thing much more absurd than this—and that the puerility and folly of the classical intrusions is even less offensive, than the heap of incongruous metaphors by which the meaning is obscured. Does the learned author really mean to contend, that the metaphors here add either force or beauty to the sentiment? or that Bacon or Milton ever wrote any thing like this upon such a topic? In his happier moments and more vehement adjurations, Mr. C. is often beyond all question a great and commanding orator; and we have no doubt was, to those who had the happiness of hearing him, a much greater orator than the mere readers of his speeches have any means of conceiving:—but we really cannot help repeating our protest against a style of composition which could betray its great master, and that very frequently, into such passages as those we have just extracted. The mischief is not to the master—whose genius could efface all such stains, and whose splendid successes would sink his failures in oblivion—but to the pupils, and to the public, whose taste that very genius is thus instrumental in corrupting. If young lawyers are taught to consider *this* as the style which should be aimed at and encouraged, to render Judges benevolent,—by comparing them to the "sweet-souled Cimon," and the "gallant Epaminondas;" or to talk about their own "young and slender tapers," and "the clouds and the morning sun,"—with what precious stuff will the Courts and the country be infested! It is not difficult to imitate the defects of such a style—and of all defects they are the most nauseous in imitation. Even in the hands of men of genius, the risk is, that the longer such a style is cultivated, the more extravagant it will grow,—just as those who deal in other means of intoxication, are tempted to strengthen the mixture as they proceed. The learned and candid author before us, testifies this to have been the progress of Mr. C. himself—and it is still more strikingly illustrated by the history

of his models and imitators. Mr. Burke had much less of this extravagance than Mr. Grattan — Mr. Grattan much less than Mr. Curran — and Mr. Curran much less than Mr. Phillips. — It is really of some importance that the climax should be closed, somewhere.

There is a concluding chapter, in which Mr. C.'s skill in cross-examination, and his conversational brilliancy, are commemorated; as well as the general simplicity and affability of his manners, and his personal habits and peculiarities. He was not a profound lawyer, nor much of a general scholar, though reasonably well acquainted with all the branches of polite literature, and an eager reader of novels — being often caught sobbing over the pathos of Richardson, or laughing at the humour of Cervantes, with an unrestrained vehemence which reminds us of that of Voltaire. He spoke very slow, both in public and private, and was remarkably scrupulous in his choice of words: he slept very little, and, like Johnson, was always averse to retire at night—lingering long after he arose to depart — and, in his own house, often following one of his guests to his chamber, and renewing the conversation for an hour. He was habitually abstinent and temperate; and, from his youth up, in spite of all his vivacity, the victim of a constitutional melancholy. His wit is said to have been ready and brilliant, and altogether without gall. But the credit of this testimony is somewhat weakened by a little selection of his *bon mots*, with which we are furnished in a note. The greater part, we own, appear to us to be rather vulgar and ordinary; as, when a man of the name of Halfpenny was desired by the Judge to sit down, Mr. C. said, "I thank your Lordship for having at last *nailed that rap to the counter;*" or, when observing upon the singular pace of a Judge who was lame, he said, "Don't you see that one leg goes before, like a tipstaff, to make room for the other?" — or, when vindicating his countrymen from the charge of being naturally vicious, he said, "He had never yet heard of an Irishman being *born drunk.*" The following, however, is good—"I can't tell you, Curran," observed an Irish nobleman, who had voted for the Union, "how frightful our old House of Commons appears to me." "Ah! my Lord," replied the other, "it is only natural for murderers to be afraid of Ghosts;" — and this is at least grotesque. "Being asked what an Irish gentleman, just arrived in England, could mean by perpetually putting out his tongue? Answer — 'I suppose he's trying to *catch the English accent.*'" In his last illness, his physician observing in the morning that he seemed to cough with more difficulty, he answered, "That is rather surprising, as I have been practising all night."

But these things are of little consequence. Mr. Curran was something much better than a sayer of smart sayings. He was a lover of his country — and its fearless, its devoted, and indefatigable servant. To his energy and talents she was perhaps indebted for some mitigation of her sufferings in the days of her extremity — and to these, at all events, the public has been indebted, in a great degree, for the knowledge they now have of her wrongs; and for the feeling which that knowledge has excited, of the necessity of granting them redress. It is in this character that he must have most wished to be remembered, and in which he has most deserved it.

TOUR IN SWITZERLAND.

(November, 1822.)

Switzerland, or a Journal of a Tour and Residence in that Country in the Years 1817, 1818, *and* 1819. *Followed by an Historical Sketch of the Manners and Customs of Ancient and Modern Helvetia, in which the Events of our own Time are fully detailed; together with the Causes to which they may be referred.* By L. Simond, "Author of Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during the Years 1810 and 1811." In 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1822.*

M. Simond is already well known in this country as the author of one of the best accounts of it that has ever been given to the world, either by native or foreigner — the fullest certainly, and the most unprejudiced—and

* I reprint a part of this paper: — partly out of love to the memory of the author, who was my connection and particular friend: — but chiefly for the sake of his remarks on our English manners, and my judgment on these remarks — which I would venture to submit to the sensitive patriots of America, as a specimen of the temperance with which the patriots of other countries can deal with the censors of their national habits and pretensions to fine breeding.

containing the most faithful descriptions both of the aspect of our country, and the peculiarities of our manners and character, that has yet come under our observation. There are some mistakes, and some rash judgments; but nothing can exceed the candour of the estimate, or the fairness and independence of spirit with which it is made; while the whole is pervaded by a vein of original thought, always sagacious, and not unfrequently profound. The main fault of that book, as a work of *permanent* interest and instruction, which it might otherwise have been, is the too great space which is allotted to the transient occurrences and discussions of the time to which it refers — most of which have already lost their interest, and not only read like old news and stale politics, but have extended their own atmosphere of repulsion to many admirable remarks and valuable suggestions, of which they happen to be the vehicles.

The work before us is marked by the same excellencies, and is nearly free from the faults to which we have just alluded. In spite of this, however — perhaps even in consequence of it — we suspect it will not generally be thought so entertaining; the scene being necessarily so much narrower, and the persons of the drama fewer and less diversified. The work, however, is full of admirable description and original remark; — nor do we know any book of travels, ancient or modern, which contains, in the same compass, so many graphic and animated delineations of external objects, or so many just and vigorous observations on the moral phenomena it records. The most remarkable thing about it, however — and it occurs equally in the author's former publication — is the singular combination of enthusiasm and austerity that appears both in the descriptive, and the reasoning or ethical parts of the performance — the perpetual struggle that seems to exist between the feelings and fancy of the author, and the sterner intimations of his understanding. There is, accordingly, in all his moral and political observations at least, a constant alternation of romantic philanthropy and bitter sarcasm — of the most captivating views of apparent happiness and virtue, and the most relentless disclosures of actual guilt and misery — of the sweetest and most plausible illusions, and the most withering and chilling truths. He expatiates, for example, through many pages, on the heroic valour and devoted patriotism of the old Helvetic worthies, with the memorials of which the face of their country is covered—and then proceeds to dissect their character and manners with the most cruel particularity, and makes them out to have been most barbarous, venal, and unjust. In the same way, he bewitches his readers with seducing pictures of the peace, simplicity, independence, and honesty of the mountain villagers; and by and by takes occasion to tell us, that they are not only more stupid, but more corrupt than the inhabitants of cities. He eulogises the solid learning and domestic habits that prevail at Zurich and Geneva; and then makes it known to us that they are infested with faction and ennui. He draws a delightful picture of the white cottages and smiling pastures in which the cheerful peasants of the Engadine have their romantic habitations — and then casts us down from our elevation without the least pity, by informing us, that the best of them are those who have returned from hawking stucco parrots, sixpenny looking-glasses, and coloured sweetmeats through all the towns of Europe. He is always strong for liberty, and indignant at oppression — but cannot settle very well in what liberty consists; and seems to suspect, at last, that political rights are oftener a source of disorder than of comfort; and that if person and property are tolerably secure, it is mere quixotism to look further.

So strong a contrast of warm feelings and cold reasonings, such animating and such despairing views of the nature and destiny of mankind, are not often to be found in the same mind — and still less frequently in the same book: and yet they amount but to an extreme case, or strong example, of the inconsistencies through which all men of generous tempers and vigorous understandings are perpetually passing, as the one or the other part of their constitution assumes the ascendant. There are many of our good feelings, we suspect, and some even of our good principles, that rest upon a sort of illusion; or cannot submit at least to be questioned by frigid reason, without being for the time a good deal discountenanced and impaired — and this we take to be very clearly the case with M. Simond. His

temperament is plainly enthusiastic, and his fancy powerful: but his reason is active and exacting, and his love of truth paramount to all other considerations. His natural sympathies are with all fine and all lofty qualities — but it is his honest conviction, that happiness is most securely built of more vulgar materials — and that there is even something ridiculous in investing our humble human nature with these magnificent attributes. At all events it is impossible to doubt of his sincerity in both parts of the representation; — for there is not the least appearance of a love of paradox, or a desire to produce effect; and nothing can be so striking as the air of candour and impartiality that prevails through the whole work. If any traces of prejudice may still be detected, they have manifestly survived the most strenuous efforts to efface them. The strongest, we think, are against French character and English manners — with some, perhaps, against the French Revolution, and its late Imperial consummator. He is very prone to admire Nature — but not easily satisfied with Man; and, though most intolerant of intolerance, and most indulgent to those defects of which adventitious advantages make men most impatient, he is evidently of opinion that scarcely any thing is exactly as it should be in the present state of society — and that little more can be said for most existing habits and institutions, than that they have been, and might have been, still worse.

He sets out for the most picturesque country of Europe, from that which is certainly the least so: — and gives the first indications of his sensitiveness on these topics, by a passing critique on the ancient châteaux of France, and their former inhabitants. We may as well introduce him to our readers with this passage as with any other.

"A few comfortable residences, scattered about the country, have lately put us in mind how very rare they are in general. Instead of them, you meet, not unfrequently, some ten or twenty miserable hovels, crowded together round what was formerly the stronghold of the lord of the manor; a narrow, dark, prison-like building, with small grated windows, embattled walls, and turrets peeping over thatched roofs. The lonely cluster seems unconnected with the rest of the country, and may be said to represent the feudal system, as plants in a *hortus siccus* do the vegetable. Long before the Revolution, the châteaux had been mostly forsaken by their *seigneurs*, for the nearest country town; where Monsieur le Comte, or Monsieur le Marquis, decorated with the cross of St. Louis, made shift to live on his paltry seigniorial dues, and rents ill paid by a starving peasantry; spending his time in reminiscences of gallantry with the old dowagers of the place, who rouged and wore patches, dressed in hoops and high-heeled shoes, full four inches, and long pointed elbow-ruffles, balanced with lead. Not one individual of this good company knew any thing of what was passing in the world, or suspected that any change had taken place since the days of Louis XIV. No book found its way there; no one read, not even a newspaper. When the Revolution burst upon this inferior nobility of the provinces, it appeared to them like Attila and the Huns to the people of the fifth century — the Scourge of God, coming nobody knew whence, for the mere purpose of destruction — a savage enemy, speaking an unknown language, with whom no compromise could be made."

The first view of the new country, though no longer new to most readers, is given with a truth and a freshness of feeling which we are tempted to preserve in an extract.

"Soon after passing the frontiers of the two countries, the view, heretofore bounded by near objects, woods and pastures, rocks and snows, opened all at once upon the Canton de Vaud, and upon half Switzerland! a vast extent of undulating country, tufted woods and fields, and silvery streams and lakes, villages and towns with their antique towers, and their church-steeples shining in the sun.

"The lake of Neuchâtel, far below on the left, and those of Morat and Vienne, like mirrors set in deep frames, contrasted by the tranquillity of their lucid surfaces, with the dark shades and broken grounds and ridges of the various landscape. Beyond this vast extent of country, its villages and towns, woods, lakes, and mountains; beyond all terrestrial objects — beyond the horizon itself, rose a long range of aërial forms, of the softest pale pink hue: these were the high Alps, the rampart of Italy — from Mont Blanc in Savoy, to the glaciers of the Oberland, and even further. Their angle of elevation seen from this distance is very small indeed. Faithfully represented in a drawing, the effect would be insignificant; but the aërial perspective amply restored the proportions lost in the mathematical perspective.

"The human mind thirsts after immensity and immutability, and duration without bounds; but it needs some tangible object from which to take its flight, — something present to lead to futurity, something bounded from whence to rise to the infinite. This vault of the heavens over our head, sinking all terrestrial objects into absolute nothingness, might seem best fitted to awaken this sense of expansion in the mind: but mere space is not a perceptible object to which we can readily apply a scale, while the Alps,

seen at a glance between heaven and earth — met as it were on the confines of the regions of fancy and of sober reality, are there like written characters, traced by a divine hand, and suggesting thoughts such as human language never reached.

"Coming down the Jura, a long descent brought us to what appeared a plain, but which proved a varied country with hills and dales, divided into neat enclosures of hawthorn in full bloom, and large hedgerow trees, mostly walnut, oak, and ash. It had altogether very much the appearance of the most beautiful parts of England, although the enclosures were on a smaller scale, and the cottages less neat and ornamented. They differed entirely from France, where the dwellings are always collected in villages, the fields all open and without trees. Numerous streams of the clearest water crossed the road, and watered very fine meadows. The houses, built of stone, low, broad, and massy, either thatched or covered with heavy wooden shingles, and shaded with magnificent walnut trees, might all have furnished studies to an artist."—Vol. i. pp. 25—27.

The following, however, is more characteristic of the author's vigorous and familiar, but somewhat quaint and abrupt, style of description.

"Leaving our equipages at Ballaigne, we proceeded to the falls of the Orbe, through a hanging wood of fine old oaks, and came, after a long descent, to a place where the Orbe breaks through a great mass of ruins, which, at some very remote period, have fallen from the mountain, and entirely obstructed its channel. All the earth, and all the smaller fragments, have long since disappeared: and the water now works its way, with great noise and fury, among the larger fragments, and falls above the height of eighty feet, in the very best style. The blocks, many of them as large as a good-sized three-story house, are heaped up most strangely, jammed in by their angles — in equilibrium on a point, or forming perilous bridges, over which you may, with proper precaution, pick your way to the other side. The quarry from which the materials of the bridge came is just above your head, and the miners are still at work — air, water, frost, weight, and time! The strata of limestone are evidently breaking down; their deep rents are widening, and enormous masses, already loosened from the mountain, and suspended on their precarious bases, seem only waiting for the last effort of the great lever of nature to take the horrid leap, and bury under some hundred feet of new chaotic ruins, the trees, the verdant lawn — and yourself, who are looking on and foretelling the catastrophe! We left this scene at last reluctantly, and proceeded towards the *dent-de-vaulion*, at the base of which we arrived in two hours, and in two hours more reached the summit, which is four thousand four hundred and seventy-six feet above the sea, and three thousand three hundred and forty-two feet above the lake of Geneva. Our path lay over smooth turf, sufficiently steep to make it difficult to climb. At the top we found a narrow ridge, not more than one hundred yards wide. The south view, a most magnificent one, was unfortunately too like that at our entrance into Switzerland to bear a second description; the other side of the ridge can scarcely be approached without terror, being almost perpendicular. Crawling, therefore, on our hands and knees, we ventured, in this modest attitude, to look out at the window at the hundred and fiftieth story (at least two thousand feet), and see what was doing in the street. Herds of cattle in the *infiniment petit* were grazing on the verdant lawn of a narrow vale; on the other side of which, a mountain, overgrown with dark pines, marked the boundary of France. Towards the west, we saw a piece of water, which appeared like a mere fish-pond. It was the lake of Joux, two leagues in length, and half a league in breadth. We were to look for our night's lodgings in the village on its banks."—Vol. i. pp. 33—36.

"Bienne struck us as more Swiss than any thing we had yet seen, or rather as if we were entering Switzerland for the first time; every thing looked and sounded so foreign: and yet to see the curiosity we excited the moment we landed and entered the streets, we might have supposed it was ourselves who looked rather outlandish. The women wore their hair plaited down to their heels, while the full petticoat did not descend near so far. Several groups of them, sitting at their doors, sung *in parts*, with an accuracy of ear and of taste innate among the Germans. Gateways fortified with towers intersect the streets, which are composed of strange-looking houses built on arcades, like those of bridges, and variously painted, blue with yellow borders, red with white, or purple and grey; projecting iron balconies, highly worked, and of a glossy black, with bright green window frames. The luxury of fountains and of running water is still greater here than at Neuchâtel; and you might be tempted to quench your thirst in the kennel, it runs so clear and pure. Morning and evening, goats, in immense droves, conducted to or from the mountain, traverse the streets, and stop of themselves, each at its own door. In the interior of the houses, most articles of furniture are quaintly shaped and ornamented; old-looking, but rubbed bright, and in good preservation; from the nut-cracker, curiously carved, to the double-necked cruet, pouring oil and vinegar out of the same bottle. The accommodations at the inn are homely, but not uncomfortable; substantially good, though not elegant."—Vol. i. pp. 65, 66.

We may add the following, which is in the same style: —

"It rained all day yesterday, and we remained shut up in our room at a German inn in Waldshut, enjoying a day's rest with our books, and observing men and manners in Germany, through the small round panes of our casements. The projecting roofs

of houses afford so much shelter on both sides of the streets, that the beau sex of Waldshut were out all day long in their Sunday clothes, as if it had been fine weather; their long yellow hair in a single plait hung down to their heels, along a back made very straight by the habit of carrying pails of milk and water on the head; their snow-white shift-sleeves, rolled up to the shoulder, exposed to view a sinewy sun-burnt arm; the dark red stays were laced with black in front, and a petticoat scarcely longer than the Scotch kilt, hid nothing of the lower limb, nor of a perfectly neat stocking, well stretched by red garters full in sight. The aged among them, generally frightful, looked like withered little old men in disguise."—Vol. i. pp. 87, 88.

Of all the Swiss cities, he seems to have been most struck with Berne; and the impression made by its majestic exterior, has even made him a little too partial, we think, to its aristocratic Constitution. His description of its appearance is given with equal spirit and precision.

"These fine woods extend almost to the very gates of Berne, where you arrive under an avenue of limes, which, in this season, perfume the air. There are seats by the side of the road, for the convenience of foot-passengers, especially women going to market, with a shelf above, at the height of a person standing, for the purpose of receiving their baskets while they rest themselves on the bench: you meet also with fountains at regular distances. The whole country has the appearance of English pleasure grounds. The town itself stands on the elevated banks of a rapid river, the Aar, to which the Rhine is indebted for one half of its waters. A sudden bend of the stream encloses, on all sides but one, the promontory on which the town is built, the magnificent slope is in some places covered with turf, supported in others by lofty terraces planted with trees, and commanding wonderful views over the surrounding rich country, and the high Alps beyond it.

"It is not an easy matter to account for the first impression you receive upon entering Berne. You certainly feel that you have got to an ancient and a great city. yet, before the eleventh century, it had not a name, and its present population does not exceed twelve thousand souls. It is a republic; yet it looks kingly. Something of Roman majesty appears in its lofty terraces; in those massy arches on each side of the streets; in the abundance of water flowing night and day into gigantic basins; in the magnificent avenues of trees. The very silence, and absence of bustle, a certain stateliness and reserved demeanour in the inhabitants, by showing it to be not a money-making town, implies that its wealth springs from more solid and permanent sources than trade can afford, and that another spirit animates its inhabitants. In short, of all the first-sight impressions and guesses about Berne, that of its being a Roman town would be nearer right than any other. Circumstances, in some respects similar, have produced like results in the Alps, and on the plains of Latium, at the interval of twenty centuries. Luxury at Berne seems wholly directed to objects of public utility. By the side of those gigantic terraces, of those fine fountains, and noble shades, you see none but simple and solid dwellings, yet scarcely any beggarly ones; not an equipage to be seen, but many a country waggon, coming to market, with a capital team of horses, or oxen, well appointed every way.

"Aristocratic pride is said to be excessive at Berne; and the antique simplicity of its magistrates, the plain and easy manners they uniformly preserve in their intercourse with the people, are not by any means at variance with the assertion; for that external simplicity and affability to inferiors is one of the characteristics of the aristocratic government; all assumption of superiority being carefully avoided when real authority is not in question. Zurich suggests the idea of a municipal aristocracy; Berne of a warlike one; there, we think we see citizens of a town transformed into nobility; here nobles who have made themselves citizens."—Vol. i. pp. 213—217.*

But we must now hasten from the physical wonders of this country to some of the author's moral observations; and we are tempted to give the first place to his unsparing but dispassionate remarks on the character of modern English travellers. At Geneva, he observes,—

"English travellers swarm here, as every where else; but they do not mix with the society of the country more than they do elsewhere, and seem to like it even less. The people of Geneva, on the other hand, say, 'Their former friends, the English, are so changed they scarcely know them again. They used to be a plain downright race, in whom a certain degree of *sauvagerie* (oddity and shyness) only served to set off the advantages of a highly cultivated understanding, of a liberal mind, and generous temper, which characterized them in general. Their young men were often rather wild, but soon reformed, and became like their fathers. Instead of this, we now see (they say), a mixed assemblage, of whom lamentably few possess any of those qualities we were wont to admire in their predecessors. Their former shyness and reserve is changed to disdain and rudeness. If you seek these modern English, they keep aloof, do not mix in conversation, and seem to laugh at you. Their conduct, still more strange and unaccountable in regard to each other, is indicative of contempt or suspicion. Studiously avoiding to exchange a word with their countrymen, one would suppose they expected to find a sharper in every individual of their own nation, not particularly introduced,—or at best

* Many travelling details, and particular descriptions, are here omitted.

a person beneath them. Accordingly you cannot vex or displease them more than by inviting other English travellers to meet them, whom they may be compelled afterwards to acknowledge. If they do not find a crowd, they are tired. If you speak of the old English you formerly knew, that was before the Flood! If you talk of books, it is pedantry, and they yawn; of politics, they run wild about Bonaparte! Dancing is the only thing which is sure to please them. At the sound of the fiddle, the thinking nation starts up at once. Their young people are adepts in the art; and take pains to become so, spending half their time with the dancing master. You may know the houses where they live by the scraping of the fiddle, and shaking of the floor, which disturb their neighbours. Few bring letters; and yet they complain they are neglected by the good company, and cheated by innkeepers. The latter, accustomed to the *Milords Anglais* of former times, or at least having heard of them, think they may charge accordingly; but only find *des Anglais pour rire*, who bargain at the door, before they venture to come in, for the leg of mutton and bottle of wine, on which they mean to dine!'

"Placed as I am between the two parties, I hear young Englishmen repeat, what they have heard in France, that the Genevans are cold, selfish, and interested, and their women *des précieuses ridicules*, the very milliners and mantua-makers giving themselves airs of modesty and deep reading! that there is no opera, nor *théâtre des variétés;* in short, that Geneva is the dullest place in the world. Some say it is but a bad copy of England, a sham republic; and a scientific, no less than a political, counterfeit. In short, the friends of Geneva, among our modern English travellers, are not numerous — though they are select. These last distinguished themselves during the late hard winter by their bounty to the poor — not the poor of Geneva, who were sufficiently assisted by their richer countrymen, but those of Savoy, who were literally starving. If English travellers no longer appear in the same light as formerly, it is because it is not the same class of people who go abroad, but all classes, — and not the best of all classes either. They know this too, and say it themselves; they feel the ridicule of their enormous numbers, and of the absurd conduct of many of them. They are ashamed and provoked; describe it with the most pointed irony, and tell many a humorous story against themselves. Formerly, the travelling class was composed of young men of good family and fortune, just coming of age, who, after leaving the University, went the tour of the Continent under the guidance of a learned tutor, often a very distinguished man, or of men of the same class, at a more advanced age, with their familes, who, after many years spent in professional duties at home, came to visit again the countries they had seen in their youth, and the friends they had known there. In those better times, when no Englishman left his country either to seek his fortune, to save money, or to hide himself; when travellers of that nation were all very rich or very learned; of high birth, yet liberal principles; unbounded in their generosity, and with means equal to the inclination, their high standing in the world might well be accounted for; and it is a great pity they should have lost it. Were I an Englishman, I would not set out on my travels until the new fashion were over."—Vol. i. pp. 356—359.

At Schaffhausen, again, he observes, —

"There were other admirers here besides ourselves; some English, and more Germans, who furnished us with an opportunity of comparing the difference of national manners. The former, divided into groups, carefully avoiding any communication with each other still more than with the foreigners, never exchanged a word, and scarcely a look, with any but the legitimate interlocutors of their own set; women adhering more particularly to the rule — from native reserve and timidity, full as much as from pride or from extreme good breeding. Some of the ladies here might be Scotch; at least they wore the national colours, and we overheard them drawing comparisons between what we had under our eyes and Coralyn; giving, justly enough, the preference to the Clyde; but, at any rate, they behaved *à l'Anglaise.* The German ladies, on the contrary, contrived to *lier conversation* in indifferent French. With genuine simplicity, wholly unconscious of forwardness, although it might undoubtedly have been so qualified in England, they begged of my friend to let them hear a few words in English, just to know the sound, to which they were strangers. If we are to judge of the respective merits of these opposite manners, by the impression they leave, I think the question is already decided by the English against themselves. Yet, at the same time that they blame and deride their own proud reserve, and would depart from it if they well knew how, but a few have the courage to venture: — and I really believe they are the best bred, who thus allow themselves to be good-humoured and vulgar."—Vol. i. pp. 94, 95.

We have not much to say in defence of our countrymen — but what may be said truly, ought not to be suppressed. That our travellers are now generally of a lower rank than formerly, and that not many of them are fitted, either by their wealth or breeding, to uphold the character of the noble and honourable persons who once almost monopolized the advantages of foreign travel, is of course implied in the fact of their having become vastly more numerous, — without supposing any actual degeneracy in the nation itself. At a very popular point of M. Simond's journey, it appeared from a register which he consulted, that the proportion of travellers from different countries, was twenty-eight English to four Prussians, two

Dutch, five French, one Italian, and three Americans. That some of this great crowd of emigrants might not be suitable associates for some others, may easily be conjectured — and that the better sort may not have been very willing to fraternize with those who did least honour to their common country, could scarcely be imputed to them as a fault. But these considerations, we fear, will go but a little way to explain the phenomenon; or to account for the "Morgue Aristocratique," as Bonaparte called it, of the English gentry — the sort of sulky and contemptuous reserve with which, both at home and abroad, almost all who have any pretensions to *bon ton* seem to think it necessary to defend those pretensions. The thing has undoubtedly been carried, of late years, to an excess that is both ludicrous and offensive — and is, in its own nature, unquestionably a blemish and a misfortune: but it does not arise, we are persuaded, from any thing intrinsically haughty or dull in our temperament — but is a natural consequence, and, it must be admitted, a considerable drawback from two very proud peculiarities in our condition — the freedom of our constitution, and the rapid progress of wealth and intelligence in the body of the nation.

In most of the other countries of Europe, if a man was not born in high and polished society, he had scarcely any other means of gaining admission to it — and honour and dignity, it was supposed, belonged, by inheritance, to a very limited class of the people. Within that circle, therefore, there could be no derogation — and, from without it, there could be no intrusion. But, in this country, sons of every condition have been long entitled to aspire to every situation — and, from the nature of our political constitution, any one who had individual influence, by talent, wealth, or activity, became at once of consequence in the community, and was classed as the open rival or necessary auxiliary of those who had the strongest hereditary claims to importance. But though the circle of Society was in this way at all times larger than in the Continental nations, and embraced more persons of dissimilar training and habits, it does not appear to have given a tone of repulsion to the manners of those who affected the superiority, till a period comparatively remote. In the days of the Tudors and Stuarts there was a wide pale of separation between the landed aristocracy and the rest of the population; and accordingly, down at least to the end of Charles the Second's reign, there seems to have been none of this dull and frozen arrogance in the habits of good company. The true reason of this, however, was, that though the competition was constitutionally open, good education was, in fact, till after this period, confined to the children of the gentry; and a certain parade in equipage and dress, which could not be easily assumed but by the opulent, nor naturally carried but by those who had been long accustomed to it, threw additional difficulties in the way of those who wished to push themselves forward in society, and rendered any other bulwarks unnecessary for the protection of the sanctuary of fashion.

From the time of Sir Robert Walpole, however, the communication between the higher and the lower orders became far more open and easy. Commercial wealth and enterprise were prodigiously extended — literature and intelligence spread with unprecedented rapidity among the body of the people; and the increased intercourse between the different parts of the country, naturally produced a greater mixture of the different classes of the people. This was followed by a general relaxation in those costly external observances, by which persons of condition had till then been distinguished. Ladies laid aside their hoops, trains, and elaborate head-dresses; and gentlemen their swords, periwigs, and embroidery;— and at the same time that it thus became quite practicable for an attorney's clerk or a mercer's apprentice to assume the exterior of a nobleman, it happened also, both that many persons of that condition had the education that fitted them for a higher rank — and that several had actually won their way to it by talents and activity, which had not formerly been looked for in that quarter. *Their* success was well merited undoubtedly, and honourable both to themselves and their country; but its occasional occurrence, even more than the discontinuance of aristocratical forms or the popular spirit of the Government, tended strongly to encourage the pretensions of others, who had little qualification for success, beyond an eager desire to obtain it. So many persons now

raised themselves by their own exertions, that every one thought himself entitled to rise; and very few proportionally were contented to remain in the rank to which they were born; and as vanity is a still more active principle than ambition, the effects of this aspiring spirit were more conspicuously seen in the invasion which it prompted on the prerogatives of polite society, than in its more serious occupations; and a herd of uncomfortable and unsuitable companions beset all the approaches to good company, and seemed determined to force all its barriers.

We think we have now stated the true causes of this phenomenon—but, at all events, the fact we believe to be incontrovertible, that within the last fifty years there has been an incredible increase of forwardness and solid impudence among the half-bred and half-educated classes of this country—and that there was consequently some apology for the assumption of more distant and forbidding manners towards strangers, on the part of those who were already satisfied with the extent of their society. It was evidently easier and more prudent to reject the overtures of unknown acquaintances, than to shake them off after they had been once allowed to fasten themselves—to repress, in short, the first attempts at familiarity, and repel, by a chilling and somewhat disdainful air, the advances of all, of whom it might any way be suspected that they might turn out discreditable or unfit associates.

This, we have no doubt, is the true history of that awful tone of gloomy indifference and stupid arrogance, which has unfortunately become so striking a characteristic of English manners. At its best, and when most justified by the circumstance of the parties, it has, we must allow, but an ungracious and disobliging air: but the extravagant height to which it is now frequently carried, and the extraordinary occasions on which it is sometimes displayed, deserve all the ridicule and reprobation they meet with. We should not quarrel much with a man of family and breeding being a little distant and cold to the many very affable people he may meet with, either in his travels, or in places of public resort at home. But the provoking thing is, to see the same frigid and unsociable manner adopted in private society, and towards persons of the highest character, if they happen not to belong to the same set or to be occupied with the same pursuits with those fastidious mortals,—who, while their dignity forbids them to be affable to men of another club, or women of another assembly, yet admit to the familiarity of their most private hours, a whole gang of led captains, or led parsons, fiddlers, boxers, or parasitical buffoons. But the most remarkable extravagance in the modern practice of this repulsive system, is, that the most outrageous examples of it are to be met with among those who have the least occasion for its protection,—persons whose society nobody would think of courting, and who yet receive the slightest and most ordinary civilities—being all that the most courteous would ever dream of offering them,—with airs of as vehement disdain as if they were really in danger of having their intimacy taken by storm! Such manners, in such people, are no doubt in the very extreme of absurdity. But it is the mischief of all cheap fashions, that they are immediately pirated by the vulgar; and certainly there is none that can be assumed with so little cost, either of industry or understanding, as this. As the whole of it consists in being silent, stupid, and sulky, it is quite level to the meanest capacity,—and, we have no doubt, has enabled many to pass for persons of some consideration, who could never have done so on any other terms; or has permitted them at least to think that they were shunning the society of many by whom they would certainly have been shunned.

We trust, therefore, that this fashion of mock stateliness and sullen reserve will soon pass away. The extreme facility with which it may be copied by the lowest and dullest of mankind,—the caricatures which are daily exhibited of it in every disgusting variety,—and the restraints it must impose upon the good nature and sociality which, after all, do *really* form a part of our national character, must concur, we think, with the alienation it produces in others, speedily to consign it to the tomb of other forgotten affectations. The duties that we owe to strangers that come casually into our society, certainly are not very weighty—and a man is no doubt entitled to consult his own ease, and even his indolence, at the hazard of being unpopular

among such persons. But, after all, affability and complaisance are still a kind of duties, in their degree; and of all duties, we should really think are those that are repaid, not only with the largest share of gratitude, but with the greatest internal satisfaction. All we ask is, that they, and the pleasure which naturally accompanies their exercise, should not be sacrificed to a vain notion of dignity, which the person assuming it knows all the while to be false and hollow — or to a still vainer assumption of fashion, which does not impose upon one in a thousand; and subjects its unhappy victim to the ridicule of his very competitors in the practice. All studied manners are assumed, of course, for the sake of the effect they are to produce on the beholders: and if a man have a particularly favourable opinion of the wisdom and dignity of his physiognomy, and, at the same time, a perfect consciousness of the folly and vulgarity of his discourse, there is no denying that such a man, when he is fortunate enough to be where he is not known, will do well to keep his own secret, and sit as silent, and look as repulsive among strangers as possible. But, under any other circumstances, we really cannot admit it to be a reasonable, any more than an amiable demeanour. To return, however, to M. Simond.

If he is somewhat severe upon our national character, it must be confessed that he deals still harder measure to his own countrymen. There is one passage in which he distinctly states that no man in France now pretends to any principle, either personal or political. What follows is less atrocious, — and probably nearer the truth. It is the sequel of an encomium on the domestic and studious occupations of the well-informed society of Zurich.

"Probably a mode of life so entirely domestic would tempt few strangers, and in France particularly it would appear quite intolerable. Yet I doubt whether these contemners of domestic dulness are not generally the dullest of the two. Walking occasionally the whole length of the interior Boulevards of Paris, on a summer evening, I have generally observed on my return, at the interval of several hours, the very same figures sitting just where I had left them; mostly isolated middle-aged men, established for the evening on three chairs, one for the elbow, another for the extended leg, a third for the centre of gravity; with vacant looks, and a muddy complexion, appearing discontented with themselves and others, and profoundly tired. A *fauteuil* in a *salon*, for the passive hearer of the talk of others, is still worse, I take it, than the three chairs on the Boulevard. The theatre, seen again and again, can have no great charm; nor is it every one who has money to spare for the one, or free access to the other; therefore, an immense number of people are driven to the Boulevard as a last resource. As to home, it is no resource at all. No one thinks of the possibility of employing his time there, either by himself or with his family. And the result, upon the whole is, that I do not believe there is a country in the world where you see so many long faces, care-worn and cross, as among the very people who are deemed, and believe themselves the merriest in the world. A man of rank and talent, who has spent many years in the *Crimea*, who employed himself diligently and usefully when there, and who naturally loves a country where he has done much good, praising it to a friend, has been heard to remark, as the main objection to a residence otherwise delightful — 'Mais on est obligé de s'aller coucher tous les soirs à sept heures, — parcequ'en Crimée on ne sait pas où aller passer la soirée!' This remark excites no surprise at Paris. Every one there feels that there can be no alternative, — some place, *not home*, to spend your evenings in, or to bed at seven o'clock! It puts one in mind of the gentleman who hesitated about marrying a lady whose company he liked very much, 'for,' as he observed, 'where could I then go to pass my evenings?'" — Vol. i. pp. 404, 405.

The following, though not a cordial, is at least a candid testimony to the substantial benefits of the Revolution: —

"The clamorous, restless, and bustling manners of the common people of Aix, their antiquated and ragged dress, their diminutive stature and ill-favoured countenances, strongly recalled to my mind the population of France, such as I remembered it formerly; for a considerable change has certainly taken place, in all such respects, between the years 1789 and 1815. The people of France are decidedly less noisy, and graver; better dressed, and cleaner. All this may be accounted for; but handsomer is not so readily understood, *à priori*. It seems as if the hardships of war, having successively carried off all the weakly, those who survived have regenerated the species. The people have undoubtedly gained much by the Revolution on the score of property, and a little as to political institutions. They certainly seem conscious of some advantage attained, and to be proud of it — not properly civil liberty, which is little understood, and not properly estimated, but a certain coarse equality, asserted in small things, although not thought of in the essentials of society. This new-born equality is very touchy, as if it felt yet insecure; and thence a degree of rudeness in the common intercourse with the lower class, and, more or less, all classes, very different from the old proverbial French politeness. This, though in itself not agreeable, is,

however, a good sign. Pride is a step in moral improvement, from a very low state. These opinions, I am well aware, will not pass in France without animadversion, as it is not to be expected the same judgment will be formed of things under different circumstances. If my critics, however, will only go three or four thousand miles off, and stay away a quarter of a century, I dare say we shall agree better when we compare notes on their return." — Vol. i. pp. 333, 331.

The way in which M. Simond speaks of Rousseau, affords a striking example of that struggle between enthusiasm and severity — romance and cool reason, which we noticed in the beginning as characteristic of the whole work. He talks, on the whole, with contempt, and even bitterness, of his character: but he follows his footsteps, and the vestiges and memorials even of his fictitious personages, with a spirit of devout observance — visits Clareus, and pauses at Meillerie — rows in a burning day to his island in the lake of Bienne — expatiates on the beauty of his retreat at the Charmettes — and even stops to explore his temporary abode at Moitier Travers. The following passages are remarkable: —

"Rousseau, from his garret, governed an empire — that of the mind; the founder of a new religion in politics, and to his enthusiastic followers a prophet — He said, and they believed! The disciples of Voltaire might be more numerous, but they were bound to him by far weaker ties. Those of Rousseau made the French Revolution, and perished *for* it; while Voltaire's, miscalculating its chances, perished *by* it. Both, perhaps, deserved their fate; but the former certainly acted the nobler part, and went to battle with the best weapons too, — for in the deadly encounter of all the passions, of the most opposite principles and irreconcilable prejudices, cold-hearted wit is of little avail. Heroes and martyrs do not care for epigrams; and he must have enthusiasm who pretends to lead the enthusiastic or cope with them. *Une intime persuasion*, Rousseau has somewhere said, *m'a toujours tenu lieu d'éloquence!* And well it might; for the first requisite to command belief, is to believe yourself. Nor is it easy to impose on mankind in this respect. There is no eloquence, no ascendancy over the minds of others, without this intimate persuasion in yourself. Rousseau's might only be a sort of poetical persuasion, lasting but as long as the occasion; yet it was thus powerful, only because it was true, though but for a quarter of an hour perhaps, in the heart of this inspired writer.

"Mr. M——, son of the friend of Rousseau, to whom he left his manuscripts, and especially his Confessions, to be published after his death, had the goodness to show them to me. I observed a fair copy written by himself in a small hand like print, very neat and correct; not a blot or an erasure to be seen. The most curious of these papers, however, were several sketch-books, or memoranda half filled, where the same hand is no longer discernible; but the same genius, and the same wayward temper and perverse intellect, in every fugitive thought which is there put down. Rousseau's composition, like Montesquieu's, was laborious and slow; his ideas flowed rapidly, but were not readily brought into proper order, they did not appear to have come in consequence of a previous plan; but the plan itself, formed afterwards, came in aid of the ideas, and served as a sort of frame for them, instead of being a system to which they were subservient. Very possibly some of the fundamental opinions he defended so earnestly, and for which his disciples would willingly have suffered martyrdom, were originally adopted because a bright thought, caught as it flew, was entered in his commonplace book.

"These loose notes of Rousseau afford a curious insight into his taste in composition. You find him perpetually retrenching epithets — reducing his thoughts to their simplest expressions — giving words a peculiar energy, by the new application of their original meaning — going back to the *naïveté* of old language; and, in the artificial process of simplicity, carefully effacing the trace of each laborious footstep as he advanced; each idea, each image, coming out, at last, as if cast entire at a single throw, original, energetic, and clear. Although Mr. M—— had promised to Rousseau that he would publish his Confessions as they were, yet he took upon himself to suppress a passage explaining certain circumstances of his abjurations at Anneci, affording a curious, but frightfully disgusting, picture of monkish manners at that time. It is a pity that Mr. M—— did not break his word in regard to some few more passages of that most admirable and most vile of all the productions of genius." — Vol. i. pp. 564—566.

The following notices of Madame de Staël are emphatic and original: —

"I had seen Madame de Staël a child; and I saw her again on her death-bed. The intermediate years were spent in another hemisphere, as far as possible from the scenes in which she lived. Mixing again, not many months since, with a world in which I am a stranger, and feel that I must remain so, I just saw this celebrated woman; and heard, as it were her last words, as I had read her works before, uninfluenced by any local bias. Perhaps, the impressions of a man thus dropped from another world into this may be deemed something like those of posterity.

"Madame de Stael lived for conversation: she was not happy out of a large circle, and a French circle where she could be heard in her own language to the best advantage. Her extravagant admiration of the society of Paris was neither more nor less than genuine admiration of herself. It was the best mirror she

could get — and that was all. Ambitious of all sorts of notoriety, she would have given the world to have been born noble and a beauty. Yet there was in this excessive vanity so much honesty and frankness, it was so entirely void of affectation and trick, she made so fair and so irresistible an appeal to your own sense of her worth, that what would have been laughable in any one else, was almost respectable in her. That ambition of eloquence, so conspicuous in her writings, was much less observable in her conversation; there was more *abandon* in what she said than in what she wrote; while speaking, the spontaneous inspiration was no labour, but all pleasure. Conscious of extraordinary powers, she gave herself up to the present enjoyment of the good things, and the deep things, flowing in a full stream from her own well-stored mind and luxuriant fancy. The inspiration was pleasure—the pleasure was inspiration; and without precisely intending it, she was, every evening of her life, in a circle of company, the very Corinne she had depicted." —Vol. i. pp. 283—286.

REJECTED ADDRESSES.

(NOVEMBER, 1812.)

Rejected Addresses; or the New Theatrum Poetarum. 12mo. Pp. 126. London: 1812.*

AFTER all the learning, wrangling, and solemn exhortation of our preceding pages, we think we may venture to treat our readers with a little morsel of town-made gaiety, without any great derogation for our established character for seriousness and contempt of trifles. We are aware, indeed, that there is no way by which we could so certainly ingratiate ourselves with our provincial readers, as by dealing largely in such articles; and we can assure them, that if we have not hitherto indulged them very often in this manner, it is only because we have not often met with any thing nearly so good as the little volume before us. We have seen nothing comparable to it indeed since the publication of the poetry of the Antijacobin; and though it wants the high seasoning of politics and personality, which no doubt contributed much to the currency of that celebrated collection, we are not sure that it does not exhibit, on the whole, a still more exquisite talent of imitation, with powers of poetical composition that are scarcely inferior.

We must not forget, however, to inform our country readers, that these "Rejected Addresses" are merely a series of imitations of the style and manner of the most celebrated living writers — who are here supposed to have tried their hands at an address to be spoken at the opening of the New Theatre in Drury Lane — in the hope, we presume, of obtaining the twenty-pound prize which the munificent managers are said to have held out to the successful candidate The names of the imaginary competitors, whose works are now offered to the public, are only indicated by their initials; and there are one or two which we really do not know how to fill up. By far the greater part, however, are such as cannot possibly be mistaken; and no reader of Scott, Crabbe, Southey, Wordsworth, Lewis, Moore, or Spencer, could require the aid, even of their initials, to recognize them in their portraits. Coleridge, Coleman, and Lord Byron, are not quite such striking likenesses. Of Dr. Busby's and Mr. Fitzgerald's we do not hold ourselves qualified to judge — not professing to be deeply read in the works of these originals.

There is no talent so universally entertaining as that of mimicry — even when it is confined to the lively imitation of the air and manner — the voice, gait, and external deportment of ordinary individuals. Nor is this to be ascribed entirely to our wicked love of ridicule; for, though we must not assign a very high intellectual rank to an art which is said to have attained to perfection among the savages of New Holland, some admiration is undoubtedly due to the capacity of nice observation which it implies; and some gratification may be innocently derived from the sud-

* I have been so much struck, on lately looking back to this paper, with the very extraordinary merit and felicity of the Imitations on which it is employed, that I cannot resist the temptation of giving them a chance of delighting a new generation of admirers, by including some part of them in this publication. I take them, indeed, to be the very best imitations (and often of difficult originals) that ever were made: and, considering their great extent and variety, to indicate a talent to which I do not know where to look for a parallel. Some few of them descend to the level of parodies: but by far the greater part are of a much higher description. They ought, I suppose, to have come under the head of Poetry,—but "Miscellaneous" is broad enough to cover any thing.—Some of the less striking citations are now omitted. The authors, I believe, have been long known to have been the late Messrs. Smith.

den perception which it excites of peculiarities previously unobserved. It rises in interest, however, and in dignity, when it succeeds in expressing, not merely the visible and external characteristics of its objects, but those also of their taste, their genius, and temper. A vulgar mimic repeats a man's cant-phrases and known stories, with an exact imitation of his voice, look, and gestures; but he is an artist of a far higher description, who can make stories or reasonings in his manner; and represent the features and movements of his mind, as well as the accidents of his body. The same distinction applies to the mimicry, if it may be so called, of an author's style and manner of writing. To copy his peculiar phrases or turns of expression — to borrow the grammatical structure of his sentences, or the metrical balance of his lines — or to crowd and string together all the pedantic or affected words which he has become remarkable for using — applying, or misapplying all these without the least regard to the character of his genius, or the spirit of his compositions, is to imitate an author only as a monkey might imitate a man — or, at best, to support a masquerade character on the strength of the dress only; and at all events, requires as little talent, and deserves as little praise, as the mimetic exhibitions in the neighbourhood of Port-Sydney. It is another matter, however, to be able to borrow the diction and manner of a celebrated writer to express sentiments like his own — to write as he would have written on the subject proposed to his imitator — to think his thoughts, in short, as well as to use his words — and to make the revival of his style appear but a consequence of the strong conception of his peculiar ideas. To do this in all the perfection of which it is capable, requires talents, perhaps, not inferior to those of the original on whom they are employed — together with a faculty of observation, and a dexterity of application, which that original might not always possess; and should not only afford nearly as great pleasure to the reader, as a piece of composition, — but may teach him some lessons, or open up to him some views, which could not have been otherwise disclosed.

The exact imitation of a good thing, it must be admitted, promises fair to be a pretty good thing in itself; but if the resemblance be very striking, it commonly has the additional advantage of letting us more completely into the secret of the original author, and enabling us to understand far more clearly in what the peculiarity of his manner consists, than most of us should ever have done without this assistance. The resemblance, it is obvious, can only be rendered striking by exaggerating a little, and bringing more conspicuously forward, all that is peculiar and characteristic in the model: and the marking features, which were somewhat shaded and confused in their natural presentment, being thus magnified and disengaged in the copy, are more easily observed and comprehended, and their effect traced with infinitely more ease and assurance; — just as the course of a river, or a range of mountains, is more distinctly understood when laid down on a map or plan, than when studied in their natural proportions. Thus, in Burke's imitation of Bolingbroke, (the most perfect specimen, perhaps, which ever will exist of the art of which we are speaking,) we have all the qualities which distinguish the style, or we may indeed say the genius, of that noble writer, as it were, concentrated and brought at once before us; so that an ordinary reader, who, in perusing his genuine works, merely felt himself dazzled and disappointed — delighted and wearied he could not tell why, is now enabled to form a definite and precise conception of the causes of those opposite sensations, — and to trace to the nobleness of the diction and the inaccuracy of the reasoning — the boldness of the propositions and the rashness of the inductions — the magnificence of the pretensions and the feebleness of the performance, those contradictory judgments, with the confused result of which he had been perplexed in the study of the original. The same thing may be said of the imitation of Darwin, contained in the Loves of the Triangles, though confessedly of a satirical or ludicrous character All the peculiarities of the original poet are there brought together, and crowded into a little space; where they can be compared and estimated with ease. His essence, in short, is extracted, and separated in a good degree from what is common to him with the rest of his species; — and while he is recognized at once as the original from whom all those character-

istic traits have been borrowed, that original itself is far better understood—because the copy presents no traits but such as *are* characteristic.

This highest species of imitation, therefore, we conceive to be of no slight value in fixing the taste and judgment of the public, even with regard to the great standard and original authors who naturally become its subjects. The pieces before us, indeed, do not fall correctly under this denomination: — the subject to which they are confined, and the occasion on which they are supposed to have been produced, having necessarily given them a certain ludicrous and light air, not quite suitable to the gravity of some of the originals, and imparted to some of them a sort of mongrel character in which we may discern the features both of burlesque and of imitation. There is enough, however, of the latter to answer the purposes we have indicated above; while the tone of levity and ridicule may answer the farther purpose of admonishing the authors who are personated in this exhibition, in what directions they trespass on the borders of absurdity, and from what peculiarities they are in danger of becoming ridiculous. A mere parody or travestie, indeed, is commonly made, with the greatest success, upon the tenderest and most sublime passages in poetry — the whole secret of such performances consisting in the substitution of a mean, ludicrous, or disgusting subject, for a touching or noble one. But where this is not the case, and where the passages imitated are conversant with objects nearly as familiar, and names and actions almost as undignified, as those in the imitation, the author may be assured, that what a moderate degree of exaggeration has thus made eminently laughable, could never have been worthy of a place in serious and lofty poetry. — But we are falling, we perceive, into our old trick of dissertation, and forgetting our benevolent intention to dedicate this article to the amusement of our readers. We break off therefore, abruptly, and turn without farther preamble to the book.

The first piece, under the name of the loyal Mr. Fitzgerald, though as good, we suppose, as the original, is not very interesting. Whether it be very like Mr. Fitzgerald or not, however, it must be allowed that the vulgarity, servility, and gross absurdity of the newspaper scribblers is well rendered in the following lines: —

"Gallia's stern despot shall in vain advance
From Paris, the metropolis of France;
By this day month the monster shall not gain
A foot of land in Portugal or Spain.
See Wellington in Salamanca's field
Forces his favourite General to yield,
Breaks through his lines, and leaves his boasted Marmont
Expiring on the plain without an arm on:
Madrid he enters at the cannon's mouth,
And then the villages still further south!
Base Bonaparte, filled with deadly ire,
Sets one by one our playhouses on fire:
Some years ago he pounc'd with deadly glee on
The Opera House—then burnt down the Pantheon;
Nay, still unsated, in a coat of flames,
Next at Millbank he cross'd the river Thames.
Who makes the quartern loaf and Luddites rise?
Who fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies?
Who thought in flames St. James's court to pinch?
Who burnt the wardrobe of poor Lady Finch?
Why he, who, forging for this Isle a yoke,
Reminds me of a line I lately spoke,
'The tree of freedom is the British oak.'"

The next, in the name of Mr. W. Wordsworth, is entitled "The Baby's Début;" and is characteristically announced as intended to have been "spoken in the character of Nancy Lake, a girl eight years of age, who is drawn upon the stage in a child's chaise, by Samuel Hughes, her uncle's porter." The author does not, in this instance, attempt to copy any of the higher attributes of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry: but has succeeded perfectly in the imitation of his mawkish affectations of childish simplicity and nursery stammering. We hope it will make him ashamed of his Alice Fell, and the greater part of his last volumes — of which it is by no means a parody, but a very fair, and indeed we think a flattering imitation. We give a stanza or two as a specimen: —

"My brother Jack was nine in May,
And I was eight on New Year's Day;
So in Kate Wilson's shop
Papa (he's my papa and Jack's)
Bought me last week a doll of wax,
And brother Jack a top.

"Jack's in the pouts — and this it is,
He thinks mine came to more than his,
So to my drawer he goes,
Takes out the doll, and, oh, my stars!
He pokes her head between the bars,
And melts off half her nose!"—Pp. 5, 6.

Mr. Moore's Address is entitled "The Living Lustres," and appears to us a very fair imitation of the fantastic verses which that ingenious person indites when he is merely gallant; and, resisting the lures of voluptuousness, is not enough in earnest to be tender. It begins:—

"O why should our dull retrospective addresses
Fall damp as wet blankets on Drury Lane fire?
Away with blue devils, away with distresses,
And give the gay spirit to sparkling desire!
Let artists decide on the beauties of Drury,
The richest to me is when woman is there;
The question of Houses I leave to the jury;
The fairest to me is the house of the fair."—P. 25.

The main drift of the piece, however, as well as its title, is explained in the following stanzas:—

"How well would our artists attend to their duties,
Our house save in oil, and our authors in wit,
In lieu of yon lamps if a row of young beauties
Glanc'd light from their eyes between us and the pit.
Attun'd to the scene, when the pale yellow moon is on
Tower and tree, they'd look sober and sage;
And when they all wink'd their dear peepers in unison,
Night, pitchy night would envelop the stage.
Ah! could I some girl from yon box for her youth pick,
I'd love her—as long as she blossom'd in youth!
Oh! white is the ivory case of the toothpick,
But when beauty smiles how much whiter the tooth!"—Pp. 26, 27.

The next, entitled "The Rebuilding," is in name of Mr. Southey; and is one of the best in the collection. It is in the style of the Kehama of that multifarious author; and is supposed to be spoken in the character of one of his Glendoveers. The imitation of the diction and measure, we think, is nearly perfect; and the descriptions quite as good as the original. It opens with an account of the burning of the old theatre, formed upon the pattern of the Funeral of Arvalan.

"Midnight, yet not a nose
From Tower-hill to Piccadilly snored!
Midnight, yet not a nose
From Indra drew the essence of repose!
See with what crimson fury,
By Indra fann'd, the god of fire ascends the walls of Drury!
The tops of houses, blue with lead,
Bend beneath the landlord's tread;
Master and 'prentice, serving man and lord,
Nailor and tailor,
Grazier and brazier,
Thro' streets and alleys pour'd,
All, all abroad to gaze,
And wonder at the blaze."—Pp. 29, 30.

There is then a great deal of indescribable intriguing between Veeshnoo, who wishes to rebuild the house through the instrumentality of Mr. Whitbread, and Yamen who wishes to prevent it. The Power of Restoration, however, brings all the parties concerned to an amicable meeting; the effect of which, on the Power of Destruction, is thus finely represented:—

"Yamen beheld, and wither'd at the sight;
Long had he aim'd the sun-beam to controul,
For light was hateful to his soul:
Go on, cried the hellish one, yellow with spite;
Go on, cried the hellish one, yellow with spleen;
Thy toils of the morning, like Ithaca's queen,
I'll toil to undo every night.

The lawyers are met at the Crown and Anchor,
And Yamen's visage grows blanker and blanker.
The lawyers are met at the Anchor and Crown,
And Yamen's cheek is a russety brown.
Veeshnoo, now thy work proceeds!
The solicitor reads,
And, merit of merit!
Red wax and green ferret
Are fix'd at the foot of the deeds!"—Pp. 35, 36.

"Drury's Dirge," by Laura Matilda, is not of the first quality. The verses, to be sure, are very smooth, and very nonsensical—as was intended: but they are not so good as Swift's celebrated Song by a Person of Quality; and are so exactly in the same measure, and on the same plan, that it is impossible to avoid making the comparison. The reader may take these three stanzas as a sample:—

"Lurid smoke and frank suspicion,
Hand in hand reluctant dance;
While the God fulfils his mission,
Chivalry resigns his lance.

"Hark! the engines blandly thunder,
Fleecy clouds dishevell'd lie;
And the firemen, mute with wonder,
On the son of Saturn cry.

"See the bird of Ammon sailing,
Perches on the engine's peak,
And the Eagle fireman hailing,
Soothes them with its bickering beak."

"A Tale of Drury," by Walter Scott, is,

upon the whole, admirably executed; though the introduction is rather tame. The burning is described with the mighty Minstrel's characteristic love of localities:—

"Then London's sons in nightcap woke!
In bedgown woke her dames;
For shouts were heard 'mid fire and smoke,
And twice ten hundred voices spoke,
'The Playhouse is in flames!
And lo! where Catherine street extends,
A fiery tail its lustre lends
To every window pane:
Blushes each spout in Martlet Court,
And Barbican, moth-eaten fort,
And Covent Garden kennels sport,
A bright ensanguin'd drain;
Meux's new brewhouse shows the light,
Rowland Hill's chapel, and the height
Where patent shot they sell:
The Tennis Court, so fair and tall,
Partakes the ray with Surgeons' Hall,
The ticket porters' house of call,
Old Bedlam, close by London wall,
Wright's shrimp and oyster shop withal,
And Richardson's Hotel." — Pp. 46, 47.

The mustering of the firemen is not less meritorious:—

"The summon'd firemen woke at call,
And hied them to their stations all.
Starting from short and broken snoose,
Each sought his pond'rous hobnail'd shoes;
But first his worsted hosen plied,
Plush breeches next in crimson dyed,
His nether bulk embrac'd;
Then jacket thick, of red or blue,
Whose massy shoulder gave to view
The badge of each respective crew,
In tin or copper traced.
The engines thunder'd thro' the street,
Fire-hook, pipe, bucket, all complete,
And torches glar'd, and clattering feet
Along the pavement paced."—P. 48.

The procession of the engines, with the badges of their different companies, and the horrible names of their leaders, is also admirable — but we cannot make room for it. The account of the death of Muggins and Higginbottom, however, must find a place. These are the two principal firemen who suffered on this occasion; and the catastrophe is described with a spirit, not unworthy of the name so venturously assumed by the describer. After the roof falls in, there is silence and great consternation:—

"When lo! amid the wreck uprear'd
Gradual a moving head appear'd,
And Eagle firemen knew
'Twas Joseph Muggins, name rever'd,
The foreman of their crew.
Loud shouted all in sign of woe,
'A Muggins to the rescue, ho!'
And pour'd the hissing tide:
Meanwhile the Muggins fought amain,
And strove and struggled all in vain,
For rallying but to fall again,
He totter'd, sunk, and died!
Did none attempt, before he fell,
To succour one they lov'd so well?
Yes, Higginbottom did aspire
(His fireman's soul was all on fire)
His brother chief to save;
But ah! his reckless generous ire
Serv'd but to share his grave!
'Mid blazing beams and scalding streams,
Thro' fire and smoke he dauntless broke,
Where Muggins broke before.
But sulphury stench and boiling drench,
Destroying sight, o'erwhelm'd him quite;
He sunk to rise no more!
Still o'er his head, while Fate he brav'd,
His whizzing water-pipe he waved;
'Whitford and Mitford, ply your pumps!
'You, Clutterbuck, come stir your stumps,
'Why are you in such doleful dumps?
'A fireman, and afraid of bumps!
'What are they fear'd on, fools? 'od rot 'em!'
Were the last words of Higginbottom."
Pp. 50—52.

The rebuilding is recorded in strains as characteristic, and as aptly applied:—

"Didst mark how toil'd the busy train,
From morn to eve, till Drury Lane
Leap'd like a roebuck from the plain?
Ropes rose and sunk, and rose again,
And nimble workmen trod.
To realize bold Wyatt's plan
Rush'd many a howling Irishman,
Loud clatter'd many a porter can,
And many a ragamuffin clan,
With trowel and with hod." — Pp. 52, 53.

"The Beautiful Incendiary," by the Honourable W. Spencer, is also an imitation of great merit. The flashy, fashionable, artificial style of this writer, with his confident and extravagant compliments, can scarcely be said to be parodied in such lines as the following:—

"Sobriety cease to be sober,
Cease labour to dig and to delve!
All hail to this tenth of October,
One thousand eight hundred and twelve!

Hah! whom do my peepers remark?
'Tis Hebe with Jupiter's jug!
Oh no! 'tis the pride of the Park,
Fair Lady Elizabeth Mugg!
But ah! why awaken the blaze
Those bright burning-glasses contain,
Whose lens, with concentrated rays,
Proved fatal to old Drury Lane?
'Twas all accidental, they cry:
Away with the flimsy humbug!
'Twas fir'd by a flash from the eye
Of Lady Elizabeth Mugg!"

"Fire and Ale," by M. G. Lewis, is not less fortunate; and exhibits not only a faithful copy of the spirited, loose, and flowing versification of that singular author, but a very just representation of that mixture of extravagance and jocularity which has impressed most of his writings with the character of a sort of farcical horror. For example:—

"The fire king one day rather amorous felt;
He mounted his hot copper filly;
His breeches and boots were of tin; and the belt
Was made of cast iron, for fear it should melt
With the heat of the copper colt's belly.
Sure never was skin half so scalding as his!
When an infant, 'twas equally horrid,
For the water when he was baptiz'd gave a fizz,
And bubbl'd and simmer'd and started off, whizz!
As soon as it sprinkl'd his forehead.
Oh then there was glitter and fire in each eye,
For two living coals were the symbols;
His teeth were calcin'd, and his tongue was so dry
It rattled against them as though you should try
To play the piano in thimbles."—Pp. 68, 69.

The drift of the story is, that this formidable personage falls in love with Miss Drury the elder, who is consumed in his ardent embrace! when Mr. Whitbread, in the character of the Ale King, fairly bullies him from a similar attempt on her younger sister, who has just come out under *his* protection.

We have next "Playhouse Musings," by Mr. Coleridge — a piece which is unquestionably Lakish — though we cannot say that we recognize in it any of the peculiar traits of that powerful and misdirected genius whose name it has borrowed. We rather think, however, that the tuneful Brotherhood will consider it as a respectable eclogue. This is the introduction:—

"My pensive Public! wherefore look you sad?
I had a grandmother; she kept a donkey
To carry to the mart her crockery ware,
And when that donkey look'd me in the face,
His face was sad! and you are sad, my Public!
Joy should be yours: this tenth day of October
Again assembles us in Drury Lane.
Long wept my eye to see the timber planks
That hid our ruins: many a day I cried
Ah me! I fear they never will rebuild it!
Till on one eve, one joyful Monday eve,
As along Charles Street I prepar'd to walk,
Just at the corner, by the pastrycook's,
I heard a trowel tick against a brick!
I look'd me up, and straight a parapet
Uprose, at least seven inches o'er the planks.
Joy to thee, Drury! to myself I said,
He of Blackfriars Road, who hymn'd thy downfall
In loud Hosannahs, and who prophesied
That flames like those from prostrate Solyma
Would scorch the hand that ventur'd to rebuild thee,
Has prov'd a lying prophet. From that hour,
As leisure offer'd, close to Mr. Spring's
Box-office door, I've stood and eyed the builders."
Pp. 73, 74.

Of "Architectural Atoms," translated by Dr. Busby, we can say very little more than that they appear to us to be far more capable of combining into good poetry than the few lines we were able to read of the learned Doctor's genuine address in the newspapers. They might pass, indeed, for a very tolerable imitation of Darwin; — as for instance:—

"I sing how casual bricks, in airy climb,
Encounter'd casual horse-hair, casual lime;
How rafters borne through wond'ring clouds elate,
Kiss'd in their slope blue elemental slate!
Clasp'd solid beams, in chance-directed fury,
And gave to birth our renovated Drury."—Pp. 82, 83.

And again:—

"Thus with the flames that from old Drury rise
Its elements primæval sought the skies,
There pendulous to wait the happy hour,
When new attractions should restore their power.
Here embryo sounds in æther lie conceal'd
Like words in northern atmosphere congeal'd.
Here many an embryo laugh, and half encore,
Clings to the roof, or creeps along the floor.
By puffs concipient some in æther flit,
And soar in bravos from the thundering pit;
While some this mortal life abortive miss,
Crush'd by a groan or murder'd by a hiss."—P. 87.

"The Theatre," by the Rev. G. Crabbe, we rather think is the best piece in the collection. It is an exquisite and most masterly imitation, not only of the peculiar style, but of the taste, temper, and manner of description of that most original author; and can hardly be said to be in any respect a caricature of that style or

manner — except in the excessive profusion of puns and verbal jingles — which, though undoubtedly to be ranked among his characteristics, are never so thick-sown in his original works as in this admirable imitation. It does not aim, of course, at any shadow of his pathos or moral sublimity; but seems to us to be a singularly faithful copy of his passages of mere description. It begins as follows: —

"'Tis sweet to view, from half-past five to six,
Our long wax candles, with short cotton wicks,
Touch'd by the lamplighter's Promethean art,
Start into light, and make the lighter start!
To see red Phœbus through the gallery pane
Tinge with his beam the beams of Drury Lane,
While gradual parties fill our widen'd pit,
And gape, and gaze, and wonder, ere they sit.
"At first, while vacant seats give choice and ease,
Distant or near, they settle where they please;
But when the multitude contracts the span,
And seats are rare they settle where they can.
"Now the full benches, to late comers, doom
No room for standing, miscall'd *standing room.*
"Hark, the check-taker moody silence breaks,
And bawling 'Pit full,' gives the check he takes."
Pp. 116, 117.

The tuning of the orchestra is given with the same spirit and fidelity; but we rather choose to insert the following descent of a play-bill from the upper boxes: —

"Perchance, while pit and gallery cry, 'Hats off,'
And aw'd consumption checks his chided cough,
Some giggling daughter of the queen of love
Drops, reft of pin, her play-bill from above;
Like Icarus, while laughing galleries clap,
Soars, ducks, and dives in air, the printed scrap:
But, wiser far than he, combustion fears,
And, as it flies, eludes the chandeliers;
Till sinking gradual, with repeated twirl,
It settles, curling, on a fiddler's curl;
Who from his powder'd pate the intruder strikes,
And, for mere malice, sticks it on the spikes."
P. 118.

The quaintness and minuteness of the following catalogue are also in the very spirit of the original author — bating always the undue allowance of puns and *concetti* to which we have already alluded: —

"What various swains our motley walls contain!
Fashion from Moorfields, honour from Chick lane;
Bankers from Paper Buildings here resort,
Bankrupts from Golden Square and Riches Court;
The lottery cormorant, the auction shark,
The full-price master, and the half-price clerk;
Boys who long linger at the gallery door,
With pence twice five, — they want but twopence more,
Till some Samaritan the twopence spares,
And sends them jumping up the gallery stairs.
Critics we boast who ne'er their malice baulk,
But talk their minds, — we wish they'd mind their talk!
Big-worded bullies, who by quarrels live,
Who give the lie, and tell the lie they give;
And bucks with pockets empty as their pate,
Lax in their gaiters, laxer in their gait."
Pp. 118, 119.

We shall conclude with the episode of the loss and recovery of Pat Jennings's hat — which, if Mr. Crabbe had thought at all of describing, we are persuaded he would have described precisely as follows: —

"Pat Jennings in the upper gallery sat,
But, leaning forward, Jennings lost his hat;
Down from the gallery the beaver flew,
And spurn'd the one to settle in the two.
How shall he act? Pay at the gallery door
Two shillings for what cost when new but four?
Now, while his fears anticipate a thief,
John Mullins whispers, take my handkerchief.
Thank you, cries Pat, but one won't make a line;
Take mine, cried Wilson, and cried Stokes take mine.
A motley cable soon Pat Jennings ties,
Where Spitalfields with real India vies;
Like Iris' bow, down darts the painted hue
Starr'd, strip'd, and spotted, yellow, red, and blue.
Old calico, torn silk, and muslin new.
George Green below, with palpitating hand,
Loops the last kerchief to the beaver's band:
Upsoars the prize; the youth with joy unfeign'd,
Regain'd the felt, and felt what he regain'd;
While to the applauding galleries grateful Pat
Made a low bow, and touch'd the ransom'd hat."

The Ghost of Samuel Johnson is not very good as a whole: though some passages are singularly happy. The measure and solemnity of his sentences, in all the limited variety of their structure, is imitated with skill; — but the diction is caricatured in a vulgar and unpleasing degree. To make Johnson call a door "a ligneous barricado," and its knocker and bell its "frappant and tintinabulant appendages," is neither just nor humorous; and we are surprised that a writer who has given such extraordinary proofs of his talent for finer ridicule and fairer imitation, should have stooped to a vein of pleasantry so low, and so long ago exhausted; especially as, in other passages of the same piece, he has shown how well qua-

lified he was both to catch and to render the true characteristics of his original. The beginning, for example, we think excellent: —

"That which was organized by the moral ability of one, has been executed by the physical effort of many; and DRURY LANE THEATRE is now complete. Of that part behind the curtain, which has not yet been destined to glow beneath the brush of the varnisher, or vibrate to the hammer of the carpenter, little is thought by the public, and little need be said by the committee. Truth, however, is not to be sacrificed for the accommodation of either; and he who should pronounce that our edifice has received its final embellishment, would be disseminating falsehood without incurring favour, and risking the disgrace of detection without participating the advantage of success.

"Let it not, however, be conjectured, that because we are unassuming, we are imbecile; that forbearance is any indication of despondency, or humility of demerit. He that is the most assured of success will make the fewest appeals to favour; and where nothing is claimed that is undue, nothing that is due will be withheld. A swelling opening is too often succeeded by an insignificant conclusion. Parturient mountains have ere now produced muscipular abortions; and the auditor who compares incipient grandeur with final vulgarity, is reminded of the pious hawkers of Constantinople, who solemnly perambulate her streets, exclaiming, 'In the name of the prophet — figs!'" — Pp. 54, 55.

It ends with a solemn eulogium on Mr. Whitbread, which is thus wound up: —

"To his never-slumbering talents you are indebted for whatever pleasure this haunt of the Muses is calculated to afford. If, in defiance of chaotic malevolence, the destroyer of the temple of Diana yet survives in the name of Herostratus, surely we may confidently predict, that the rebuilder of the temple of Apollo will stand recorded to distant posterity, in that of — SAMUEL WHITBREAD." — Pp. 59, 60.

Our readers will now have a pretty good idea of the contents of this amusing little volume. We have no conjectures to offer as to its anonymous author. He who is such a master of disguises, may easily be supposed to have been successful in concealing himself; — and with the power of assuming so many styles, is not likely to be detected by his own. We should guess, however, that he had not written a great deal in his own character — that his natural style was neither very lofty nor very grave — and that he rather indulges a partiality for puns and verbal pleasantries. We marvel why he has shut out Campbell and Rogers from his theatre of living poets; and confidently expect to have our curiosity in this and in all other particulars very speedily gratified, when the applause of the country shall induce him to take off his mask.

MADAME DE STAËL.

(DECEMBER, 1828.)

Œuvres Inédites de Madame la Baronne de Staël, publiées par son Fils; précédées d'une Notice sur le Caractère et les Ecrits de M. de Staël. Par Madame NECKER SAUSSURE. Trois Tomes. 8vo. London, Treuttel and Wurtz: 1820.

WE are very much indebted to Madame Necker Saussure for this copious, elegant, and affectionate account of her friend and cousin. It is, to be sure, rather in the nature of a panegyric than of an impartial biography—and, with the sagacity, morality, and skill in composition which seem to be endemic in the society of Geneva, has also perhaps something of the formality, mannerism, and didactic ambition of that very intellectual society. For a personal memoir of one so much distinguished in society, it is not sufficiently individual or familiar — and a great deal too little feminine, for a woman's account of a woman, who never forgot her sex, or allowed it to be forgotten. The only things that indicate a female author in the work before us, are the decorous purity of her morality — the feebleness of her political speculations — and her never telling the age of her friend.

The world probably knows as much already of M. and Madame Necker as it will care ever to know: yet we are by no means of opinion that too much is said of them here. They were both very good people — neither of the most perfect *bon ton*, nor of the very highest rank of understanding, — but far above the vulgar level certainly, in relation to either. The likenesses of them with which we are here presented are undoubtedly very favourable, and even flattering; but still, we have no doubt that they are likenesses, and even very cleverly executed. We hear a great deal about the strong understanding and lofty principles of Madame Necker, and of the air of purity that reigned in her physiognomy; but we are

candidly told also, that, with her tall and stiff figure, and formal manners, "il y avoit de la gêne en elle, et auprès d'elle;" and are also permitted to learn, that after having acquired various branches of knowledge by profound study, she unluckily became persuaded that all virtues and accomplishments might be learned in the same manner; and accordingly set herself, with might and main, "to *study* the arts of conversation and of housekeeping — together with the characters of individuals, and the management of society — to reduce all these things to system, and to deduce from this system *precise rules* for the regulation of her conduct." Of M. Necker, again, it is recorded, in very emphatic and affectionate terms, that he was extraordinarily eloquent and observing, and equally full of benevolence and practical wisdom: but it is candidly admitted that his eloquence was more sonorous than substantial, and consisted rather of well-rounded periods than impressive thoughts; that he was reserved and silent in general society, took pleasure in thwarting his wife in the education of their daughter, and actually treated the studious propensity of his ingenious consort with so little respect, as to prohibit her from devoting any time to composition, and even from having a table to write at! — for no better reason than that he might not be annoyed with the fear of disturbing her when he came into her apartment! He was a great joker, too, in an innocent paternal way, in his own family; but we cannot find that his witticisms ever had much success in other places. The worship of M Necker, in short, is a part of the established religion, we perceive, at Geneva; but we suspect that the Priest has made the God, here as in other instances; and rather think the worthy financier must be contented to be known to posterity chiefly as the father of Madame de Staël.

But however that may be, the education of their only child does not seem to have been gone about very prudently, by these sage personages; and if Mad. de Staël had not been a very extraordinary creature, both as to talent and temper, from the very beginning, she could scarcely have escaped being pretty well spoiled between them. Her mother had a notion, that the best thing that could be done for a child was to cram it with all kinds of knowledge, without caring very much whether it understood or digested any part of it; — and so the poor little girl was overtasked and overeducated, in a very pitiless way, for several years; till her health became seriously impaired, and they were obliged to let her run idle in the woods for some years longer — where she composed pastorals and tragedies, and became exceedingly romantic. She was then taken up again; and set to her studies with greater moderation. All this time, too, her father was counteracting the lessons of patient application inculcated by her mother, by the half-playful disputations in which he loved to engage her, and the display which he could not resist making of her lively talents in society. Fortunately, this last species of training fell most in with her disposition; and she escaped being solemn and pedantic, at some little risk of becoming forward and petulant. Still more fortunately, the strength of her understanding was such as to exempt her almost entirely from this smaller disadvantage.

Nothing, however, could exempt her from the danger and disadvantge of being a youthful Prodigy; and there never perhaps was an instance of one so early celebrated, whose celebrity went on increasing to the last period of her existence. We have a very lively picture of her, at eleven years of age, in the work before us; where she is represented as then a stout brown girl, with fine eyes, and an open affectionate manner, full of eager curiosity, kindness, and vivacity. In the drawing-room, she took her place on a little stool beside her mother's chair, where she was forced to sit very upright, and to look as demure as possible: but by and by, two or three wise-looking oldish gentlemen, with round wigs, came up to her, and entered into animated and sensible conversation with her, as with a wit of full age; and those were Raynal, Marmontel, Thomas, and Grimm. At table she listened with delighted attention to all that fell from those distinguished guests; and learned incredibly soon to discuss all subjects with them, without embarrassment or affectation. Her biographer says, indeed, that she was "always young, and never a child;" but it does seem to us a trait of mere childishness, though here cited as a proof of her filial devotion, that, in order to ensure for her parents the gratification of Mr.

Gibbon's society, she proposed, about the same time, that she should marry him! and combated, with great earnestness, all the objections that were stated to this extraordinary union.

Her temper appears from the very first to have been delightful, and her heart full of generosity and kindness. Her love for her father rose almost to idolatry; and though her taste for talk and distinction carried her at last a good deal away from him, this earliest passion seems never to have been superseded, or even interrupted, by any other. Up to the age of twenty, she employed herself chiefly with poems and plays; — but took after that to prose. We do not mean here to say any thing of her different works, the history and analysis of which occupies two thirds of the *Notice* before us. Her fertility of thought, and warmth of character, appeared first in her Letters on Rousseau; but her own character is best portrayed in Delphine — Corinne showing rather what she would have chosen to be. During her sufferings from the Revolution, she wrote her works on Literature and the Passions, and her more ambitious book on Germany. After that, with more subdued feelings — more confirmed principles — and more practical wisdom, she gave to the world her admirable Considerations on the French Revolution; having, for many years, addicted herself almost exclusively to politics, under the conviction which, in the present condition of the world, can scarcely be considered as erroneous, that under "politics were comprehended morality, religion, and literature."

She was, from a very early period, a lover of cities, of distinction, and of brilliant and varied discussion — cared little in general for the beauties of nature or art — and languished, and pined, in spite of herself, when confined to a narrow society. These are common enough traits in famous authors, and people of fashion and notoriety of all other descriptions: but they were united in her with a warmth of affection, a temperament of enthusiasm, and a sweetness of temper, with which we do not know that they were ever combined in any other individual. So far from resembling the poor, jaded, artificial creatures who live upon stimulants, and are with difficulty kept alive by the constant excitements of novelty, flattery, and emulation, her great characteristic was an excessive movement of the soul — a heart overcharged with sensibility, a frame over-informed with spirit and vitality. All her affections, says Madame Necker, — her friendship, her filial, her maternal attachment, partook of the nature of Love — were accompanied by its emotion, almost its passion — and very frequently by the violent agitations which belong to its fears and anxieties. With all this animation, however, and with a good deal of vanity which delighted in recounting her successes in society, and made her speak without reserve of her own great talents, influence, and celebrity — she seems to have had no particle of envy or malice in her composition. She was not in the least degree vindictive, jealous, or scornful; but uniformly kind, indulgent, compassionate, and forgiving — or rather forgetful of injuries. In these respects she is very justly and advantageously contrasted with Rousseau; who, with the same warmth of imagination, and still greater professions of philanthropy in his writings, uniformly indicated in his individual character the most irritable, suspicious, and selfish dispositions; and plainly showed that his affection for mankind was entirely theoretical, and had no living objects in this world. Madame de Staël's devotion to her father is sufficiently proved by her writings; — but it meets us under a new aspect in the Memoir now before us. The only injuries which she could not forgive were those offered to him. She could not bear to think that he was ever to grow old; and, being herself blinded to his progressive decay by her love and sanguine temper, she resented, almost with fury, every insinuation or casual hint as to his age or declining health. After his death, this passion took another turn. Every old man now recalled the image of her father! and she watched over the comforts of all such persons, and wept over their sufferings, with a painful intenseness of sympathy. The same deep feeling mingled with her devotions, and even tinged her strong intellect with a shade of superstition. She believed that her soul communicated with his in prayer; and that it was to his intercession that she owed all the good that afterwards befell her. Whenever she met with any piece of good fortune, she used to say, "It is my father that has obtained this for me."

In her happier days, this ruling passion took occasionally a more whimsical aspect; and expressed itself with a vivacity of which we have no idea in this phlegmatic country, and which more resembles the childish irritability of Voltaire, than the lofty enthusiasm of the person actually concerned. We give, as a specimen, the following anecdote from the work before us. Madame Saussure had come to Coppet from Geneva in M. Necker's carriage; and had been overturned in the way, but without receiving any injury. On mentioning the accident to Madame de Staël on her arrival, she asked with great vehemence who had driven; and on being told that it was Richel, her father's ordinary coachman, she exclaimed in an agony, "My God, he may one day overturn my father!" and rung instantly with violence for his appearance. While he was coming, she paced about the room in the greatest possible agitation, crying out, at every turn, "My father, my poor father! *he* might have been overturned!"—and turning to her friend, "At your age, and with your slight person, the danger is nothing,—but with his age and bulk! I cannot bear to think of it." The coachman now came in; and this lady, so mild and indulgent and reasonable with all her attendants, turned to him in a sort of frenzy, and with a voice of solemnity, but choked with emotion, said, "Richel, do you know that I am a woman of genius?"—The poor man stood in astonishment—and she went on, louder, "Have you not heard, I say, that I am a woman of genius?" Coachy was still mute. "Well then! I tell you that *I am* a woman of genius—of great genius—of prodigious genius!—and I tell you more—that all the genius I have shall be exerted to secure your rotting out your days in a dungeon, if ever you overturn my father!" Even after the fit was over, she could not be made to laugh at her extravagance; but was near beginning again—and said, "And what had I to conjure with but my poor genius?"

Her insensibility to natural beauty is rather unaccountable, in a mind constituted like hers, and in a native of Switzerland. But, though born in the midst of the most magnificent scenery, she seems to have thought, like Dr. Johnson, that there was no scene equal to the high tide of human existence in the heart of a populous city. "Give me the *Rue du Bac*," said she, when her guests were in ecstasies with the Lake of Geneva and its enchanted shores—"I would prefer living in Paris, in a fourth story, with a hundred Louis a year." These were her habitual sentiments;—but she is said to have had one glimpse of the glories of the universe, when she went first to Italy, after her father's death, and was engaged with *Corinne*. And in that work, it is certainly true that the indications of a deep and sincere sympathy with nature are far more conspicuous than in any of her other writings. For this enjoyment and late-developed sensibility, she always said she was indebted to her father's intercession.

The world is pretty generally aware of the brilliancy of her conversation in mixed company; but we were not aware that it was generally of so polemic a character, or that she herself was so very zealous a disputant,—such a determined intellectual gladiator as her cousin here represents her. Her great delight, it is said, was in eager and even violent contention; and her drawing-room at Coppet is compared to the Hall of Odin, where the bravest warriors were invited every day to enjoy the tumult of the fight, and, after having cut each other in pieces, revived to renew the combat in the morning. In this trait, also, she seems to have resembled our Johnson,—though, according to all accounts, she was rather more courteous to her opponents. These fierce controversies embraced all sorts of subjects—politics, morals, literature, casuistry, metaphysics, and history. In the early part of her life, they turned oftener upon themes of pathos and passion—love and death, and heroical devotion; but she was cured of this lofty vein by the affectations of her imitators. "I tramp in the mire with wooden shoes," she said, "whenever they would force me to go with them among the clouds." In the same way, though sufficiently given to indulge, and to talk of her emotions, she was easily disgusted by the parade of sensibility which is sometimes made by persons of real feeling; observing, with admirable force and simplicity, "Que tous les sentiments naturels ont leur pudeur."

She had at all times a deep sense of religion. Educated in the strict principles of Calvinism, she was never seduced into any admiration of the splendid apparatus and high pretensions

of Popery; although she did not altogether escape the seductions of a more sublime superstition. In theology, as well as in every thing else, however, she was less dogmatic than persuasive; and, while speaking from the inward conviction of her own heart, poured out its whole warmth, as well as its convictions, into those of others; and never seemed to feel any thing for the errors of her companions but a generous compassion and an affectionate desire for their removal. She rather *testified in favour of religion*, in short, than reasoned systematically in its support; and, in the present condition of the world, this was perhaps the best service that could be rendered. Placed in many respects in the most elevated condition to which humanity could aspire — possessed unquestionably of the highest powers of reasoning — emancipated, in a singular degree, from prejudices, and entering with the keenest relish into all the feelings that seemed to suffice for the happiness and occupation of philosophers, patriots, and lovers — she has still testified, that without religion there is nothing stable, sublime, or satisfying! and that it alone completes and consummates all to which reason or affection can aspire. A genius like hers, and so directed, is, as her biographer has well remarked, the only Missionary that can work any permanent effect on the upper classes of society in modern times; — upon the vain, the learned, the scornful, and argumentative, — they "who stone the Prophets while they affect to offer incense to the Muses."

Both her marriages have been censured; — the first, as a violation of her principles — the second, of dignity and decorum. In that with M. de Staël, she was probably merely passive. It was respectable, and not absolutely unhappy; but unquestionably not such as suited her. Of that with M. Rocca, it will not perhaps be so easy to make the apology. We have no objection to a love-match at fifty: — but where the age and the rank and fortune are all on the lady's side, and the bridegroom seems to have little other recommendation than a handsome person, and a great deal of admiration, it is difficult to escape ridicule, — or something more severe than ridicule. Mad. N. S. seems to us to give a very candid and interesting account of it: and undoubtedly goes far to take off what is most revolting on the first view, by letting us know that it originated in a romantic attachment on the part of M. Rocca; and that he was an ardent suitor to her, before the idea of loving him had entered into *her* imagination. The broken state of his health, too — the short period she survived their union — and the rapidity with which he followed her to the grave — all tend not only to extinguish any tendency to ridicule, but to disarm all severity of censure; and lead us rather to dwell on the story as a part only of the tragical close of a life full of lofty emotions.

Like most other energetic spirits, she despised and neglected too much the accommodation of her body — cared little about exercise, and gave herself no great trouble about health. With the sanguine spirit which belonged to her character, she affected to triumph over infirmity; and used to say — "I might have been sickly, like any body else, had I not resolved to vanquish all physical weaknesses." But nature would not be defied! — and she died, while contemplating still greater undertakings than any she had achieved. On her sick-bed, none of her great or good qualities abandoned her. To the last she was kind, patient, devout, and intellectual. Among other things, she said — "J'ai toujours été la même — vive et triste. — J'ai aimé Dieu, mon père, et la liberté!" She left life with regret — but felt no weak terrors at the approach of death — and died at last in the utmost composure and tranquillity.

We would rather not make any summary at present of the true character and probable effects of her writings. But we must say, we are not quite satisfied with that of her biographer. It is too flattering, and too eloquent and ingenious. She is quite right in extolling the great fertility of thought which characterizes the writings of her friend; — and, with relation to some of these writings, she is not perhaps very far wrong in saying that, if you take any three pages in them at random, the chance is, that you meet with more new and striking thoughts than in an equal space in any other author. But we cannot at all agree with her, when, in a very imposing passage, she endeavours to show that she ought to be considered as the foundress of a new school of literature and philosophy — or at least as the first who clearly revealed to the world that a

new and a grander era was now opening to their gaze.

In so far as regards France, and those countries which derive their literature from her fountains, there may be some foundation for this remark; but we cannot admit it as at all applicable to the other parts of Europe; which have always drawn their wisdom, wit, and fancy, from native sources. The truth is, that previous to her revolution, there was no civilized country where there had been so little originality for fifty years as in France. In literature, their standards had been fixed nearly a century before: and to alter, or even to advance them, was reckoned equally impious and impossible. In politics, they were restrained, by the state of their government, from any free or bold speculations; and in metaphysics, and all the branches of the higher philosophy that depend on it, they had done nothing since the days of Pascal and Descartes. In England, however, and in Germany, the national intellect had not been thus stagnated and subdued — and a great deal of what startled the Parisians by its novelty, in the writings of Madame de Staël, had long been familiar to the thinkers of these two countries. Some of it she *confessedly* borrowed from those neighbouring sources; and some she undoubtedly invented over again for herself. In both departments, however, it would be erroneous, we think, to ascribe the greater part of this improvement to the talents of this extraordinary woman. The Revolution had thrown down, among other things, the barriers by which literary enterprise had been so long restrained in France — and broken, among other trammels, those which had circumscribed the liberty of thinking in that great country. The genius of Madame de Staël co-operated, no doubt, with the spirit of the times, and assisted its effects — but it was also acted upon, and in part created, by that spirit — and her works are rather, perhaps, to be considered as the first fruits of a new order of things, that had already struck root in Europe, than as the harbinger of changes that still remain to be effected.*

In looking back to what she has said, with so much emphasis, of the injustice she had to suffer from Napoleon, it is impossible not to be struck with the aggravation which that injustice is made to receive from the quality of the victim, and the degree in which those sufferings are exaggerated, because they were her own. We think the hostility of that great commander towards a person of her sex, character, and talents, was in the highest degree paltry, and unworthy even of a highminded tyrant. But we really cannot say that it seems to have had any thing very savage or ferocious in the manner of it. He did not touch, nor even menace her life, nor her liberty, nor her fortune. No daggers, nor chains, nor dungeons, nor confiscations, are among the instruments of torture of this worse than Russian despot. He banished her, indeed, first from Paris, and then from France; suppressed her publications; separated her from some of her friends; and obstructed her passage into England; — very vexatious treatment certainly,— but not quite of the sort which we should have guessed at, from the tone either of her complaints or lamentations. Her main grief undoubtedly was the loss of the society and brilliant talk of Paris; and if *that* had been spared to her, we cannot help thinking that she would have felt less horror and detestation at the inroads of Bonaparte on the liberty and independence of mankind. She avows this indeed pretty honestly, where she says, that, if she had been aware of the privations of this sort which a certain liberal speech of M. Constant was ultimately to bring upon herself, she would have taken care that it should not have been spoken! The truth is, that, like many other celebrated persons of her country, she could not live happily without the excitements and novelties that Paris alone could supply; and that, when these were withdrawn, all the vivacity of her genius, and all the warmth of her heart, proved insufficient to protect her from the benumbing influence of *ennui*. Here are her own confessions on the record: —

"J'étois vulnérable par mon goût pour la société. Montaigne a dit jadis: *Je suis François par Paris*; et s'il pensoit ainsi, il y a trois siècles, que seroit-ce

* A great deal of citation and remark, relating chiefly to the character and conduct of Bonaparte, and especially to his persecution of the fair author, is here omitted — the object of this reprint being solely to illustrate her Personal character.

depuis que l'on a vu réunies tant de personnes d'esprit dans une même ville, et tant de personnes accoutumées à se servir de cet esprit pour les plaisirs de la conversation? *Le fantôme de l'ennui m'a toujours poursuivie!* C'est par la terreur qu'il me cause que j'aurois été capable de plier devant la tyrannie — si l'exemple de mon père, et son sang qui coule dans mes veines, ne l'emportoient pas sur cette foiblesse."— Vol. iii. p. 8.

We think this rather a curious trait, and not very easily explained. We can quite well understand how the feeble and passive spirits who have been accustomed to the stir and variety of a town life, and have had their inanity supplied by the superabundant intellect and gaiety that overflows in these great repositories, should feel helpless and wretched when these extrinsic supports are withdrawn; but by the active and energetic members of those vast assemblages, who draw their resources from within, and enliven not only themselves but the inert mass around them, by the radiation of their genius, should suffer in a similar way, it certainly is not so easy to comprehend. In France, however, the people of the most wit and vivacity seem to have always been the most subject to *ennui.* The letters of Mad. du Deffand, we remember, are full of complaints of it; and those of De Bussy also. It is but a humiliating view of our frail human nature, if the most exquisite arrangements for social enjoyment should be found thus inevitably to generate a distaste for what is ordinarily within our reach; and the habit of a little elegant amusement, not coming very close either to our hearts or understandings, should render all the other parts of life, with its duties, affections, and achievements, distasteful and burdensome. We are inclined, however, we confess, both to question the perfection of the arrangements and the system of amusement that led to such results; and also to doubt of the permanency of the discomfort that may arise on its first disturbance. We are persuaded, in short, that at least as much enjoyment may be obtained, with less of the extreme variety, and less of the over-excitement which belongs to the life of Paris, and is the immediate cause of the depression that follows their cessation; and also, that, in minds of any considerable strength and resource, this depression will be of no long duration; and that nothing but a little perseverance is required to restore the plastic frame of our nature, to its natural appetite and relish for the new pleasures and occupations that may yet await it beyond the precincts of Paris or London. We remember a signal testimony to this effect, in one of the later publications, we think of Volney, the celebrated traveller; — who describes, in a very amusing way, the misery he suffered when he first changed the society of Paris for that of Syria and Egypt; and the recurrence of the same misery when, after years of absence, he was again restored to the importunate bustle and idle chatter of Paris, from the tranquil taciturnity of his warlike Mussulmans! — his second access of home sickness when he left Paris for the United States of America, — and the discomfort he experienced, for the fourth time, when, after being reconciled to the free and substantial talk of these stout republicans, he finally returned to the amiable trifling of his own famous metropolis.

It is an affliction, certainly, to be at the end of the works of such a writer — and to think that she was cut off at a period when her enlarged experience and matured talents were likely to be exerted with the greatest utility, and the state of the world was such as to hold out the fairest prospect of their not being exerted in vain. It is a consolation, however, that she has done so much; — and her works will remain not only as a brilliant memorial of her own unrivalled genius, but as a proof that sound and comprehensive views were entertained, kind affections cultivated, and elegant pursuits followed out, through a period which posterity may be apt to regard as one of universal delirium and crime; — that the principles of genuine freedom, taste, and morality, were not altogether extinct, even under the reign of terror and violence — and that one who lived *through the whole* of that agitating scene, was the first luminously to explain, and temperately and powerfully to impress, the great moral and political Lessons which it should have taught to mankind.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

(October, 1835.)

Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honourable Sir James Mackintosh. Edited by his Son, Robert James Mackintosh, Esq. 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1835.*

There cannot be, we think, a more delightful book than this: whether we consider the attraction of the Character it brings so pleasingly before us — or the infinite variety of original thoughts and fine observations with which it abounds. As a mere narrative there is not so much to be said for it. There are but few incidents; and the account which we have of them is neither very luminous nor very complete. If it be true, therefore, that the only legitimate business of biography is with incidents and narrative, it will not be easy to deny that there is something amiss, either in the title or the substance of this work. But we are humbly of opinion that there is no good ground for so severe a limitation.

Biographies, it appears to us, are naturally of three kinds — and please or instruct us in at least as many different ways. One sort seeks to interest us by an account of what the individual in question actually did or suffered in his own person: another by an account of what he saw done or suffered by others; and a third by an account of what he himself thought, judged, or imagined — for these too, we apprehend, are *acts* of a rational being — and acts frequently quite as memorable, and as fruitful of consequences, as any others he can either witness or perform.

Different readers will put a different value on each of these sorts of biography. But at all events they will be in no danger of confounding them. The character and position of the individual will generally settle, with sufficient precision, to which class his memoirs should be referred; and no man of common sense will expect to meet in one with the kind of interest which properly belongs to another. To complain that the life of a warrior is but barren in literary speculation, or that of a man of letters in surprising personal adventures, is about as reasonable as it would be to complain that a song is not a sermon, or that there is but little pathos in a treatise on geometry.

The first class, in its higher or public department, should deal chiefly with the lives of leaders in great and momentous transactions — men who, by their force of character, or the advantage of their position, have been enabled to leave their mark on the age and country to which they belonged, and to impress more than one generation with the traces of their transitory existence. Of this kind are many of the lives in Plutarch; and of this kind, still more eminently, should be the lives of such men as Mahomet, Alfred, Washington, Napoleon. There is an inferior and more private department under this head, in which the interest, though less elevated, is often quite as intense, and rests on the same general basis, of sympathy with personal feats and endowments — we mean the history of individuals whom the ardour of their temperament, or the caprices of fortune, have involved in strange adventures, or conducted through a series of extraordinary and complicated perils. The memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini, or Lord Herbert of Cherbury, are good examples of this romantic sort of biography; and many more might be added, from the chronicles of ancient paladins, or the confessions of modern malefactors.

The second class is chiefly for the compilers of Diaries and journals — autobiographers who, without having themselves done any thing memorable, have yet had the good luck to live

* This was *my last* considerable contribution to the Edinburgh Review; and, indeed (with the exception of a slight notice of Mr. Wilberforce's Memoirs), *the only* thing I wrote for it, after my advancement to the place I now hold. If there was any impropriety in my so contributing at all, some palliation I hope may be found in the nature of the feelings by which I was led to it, and the tenor of what these feelings prompted me to say. I wrote it solely out of affection to the memory of the friend I had lost; and I think I said nothing which was not dictated by a desire to vindicate and to honour that memory. At all events, if it was an impropriety, it was one for which I cannot now submit to seek the shelter of concealment: and therefore I here reprint the greater part of it: and think I cannot better conclude the present collection, than with this tribute to the merits of one of the most distinguished of my Associates in the work out of which it has been gathered.

A considerable part of the original is omitted in this publication; but consisting almost entirely in citations from the book reviewed, and incidental remarks on these citations.

through long and interesting periods; and who, in chronicling the events of their own unimportant lives, have incidentally preserved invaluable memorials of contemporary manners and events. The memoirs of Evelyn and Pepys are the most obvious instances of works which derive their chief value from this source; and which are read, not for any great interest we take in the fortunes of the writers, but for the sake of the anecdotes and notices of far more important personages and transactions with which they so lavishly present us; and there are many others, written with far inferior talent, and where the design is more palpably egotistical, which are perused with an eager curiosity, on the strength of the same recommendation.

The last class is for Philosophers and men of Genius and speculation — men, in short, who were, or ought to have been, Authors; and whose biographies are truly to be regarded either as *supplements* to the works they have given to the world, or *substitutes* for those which they might have given. These are histories, not of men, but of Minds; and their value must of course depend on the reach and capacity of the mind they serve to develope, and in the relative magnitude of their contributions to its history. When the individual has already poured himself out in a long series of publications, on which all the moods and aspects of his mind have been engraven (as in the cases of Voltaire or Sir Walter Scott), there may be less occasion for such a biographical supplement. But when an author (as in the case of Gray) has been more chary in his communications with the public, and it is yet possible to recover the precious, though immature, fruits of his genius or his studies,— thoughts, and speculations, which no intelligent posterity would willingly let die, — it is due both to his fame and to the best interests of mankind, that they should be preserved, and reverently presented to after times, in such a posthumous portraiture as it is the business of biography to supply.

The best and most satisfactory memorials of this sort are those which are substantially made up of private letters, journals, or written fragments of any kind, by the party himself; as these, however scanty or imperfect, are at all events genuine relics of the individual, and generally bearing, even more authentically than his publications, the stamp of his intellectual and personal character. We cannot refer to better examples than the lives of Gray and of Cowper, as these have been finally completed. Next to these, if not upon the same level, we should place such admirable records of particular conversations, and memorable sayings gathered from the lips of the wise, as we find in the inimitable pages of Boswell, — a work which, by the general consent of this generation, has not only made us a thousand times better acquainted with Johnson than all his publications put together, but has raised the standard of his intellectual character, and actually made discovery of large provinces in his understanding, of which scarcely an indication was to be found in his writings. In the last and lowest place — in so far, at least, as relates to the proper business of this branch of biography, the enlargement of our knowledge of the genius and character of individuals — we must reckon that most common form of the memoirs of literary men, which consists of little more than the biographer's own (generally most partial) description and estimate of his author's merits, or of elucidations and critical summaries of his most remarkable productions. In this division, though in other respects of great value, must be ranked those admirable dissertations which Mr. Stewart has given to the world under the title of the Lives of Reid, Smith, and Robertson, — the real interest of which consists almost entirely in the luminous exposition we there meet with of the leading speculations of those eminent writers, and in the candid and acute investigation of their originality or truth.

We know it has been said, that after a man has himself given to the public all that he thought worthy of its acceptance, it is not fair for a posthumous biographer to endanger his reputation by bringing forward what he had withheld as unworthy, — either by exhibiting the mere dregs and refuse of his lucubrations, or by exposing to the general gaze those crude conceptions, or rash and careless opinions, which he may have noted down in the privacy of his study, or thrown out in the confidence of private conversation. . And no doubt there may be (as there have been) cases of such abuse. Confidence is in no case to be vio-

lated; nor are mere trifles, which bear no mark of the writer's intellect, to be recorded to his prejudice. But wherever there is power and native genius, we cannot but grudge the suppression of the least of its revelations; and are persuaded, that with those who can judge of such intellects, they will never lose any thing by the most lavish and indiscriminate disclosures. Which of Swift's most elaborate productions is at this day half so interesting as that most confidential Journal to Stella? Or which of them, with all its utter carelessness of expression, its manifold contradictions, its infantine fondness, and all its quick-shifting moods of kindness, selfishness, anger and ambition, gives us half so strong an impression either of his amiableness or his vigour? How much, in like manner, is Johnson raised in our estimation, not only as to intellect but personal character, by the industrious eavesdroppings of Boswell, setting down, day by day, in his note-book, the fragments of his most loose and unweighed conversations? Or what, in fact, is there so precious in the work, or the histories of eminent men, from Cicero to Horace Walpole, as collections of their private and familiar letters? What would we not give for such a journal — such notes of conversations, or such letters of Shakspeare, Chaucer, or Spenser? The mere drudges or coxcombs of literature may indeed suffer by such disclosures — as made-up beauties might do by being caught in undress: but all who are really worth knowing about, will, on the whole, be gainers; and we should be well content to have no biographies but of those who would profit as well as their readers, by being shown in new or in nearer lights.

The value of the insight which may thus be obtained into the mind and the meaning of truly great authors, can scarcely be overrated by any one who knows how to turn such communications to account; and we do not think we exaggerate, when we say, that in many cases more light may be gained from the private letters, notes, or recorded talk of such persons, than from the most finished of their publications; and not only upon the many new topics which are sure to be started in such memorials, but as to the true character, and the merits and defects, of such publications themselves. It is from such sources alone that we can learn with certainty by what road the author arrived at the conclusions which we see established in his works; against what perplexities he had to struggle, and after what failures he was enabled to succeed. It is thus only that we are often enabled to detect the prejudice or hostility which may be skilfully and mischievously disguised in his published books — to find out the doubts ultimately entertained by the author himself, of what may appear to most readers to be triumphantly established, — or to gain glimpses of those grand ulterior speculations, to which what seemed to common eyes a complete and finished system, was, in truth, intended by the author to serve only as a vestibule or introduction. Where such documents are in abundance, and the mind which has produced them is truly of the highest order, we do not hesitate to say, that more will generally be found in them, in the way at least of hints to kindred minds, and as scattering the seeds of grand and original conceptions, than in any finished works which the indolence, the modesty, or the avocations of such persons will have generally permitted them to give to the world. So far, therefore, from thinking the biography of men of genius barren or unprofitable, because presenting few events or personal adventures, we cannot but regard it, when constructed in substance of such materials as we have now mentioned, as the most instructive and interesting of all writing — embodying truth and wisdom in the vivid distinctness of a personal presentment,— enabling us to look on genius in its first elementary stirrings, and in its weakness as well as its strength, — and teaching us at the same time great moral lessons, both as to the value of labour and industry, and the necessity of *virtues*, as well as intellectual endowments, for the attainment of lasting excellence.

In these general remarks, our readers will easily perceive that we mean to shadow forth our conceptions of the character and peculiar merits of the work before us. It is the history not of a man of action, but of a student, a philosopher, and a statesman; and its value consists not in the slight and imperfect account of what was done by, or happened to, the individual, but in the vestiges it has fortunately preserved of the thoughts, sentiments, and opinions of one of the most powerful thinkers, most conscien-

tious inquirers, and most learned reasoners, that the world has ever seen. It is almost entirely made up of journals and letters of the author himself: and impresses us quite as strongly as any of his publications with a sense of the richness of his knowledge and the fineness of his understanding — and with a far stronger sense of his promptitude, versatility, and vigour.*

His intellectual character, generally, cannot be unknown to any one acquainted with his works, or who has even read many pages of the Memoirs now before us; and it is needless, therefore, to speak here of his great knowledge, the singular union of ingenuity and soundness in his speculations — his perfect candour and temper in discussion — the pure and lofty morality to which he strove to elevate the minds of others, and in his own conduct to conform, or the wise and humane allowance which he was ready, in every case but his own, to make for the infirmities which must always draw down so many from the higher paths of their duty.

These merits, we believe, will no longer be denied by any who have heard of his name, or looked at his writings. But there were other traits of his intellect which could only be known to those who were of his acquaintance, and which it is still desirable that the readers of these Memoirs should bear in mind. One of these was, that ready and prodigious Memory, by which all that he learned seemed to be at once engraved on the proper compartment of his mind, and to present itself at the moment it was required; another, still more remarkable, was the singular Maturity and completeness of all his views and opinions, even upon the most abstruse and complicated questions, though raised, without design or preparation, in the casual course of conversation. In this way it happened that the sentiments he delivered had generally the air of recollections — and that few of those with whom he most associated in mature life, could recollect of ever catching him in the act of making up his mind, in the course of the discussions in which it was his delight to engage them. His conclusions, and the grounds of them, seemed always to have been previously considered and digested; and though he willingly developed his reasons, to secure the assent of his hearers, he uniformly seemed to have been perfectly ready, before the cause was called on, to have delivered the opinion of the court, with a full summary of the arguments and evidence on both sides. In the work before us, we have more peeps into the preparatory deliberations of his great intellect — that scrupulous estimate of the grounds of decision, and that jealous questioning of first impressions, which necessarily precede the formation of all firm and wise opinions, — than could probably be collected from the recollections of all who had most familiar access to him in society. It was owing perhaps to this vigour and rapidity of intellectual digestion that, though all his life a great talker, there never was a man that talked half so much who said so little that was either foolish or frivolous; nor any one perhaps who knew so well how to give as much liveliness and poignancy to just and even profound observations, as others could ever impart to startling extravagance and ludicrous exaggeration. The vast extent of his information, and the natural gaiety of his temper, made him independent of such devices for producing effect; and, joined to the inherent kindness and gentleness of his disposition, made his conversation at once the most instructive and the most generally pleasing that could be imagined.

Of his intellectual endowments we shall say no more. But we must add, that the Tenderness of his domestic affections, and the deep Humility of his character, were as inadequately known, even among his friends, till the publication of those private records: for his manners, though gentle, were cold; and, though uniformly courteous and candid in society, it was natural to suppose that he was not unconscious of his superiority. It is, therefore, but justice to bring into view some of the proofs that are now before us of both these endearing traits of character. The beautiful letter which he addressed to Dr. Parr on the death of his first wife, in 1797, breathes the full spirit of both. We regret that we can only afford room for a part of it.

"Allow me, in justice to her memory, to tell you what she was, and what I owed her. I was guided in my choice only by the blind affection of my youth.

* A short account of Sir James's parentage, education, and personal history is here omitted.

I found an intelligent companion, and a tender friend; a prudent monitress, the most faithful of wives, and a mother as tender as children ever had the misfortune to lose. I found a woman who, by the tender management of my weaknesses, gradually corrected the most pernicious of them. She became prudent from affection; and though of the most generous nature, she was taught economy and frugality by her love for me. During the most critical period of my life, she preserved order in my affairs, from the care of which she relieved me. She gently reclaimed me from dissipation: she propped my weak and irresolute nature; she urged my indolence to all the exertions that have been useful or creditable to me, and she was perpetually at hand to admonish my heedlessness and improvidence. To her I owe whatever I am; to her whatever I shall be. Such was she whom I have lost! And I have lost her after eight years of struggle and distress had bound us fast together, and moulded our tempers to each other, — when a knowledge of her worth had refined my youthful love into friendship, and before age had deprived it of much of its original ardour, — I lost her, alas! (the choice of my youth, and the partner of my misfortunes) at a moment when I had the prospect of her sharing my better days!

"The philosophy which I have learnt only teaches me that virtue and friendship are the greatest of human blessings, and that their loss is irreparable. It aggravates my calamity, instead of consoling me under it. But my wounded heart seeks *another* consolation. Governed by those feelings, which have in every age and region of the world actuated the human mind, I seek relief, and I find it, in the soothing hope and consolatory opinion that a Benevolent Wisdom inflicts the chastisement, as well as bestows the enjoyments of human life; that Superintending Goodness will one day enlighten the darkness which surrounds our nature, and hangs over our prospects; that this dreary and wretched life is not the whole of man; that an animal so sagacious and provident, and capable of such proficiency in science and virtue, is not like the beasts that perish; that there is a dwelling-place prepared for the spirits of the just, and that the ways of God will yet be vindicated to man."

We may add part of a very kind letter, written from India, in 1808, in a more cheerful mood, to his son-in-law Mr. Rich, then on a mission to Babylon, — and whose early death so soon blasted the hopes, not only of his afflicted family, but of the whole literary world.

"And now, my dear Rich, allow me, with the liberty of warm affection, earnestly to exhort you to exert every power of your mind in the duties of your station. There is something in the seriousness, both of business and of science, of which your vivacity is impatient. The brilliant variety of your attainments and accomplishments do, I fear, flatter you into the conceit that you may 'indulge your genius,' and pass your life in amusement; while you smile at those who think, and at those who act. But this would be weak and ignoble. The success of your past studies ought to show you how much you may yet do, instead of soothing you with the reflection how much you have done.

"Habits of seriousness of thought and action are necessary to the duties, to the importance, and to the dignity of human life. What is amiable gaiety at twenty-four might run the risk, if it was unaccompanied by other things, of being thought frivolous and puerile at forty-four. I am so near forty-four, that I can give you pretty exact news of that dull country; which yet ought to interest you, as you are travelling towards it, and must, I hope, pass through it.

"I hope you will profit by my errors. I was once ambitious to have made you a much improved edition of myself. If you had stayed here, I should have laboured to do so, in spite of your impatience; as it is, I heartily pray that you may make yourself something much better.

"You came here so early as to have made few sacrifices of friendship and society at home. You can afford a good many years for making a handsome fortune, and still return *home* young. You do not feel the force of that word quite so much as I could wish: but for the present let me hope that the prospect of coming to one who has such an affection for you as I have, will give your country some of the attractions of home. If you can be allured to it by the generous hope of increasing the enjoyments of my old age, you will soon discover in it sufficient excellences to love and admire; and it will become to you, in the full force of the term, a home."

We are not sure whether the frequent aspirations which we find in his private letters, after the quiet and repose of an Academical situation, ought to be taken as proofs of his humility, though they are generally expressed in language bearing that character. But there are other indications enough, and of the most unequivocal description — for example, this entry in 1818: —

"—— has, I think, a distaste for me. I think the worse of nobody for such a feeling. Indeed I often feel a distaste for myself; and I am sure I should not esteem my own character in another person. It is more likely that I should have disrespectable or disagreeable qualities, than that —— should have an unreasonable antipathy."—Vol. ii. p. 344.

In the same sad but gentle spirit, we have this entry in 1822: —

"Walked a little up the quiet valley, which on this cheerful morning looked pretty. While sitting on

the stone under the tree, my mind was soothed by reading some passages of —— in the Quarterly Review. With no painful humility, I felt that an enemy of mine is a man of genius and virtue; and that all who think slightingly of me may be right."

But the strongest and most painful expression of this profound humility is to be found in a note to his Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy; in which, after a beautiful eulogium on his deceased friends, Mr. George Wilson and Mr. Serjeant Lens, he adds, —

"The present writer hopes that the good-natured reader will excuse him for having thus, perhaps unseasonably, bestowed heartfelt commendation on those who were above the pursuit of praise, and the remembrance of whose good opinion and good-will helps to support him, under a deep sense of faults and vices."

The reader now knows enough of Sir James's personal character to enter readily into the spirit of any extracts we may lay before him. The most valuable of these are supplied by his letters, journals, and occasional writings, while enjoying the comparative leisure of his Indian residence, or the complete leisure of his voyages to and from that country: and with all due deference to opposite opinions, this is exactly what we should have expected. Sir James Mackintosh, it is well known, had a great relish for society; and had not constitutional vigour (after his return from India) to go through much business without exhaustion and fatigue. In London and in Parliament, therefore, his powerful intellect was at once too much dissipated, and too much oppressed; and the traces it has left of its exertions on those scenes are comparatively few and inadequate. In conversation, no doubt, much that was delightful and instructive was thrown out; and, for want of a Boswell, has perished! But, though it may be true that we have thus lost the light and graceful flowers of anecdote and conversation, we would fain console ourselves with the belief that we have secured the more precious and mature fruits of studies and meditations, which can only be pursued to advantage, when the cessation of more importunate calls has "left us leisure to be wise."

With reference to these views, nothing has struck us more than the singular vigour and alertness of his understanding during the dull progress of his home voyage. Shut up in a small cabin, in a tropical climate, in a state of languid health, and subject to every sort of annoyance, he not only reads with an industry which would not disgrace an ardent Academic studying for honours, but plunges eagerly into original speculations, and finishes off some of the most beautiful compositions in the language, in a shorter time than would be allowed, for such subjects, to a contractor for leading paragraphs to a daily paper. In less than a fortnight, during this voyage, he seems to have thrown off nearly twenty elaborate characters of eminent authors or statesmen in English story—conceived with a justness, and executed with a delicacy, which would seem unattainable without long meditation and patient revisal. We cannot now venture, however, to present our readers with more than a part of one of them; and we take our extract from that of Samuel Johnson.

"In early youth, he had resisted the most severe tests of probity. Neither the extreme poverty nor the uncertain income to which the virtue of so many men of letters has yielded, even in the slightest degree weakened his integrity, or lowered the dignity of his independence. His moral principles (if the language may be allowed) partook of the vigour of his understanding. He was conscientious, sincere, determined; and his pride was no more than a steady consciousness of superiority in the most valuable qualities of human nature. His friendships were not only firm, but generous and tender, beneath a rugged exterior. He wounded none of those feelings which the habits of his life enabled him to estimate; but he had become too hardened by serious distress not to contract some disregard for those minor delicacies which become so keenly sensible, in a calm and prosperous fortune. He was a Tory, not without some propensities towards Jacobitism; and a High Churchman, with more attachment to ecclesiastical authority and a splendid worship, than is quite consistent with the spirit of Protestantism. On these subjects he neither permitted himself to doubt, nor tolerated difference of opinion in others. But the vigour of his understanding is no more to be estimated by his opinions on subjects where it was bound by his prejudices, than the strength of a man's body by the efforts of a limb in fetters. His conversation, which was one of the most powerful instruments of his extensive influence, was artificial, dogmatical, sententious, and poignant; adapted, with the most admirable versatility, to every subject as it arose, and distinguished by an almost unparalleled power of serious repartee. He seems to have considered himself as a sort of colloquial magistrate, who inflicted severe punishment from just policy. His course of life led him to treat those sensibilities, which such severity wounds, as fantastic and effeminate; and he

entered society too late to acquire those habits of politeness which are a substitute for natural delicacy.

"In the progress of English style, three periods may be easily distinguished. The first period extended from Sir Thomas More to Lord Clarendon. During great part of this period, the style partook of the rudeness and fluctuation of an unformed language, in which use had not yet determined the words that were to be English. Writers had not yet discovered the combination of words which best suits the original structure and immutable constitution of our language. While the terms were English, the arrangement was Latin — the exclusive language of learning, and that in which every truth in science, and every model of elegance, was then contemplated by youth. For a century and a half, ineffectual attempts were made to bend our vulgar tongue to the genius of the language supposed to be superior; and the whole of this period, though not without a capricious mixture of coarse idiom, may be called the Latin, or pedantic age, of our style.

"In the second period, which extended from the Restoration to the middle of the eighteenth century, a series of writers appeared, of less genius indeed than their predecessors, but more successful in their experiments to discover the mode of writing most adapted to the genius of the language. About the same period that a similar change was effected in France by Pascal, they began to banish from style, learned as well as vulgar phraseology; and to confine themselves to the part of the language naturally used in general conversation by well-educated men. That middle region, which lies between vulgarity and pedantry, remains commonly unchanged, while both extremes are condemned to perpetual revolution. Those who select words from that permanent part of a language, and who arrange them according to its natural order, have discovered the true secret of rendering their writings permanent; and of preserving that rank among the classical writers of their country, which men of greater intellectual power have failed to attain. Of these writers, whose language has not yet been at all superannuated, Cowley was probably the earliest, as Dryden and Addison were assuredly the greatest.

"The third period may be called the Rhetorical, and is distinguished by the prevalence of a school of writers, of which Johnson was the founder. The fundamental character of this style is, that it employs undisguised art, where classical writers appear only to obey the impulse of a cultivated and adorned nature, &c.

"As the mind of Johnson was robust, but neither nimble nor graceful, so his style, though sometimes significant, nervous, and even majestic, was void of all grace and ease; and being the most unlike of all styles to the natural effusion of a cultivated mind, had the least pretensions to the praise of eloquence. During the period, *now near a close*, in which he was a favorite model, a stiff symmetry and tedious monotony succeeded to that various music with which the taste of Addison diversified his periods, and to that natural imagery which his beautiful genius seemed with graceful negligence to scatter over his composition."

We stop here to remark, that, though concurring in the substance of this masterly classification of our writers, we should yet be disposed to except to that part of it which represents the first introduction of soft, graceful, and idiomatic English as not earlier than the period of the Restoration. In our opinion, it is at least as old as Chaucer. The English Bible is full of it; and it is among the most common, as well as the most beautiful, of the many languages spoken by Shakspeare. Laying his verse aside, there are in his longer passages of prose — and in the serious as well as the humorous parts—in Hamlet, and Brutus, and Shylock, and Henry V., as well as in Falstaff, and Touchstone, Rosalind, and Benedick, a staple of sweet, mellow, and natural English, altogether as free and elegant as that of Addison, and for the most part more vigorous and more richly coloured. The same may be said, with some exceptions, of the other dramatists of that age. Sir James is right perhaps as to the grave and authoritative writers of prose; but few of the wits of Queen Anne's time were of that description. We shall only add that part of the sequel which contains the author's general account of the Lives of the Poets.

"Whenever understanding alone is sufficient for poetical criticism, the decisions of Johnson are generally right. But the beauties of poetry must be *felt* before their causes are investigated. There is a poetical sensibility, which in the progress of the mind becomes as distinct a power as a musical ear or a picturesque eye. Without a considerable degree of this sensibility, it is as vain for a man of the greatest understanding to speak of the higher beauties of poetry, as it is for a blind man to speak of colours. But to cultivate such a talent was wholly foreign from the worldly sagacity and stern shrewdness of Johnson. As in his judgment of life and character, so in his criticism on poetry, he was a sort of free-thinker. He suspected the refined of affectation; he rejected the enthusiastic as absurd; and he took it for granted that the mysterious was unintelligible. He came into the world when the school of Dryden and Pope gave the law to English poetry. In that school he had himself learned to be a lofty and vigorous declaimer in harmonious verse; beyond that school his unforced admiration perhaps scarcely soared; and his highest effort of criticism was accordingly the noble panegyric on Dryden. His criticism owed its popu-

larity as much to its defects as to its excellences. It was on a level with the majority of readers — persons of good sense and information, but of no exquisite sensibility; and to their minds it derived a false appearance of solidity, from that very narrowness, which excluded those grander efforts of imagination to which Aristotle and Bacon have confined the name of poetry."

The admirable and original delineation, of which this is but a small part, appears to have been the task of one disturbed and sickly day. We have in these volumes characters of Hume, Swift, Lord Mansfield, Wilkes, Goldsmith, Gray, Franklin, Sheridan, Fletcher of Saltoun, Louis XIV., and some others, all finished with the same exquisite taste, and conceived in the same vigorous and candid spirit; besides which, it appears from the Journal, that, in the same incredibly short period of fourteen or fifteen days, he had made similar delineations of Lord North, Paley, George Grenville, C. Townshend, Turgot, Malesherbes, Young, Thomson, Akenside, Lord Bolingbroke, and Lord Oxford; though (we know not from what cause) none of these last mentioned appear in the present publication.

During the same voyage, the perusal of Madame de Sevigné's Letters engages him (at intervals) for about a fortnight; in the course of which he has noted down in his journal more just and delicate remarks on her character, and that of her age, than we think are any where else to be met with. But we cannot now venture on any extract; and must confine ourselves to the following admirable remarks on the true tone of polite conversation and familiar letters, — suggested by the same fascinating collection: —

"When a woman of feeling, fancy, and accomplishment has learned to converse with ease and grace, from long intercourse with the most polished society, and when she writes as she speaks, she must write letters as they ought to be written; if she has acquired just as much habitual correctness as is reconcilable with the air of negligence. A moment of enthusiasm, a burst of feeling, a flash of eloquence may be allowed; but the intercourse of society, either in conversation or in letters, allows no more. Though interdicted from the long-continued use of elevated language, they are not without a resource. There is a part of language which is disdained by the pedant or the declaimer, and which both, if they knew its difficulty, would approach with dread; it is formed of the most familiar phrases and turns in daily use by the generality of men, and is full of energy and vivacity, bearing upon it the mark of those keen feelings and strong passions from which it springs. It is the employment of such phrases which produces what may be called colloquial eloquence. Conversation and letters may be thus raised to any degree of animation, without departing from their character. Any thing may be said, if it be spoken in the tone of society. The highest guests are welcome if they come in the easy undress of the club; the strongest metaphor appears without violence, if it is *familiarly* expressed; and we the more easily catch the warmest feeling, if we perceive that it is intentionally lowered in expression, out of condescension to our calmer temper. It is thus that harangues and declamations, the last proof of bad taste and bad manners in conversation, are avoided, while the fancy and the heart find the means of pouring forth all their stores. To meet this despised part of a language in a polished dress, and producing all the effects of wit and eloquence, is a constant source of agreeable surprise. This is increased, when a few bolder and higher words are happily wrought into the texture of this familiar eloquence. To find what seems so unlike author-craft in a book, raises the pleasing astonishment to its highest degree. I once thought of illustrating my notions by numerous examples from 'La Sevigné.' And I must, some day or other, do so; though I think it the resource of a bungler, who is not enough master of language to convey his conceptions into the minds of others. The style of Madame de Sevigné is evidently copied not only by her worshipper, Walpole, but even by Gray; who, notwithstanding the extraordinary merits of his matter, has the double stiffness of an imitator, and of a college recluse."

How many debateable points are fairly settled by the following short and vigorous remarks, in the Journal for 1811: —

"Finished George Rose's 'Observations on Fox's History,' which are tedious and inefficient. That James was more influenced by a passion for arbitrary power than by Popish bigotry, is an idle refinement in Fox: he liked both Popery and tyranny; and I am persuaded he did not himself know which he liked best. But I take it to be certain, that the English people, at the Revolution, dreaded his love of Popery more than his love of tyranny. This was in them Protestant bigotry, not reason: but the instinct of their bigotry pointed right. Popery was then the name for the faction which supported civil and religious tyranny in Europe: to be a Papist was to be a partisan of the ambition of Louis XIV."

There is in the Bombay Journal of the same year, a beautiful essay on Novels, and the *moral* effect of fiction in general, the whole of which we should like to extract; but it is far too long. It proceeds on the assumption, that as all fiction must cease to interest by representing admired qualities in an exaggerated

form, and in striking aspects, it must tend to raise the standard, and increase the admiration of excellence. In answer to an obvious objection, he proceeds: —

"A man who should feel all the various sentiments of morality, in the proportions in which they are inspired by the Iliad, would certainly be far from a perfectly good man. But it does not follow that the Iliad did not produce great moral benefit. To determine that point, we must ascertain whether a man, formed by the Iliad, would be better than the ordinary man of the country, *at the time in which it appeared.* It is true that it too much inspires an admiration for ferocious courage. That admiration was then prevalent, and every circumstance served to strengthen it. But the Iliad breathes many other sentiments, less prevalent, less favoured by the state of society, and calculated gradually to mitigate the predominant passion. The friendship and sorrow of Achilles for Patroclus, the patriotic valour of Hector, the paternal affliction of Priam, would slowly introduce more humane affections. If they had not been combined with the admiration of barbarous courage they would not have been popular; and consequently they would have found no entry into those savage hearts which they were destined (I do not say *intended*) to soften. It is therefore clear, from the very nature of poetry, that the poet must inspire somewhat better morals than those around him, though, to be effectual and useful, his morals must not be totally unlike those of his contemporaries. If the Iliad should, in a long course of ages, have inflamed the ambition and ferocity of a few individuals, even that evil, great as it is, will be far from balancing all the generous sentiments, which, for three thousand years, it has been pouring into the hearts of youth; and which it now continues to infuse, aided by the dignity of antiquity, and by all the fire and splendour of poetry. Every succeeding generation, as it refines, requires the standard to be proportionably raised.

"Apply these remarks, with the necessary modifications, to those fictions copied from common life called Novels, which are not above a century old, and of which the multiplication and the importance, as well literary as moral, are characteristic features of England. There may be persons now alive who recollect the publication of 'Tom Jones,' at least, if not of 'Clarissa.' Since that time, probably twelve novels have appeared of the first rank — a prodigious number, of such a kind, in any department of literature (by the help of Sir Walter Scott and Miss Edgeworth we may now at least double the number)—and the whole class of novels must have had more influence on the public, than all other sorts of books combined. Nothing popular can be frivolous. Whatever influences multitudes, must be of proportionable importance. Bacon and Turgot would have contemplated with inquisitive admiration this literary revolution."

And soon after, while admitting that Tom Jones (for example) is so far from being a moral book as to be deserving of the severest reprobation, he adds —

"Yet even in this extreme case, I must observe that the same book inspires the greatest abhorrence of the duplicity of Blifil, of the hypocrisy of Thwackum and Square; that Jones himself is interesting by his frankness, spirit, kindness, and fidelity — all virtues of the first class. The objection is the same in its principle with that to the Iliad. The ancient epic exclusively presents war — the modern novel love; the one what was most interesting in public life, and the other what is most brilliant in private — and both with an unfortunate disregard of moral restraint."

The entry under 6th March, 1817, has, to the writer of this article, a melancholy interest, even at this distance of time. It refers to the motion recently made in the House of Commons for a new writ, on the death of Mr. Horner. The reflections with which it closes must, we think, be interesting always.

"March 6th. — The only event which now appears interesting to me, is the scene in the House of Commons on Monday. Lord Morpeth opened it in a speech so perfect, that it might have been well placed as a passage in the most elegant English writer; it was full of feeling; every topic was skilfully presented, and contained, by a sort of prudence which is a part of taste, within safe limits; he slid over the thinnest ice without cracking it. Canning filled well what would have been the vacant place of a calm observer of Horner's public life and talents. Manners Sutton's most affecting speech was a tribute of affection from a private friend become a political enemy; Lord Lascelles, at the head of the country gentlemen of England, closing this affecting, improving, and most memorable scene by declaring, 'that if the sense of the House could have been taken on this occasion, it would have been unanimous.' I may say without exaggeration, that never were so many words uttered without the least suspicion of exaggeration; and that never was so much honour paid in any age or nation to intrinsic claims alone. A Howard introduced, and an English House of Commons adopted, the proposition, of thus honouring the memory of a man of thirty-eight, the son of a shop-keeper, who never filled an office, or had the power of obliging a living creature, and whose grand title to this distinction was the belief of his virtue. How honourable to the age and to the House! A country where such sentiments prevail is not ripe for destruction."

Sir James could not but feel, in the narrow circles of Bombay, the great superiority of London society; and he has thus recorded his sense of it: —

"In great capitals, men of different provinces, professions and pursuits are brought together in society, and are obliged to acquire a habit, a matter, and manner mutually perspicuous and agreeable. Hence they are raised above frivolity, and are divested of pedantry. In small societies this habit is not imposed by necessity; they have lower, but more urgent subjects, which are interesting to all, level to all capacities, and require no effort or preparation of mind."

He might have added, that in a great capital the best of all sorts is to be met with; and that the adherents even of the most extreme or fantastic opinions are there so numerous, and generally so respectably *headed*, as to command a deference and regard that would scarcely be shown to them when appearing as insulated individuals; and thus it happens that real toleration, and true modesty, as well as their polite simulars, are rarely to be met with out of great cities. This, however, is true only of those who mix largely in the general society of such places. For bigots and exclusives of all sorts, they are hot-beds and seats of corruption; since, however absurd or revolting their tenets may be, such persons are sure to meet enough of their fellows to encourage each other. In the provinces, a believer in animal magnetism or German metaphysics has few listeners, and no encouragement; but in a place like London they make a little coterie; who herd together, exchange flatteries, and take themselves for the apostles of a new gospel.

The editor has incorporated with his work some letters addressed to him by friends of his father, containing either anecdotes of his earlier life, or observations on his character and merits. It was natural for a person whose age precluded him from speaking on his own authority of any but recent transactions, to seek for this assistance; and the information contributed by Lord Abinger and Mr. Basil Montagu (the former especially) is very interesting. The other letters present us with little more than the opinion of the writers as to his character. If these should be thought too laudatory, there is another character which has lately fallen under our eye, which certainly is not liable to that objection. In the "Table Talk" of the late Mr. Coleridge, we find these words: — "I doubt if Mackintosh ever heartily appreciated an eminently original man. After all his fluency and brilliant erudition, you can rarely carry off any thing worth preserving. You might not improperly write upon his forehead, 'Warehouse to let!'"

We wish to speak tenderly of a man of genius, and we believe of amiable dispositions, who has been so recently removed from his friends and admirers. But so portentous a misjudgment as this, and coming from such a quarter, cannot be passed without notice. If Sir James Mackintosh had any talent more conspicuous and indisputable than another, it was that of appreciating the merits of eminent and original men. His great learning and singular soundness of judgment enabled him to do this truly; while his kindness of nature, his zeal for human happiness, and his perfect freedom from prejudice or vanity, prompted him, above most other men, to do it heartily. And then, as to his being a person from whose conversation little could be carried away, why the most characteristic and remarkable thing about it was, that the whole of it might be carried away — it was so lucid, precise, and brilliantly perspicuous! The joke of the "warehouse to let" is not, we confess, quite level to our capacities. It can scarcely mean (though that is the most obvious sense) that the head was empty — as that is inconsistent with the rest even of this splenetic delineation. If it was intended to insinuate that it was ready for the indiscriminate reception of any thing which any one might choose to put into it, there could not be a more gross misconception; as we have no doubt Mr. Coleridge must often have sufficiently experienced. And by whom is this discovery, that Mackintosh's conversation presented nothing that could be carried away, thus confidently announced? Why, by the very individual against whose own oracular and interminable talk the same complaint has been made, by friends and by foes, and with an unanimity unprecedented, for the last forty years. The admiring, or rather idolizing nephew, who has lately put forth this hopeful specimen of his relics, has recorded in the preface, that "his conversation at all times required attention; and that the demand on the intellect of the hearer was often very great; and that, when he got into his 'huge circuit' and large illustrations; most people had lost him, and naturally enough supposed that he had lost himself." Nay, speaking to this very

point, of the ease or difficulty of "carrying away" any definite notions from what he said, the partial kinsman is pleased to inform us, that, with all his familiarity with the inspired style of his relative, he himself has often gone away, after listening to him for several delightful hours, with divers masses of reasoning in his head, but without being able to perceive what connexion they had with each other. "In such cases," he adds, "I have mused, *sometimes even for days afterwards*, upon the words, till at length, spontaneously as it were, the fire would kindle," &c. &c. And this is the person who is pleased to denounce Sir James Mackintosh as an ordinary man; and specially to object to his conversation, that, though brilliant and fluent, there was rarely any thing in it which could be carried away!

An attack so unjust and so arrogant leads naturally to comparisons, which it would be easy to follow out to the signal discomfiture of the party attacking. But without going beyond what is thus forced upon our notice, we shall only say, that nothing could possibly set the work before us in so favourable a point of view, as a comparison between it and the volumes of "Table Talk," to which we have already made reference — unless, perhaps, it were the contrast of the two minds which are respectively portrayed in these publications.

In these memorials of Sir James Mackintosh, we trace throughout the workings of a powerful and unclouded intellect, nourished by wholesome learning, raised and instructed by fearless though reverent questionings of the sages of other times (which is the permitted Necromancy of the wise), exercised by free discussion with the most distinguished among the living, and made acquainted with its own strength and weakness, not only by a constant intercourse with other powerful minds, but by mixing, with energy and deliberation, in practical business and affairs; and here pouring itself out in a delightful miscellany of elegant criticism, original speculation, and profound practical suggestions on politics, religion, history, and all the greater and the lesser duties, the arts and the elegances of life — all expressed with a beautiful clearness and tempered dignity — breathing the purest spirit of goodwill to mankind — and brightened not merely by an ardent hope, but an assured faith in their constant advancement in freedom, intelligence, and virtue.

On all these points, the "Table Talk" of his poetical contemporary appears to us to present a most mortifying contrast; and to render back merely the image of a moody mind incapable of mastering its own imaginings, and constantly seduced by them, or by a misdirected ambition, to attempt impracticable things: — naturally attracted by dim paradoxes rather than lucid truths, and preferring, for the most part, the obscure and neglected parts of learning to those that are useful and clear — marching, in short, at all times, under the exclusive guidance of the Pillar of Smoke — and, like the body of its original followers, wandering all his days in the desert, without ever coming in sight of the promised land.

Consulting little at any time with any thing but his own prejudices and fancies, he seems, in his later days, to have withdrawn altogether from the correction of equal minds; and to have nourished the assurance of his own infallibility, by delivering mystical oracles from his cloudy shrine, all day long, to a small set of disciples, to whom neither question nor interruption was allowed. The result of this necessarily was, an exacerbation of all the morbid tendencies of the mind; a daily increasing ignorance of the course of opinions and affairs in the world, and a proportional confidence in his own dogmas and dreams, which might have been shaken, at least, if not entirely subverted, by a closer contact with the general mass of intelligence. Unfortunately this unhealthful training (peculiarly unhealthful for such a constitution) produced not merely a great eruption of ridiculous blunders and pitiable prejudices, but seems at last to have brought on a confirmed and thoroughly diseased habit of uncharitableness, and misanthropic anticipations of corruption and misery throughout the civilized world. The indiscreet revelations of the work to which we have alluded have now brought to light instances, not only of intemperate abuse of men of the highest intellect and most unquestioned purity, but such predictions of evil from what the rest of the world has been contented to receive as improvements, and such suggestions of intolerant and Tyrannical Remedies, as no man would believe could proceed from a cultivated

intellect of the present age — if the early history of this particular intellect had not indicated an inherent aptitude for all extreme opinions, — and prepared us for the *usual* conversion of one extreme into another.

And it is worth while to mark here also, and in respect merely of consistency and ultimate authority with mankind, the advantage which a sober and well-regulated understanding will always have over one which claims to be above ordinances; and trusting either to an erroneous opinion of its own strength, or even to a true sense of it, gives itself up to its first strong impression, and sets at defiance all other reason and authority. Sir James Mackintosh had, in his youth, as much ambition and as much consciousness of power as Mr. Coleridge could have: but the utmost extent of *his* early aberrations (in his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*) was an over-estimate of the probabilities of good from a revolution of violence; and a much greater under-estimate of the mischiefs with which such experiments are sure to be attended, and the value of settled institutions and long familiar forms. Yet, though in his philanthropic enthusiasm he did miscalculate the relative value of these opposite forces (and speedily admitted and rectified the error), he never for an instant disputed the existence of *both* elements in the equation, or affected to throw a doubt upon any of the great principles on which civil society reposes. On the contrary, in his earliest as well as his latest writings, he pointed steadily to the great institutions of Property and Marriage, and to the necessary authority of Law and Religion, as essential to the being of a state, and the well-being of any human society. It followed, therefore, that when disappointed in his too sanguine expectations from the French Revolution, he had nothing to retract in the substance and scope of his opinions; and merely tempering their announcement with the gravity and caution of maturer years, he gave them out again in his later days to the world with the accumulated authority of a whole life of consistency and study. At no period of that life, did he fail to assert the right of the people to political and religious freedom; and to the protection of just and equal laws, enacted by representatives truly chosen by themselves: and he never uttered a syllable that could be construed into an approval, or even an acquiescence in persecution and intolerance; or in the maintenance of authority for any other purpose than to give effect to the enlightened and deliberate will of the community. To enforce these doctrines his whole life was devoted; and though not permitted to complete either of the great works he had projected, he was enabled to finish detached portions of each, sufficient not only fully to develope his principles, but to give a clear view of the whole design, and to put it in the power of any succeeding artist to proceed with the execution. Look now upon the other side of the parallel.

Mr. Coleridge, too, was an early and most ardent admirer of the French Revolution; but the fruits of that admiration *in him* were, not a reasoned and statesmanlike apology for some of its faults and excesses, but a resolution to advance the regeneration of mankind at a still quicker rate, by setting before their eyes the pattern of a yet more exquisite form of society! And accordingly, when a full-grown man, he actually gave into, if he did not originate, the scheme of what he and his friends called a Pantisocracy — a form of society in which there was to be neither law nor government, neither priest, judge, nor magistrate — in which all property was to be in common, and every man left to act upon his own sense of duty and affection!

This fact is enough: — and whether he afterwards passed through the stages of a Jacobin, which he seems to deny — or a hot-headed Moravian, which he seems to admit, — is really of no consequence. The character of his understanding is *settled* with all reasonable men: as well as the authority that is due to the anti-reform and anti-toleration maxims which he seems to have spent his latter years in venting. Till we saw this posthumous publication, we had, to be sure, no conception of the extent to which these compensating maxims were carried; and we now think that few of the Conservatives (who were not originally Pantisocratists) will venture to adopt them. Not only is the Reform Bill denounced as the spawn of mere wickedness, injustice, and ignorance; and the reformed House of Commons as "low, vulgar, meddling, and sneering at every thing noble and refined," but the wise and the good, we

are assured, will, in every country, "speedily become disgusted with *the Representative form of government, brutalized as it is* by the predominance of democracy, in England, France, and Belgium!" And then the remedy is, that they will recur to a new, though, we confess, not very comprehensible form of "*Pure Monarchy*, in which the reason of the people shall become efficient in the apparent will of the King!" Moreover, he is for a total dissolution of the union with Ireland, and its erection into a separate and independent kingdom. He is against Negro emancipation — sees no use in reducing taxation — and designates Malthus's demonstration of a mere matter of fact by a redundant accumulation of evidence, by the polite and appropriate appellation of "a lie;" and represents it as more disgraceful and abominable than any thing that the weakness and wickedness of man have ever before given birth to.

Such as his temperance and candour are in politics, they are also in religion; and recommended and excused by the same flagrant contradiction to his early tenets. Whether he ever was a proper Moravian or not, we care not to inquire. It is admitted, and even stated somewhat boastingly in this book, that he was a bold Dissenter from the Church. He thanks heaven, indeed, that he "had gone much farther than the Unitarians!" And to make his boldness still more engaging, he had gone these lengths, not only against the authority of our Doctors, but against the clear and admitted doctrine and teaching of the Apostles themselves! "'What care I,' I said, 'for the Platonisms of John, or the Rabbinisms of Paul? *My conscience revolts!'* — *That* was the ground of *my* Unitarianism." And by and by, this infallible and oracular person does not hesitate to declare, that others, indeed, may do as they choose, but he, for his part, can never allow that Unitarians are Christians! and, giving no credit for "revolting consciences" to any one but himself, charges all Dissenters in the lump with hating the Church much more than they loved religion — is furious against the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and Catholic Emancipation, — and at last actually, and in good set terms, denies that any Dissenter has a *right to toleration!* and, in perfect consistency, maintains that it is the duty of the magistrate to stop heresy and schism *by persecution* — if he only has reason to think that in this way the evil may be arrested; adding, by way of example, that he would be ready "to ship off — *any where*," any missionaries who might attempt to disturb the undoubting Lutheranism of certain exemplary Norwegians, whom he takes under his special protection.

We are tempted to say more. But we desist; and shall pursue this parallel no farther. Perhaps we have already been betrayed into feelings and expressions that may be objected to. We should be sorry if this could be done justly. But we do not question Mr. Coleridge's sincerity. We admit, too, that he was a man of much poetical sensiblity, and had visions of intellectual sublimity, and glimpses of comprehensive truths, which he could neither reduce into order nor combine into system. But out of poetry and metaphysics, we think he was nothing; and eminently disqualified, not only by the defects, but by the best parts of his genius, as well as by his temper and habits, for forming any sound judgment on the business and affairs of our actual world. And yet it is for his preposterous judgments *on such subjects* that his memory is now held in affected reverence by those who laughed at him, all through his life, for what gave him his only true claim to admiration! and who now magnify his genius, for no other purpose but to give them an opportunity to quote, as of grave authority, his mere delirations, on reform, dissent, and toleration — his cheering predictions of the approaching millennium of pure monarchy — or his demonstrations of the absolute harmlessness of taxation, and the sacred duty of all sorts of *efficient* persecution. We are sure we treat Mr. Coleridge with all possible respect when we say, that *his* name can lend no more plausibility to absurdities like these, than the far greater names of Bacon or Hobbes could do to the belief in sympathetic medicines, or in churchyard apparitions.

We fear we have already transgressed our just limits. But before concluding, we wish to say a word on a notion which we find pretty generally entertained, that Sir James Mackintosh did not sufficiently turn to profit the talent which was committed to him; and did

much less than, with his gifts and opportunities, he ought to have done. He himself seems, no doubt, to have been occasionally of that opinion; and yet we cannot but think it in a great degree erroneous. If he had not, in early life, conceived the ambitious design of executing two great works, — one on the principles of Morals and Legislation, and one on English History; or had not let it be understood, for many years before his death, that he was actually employed on the latter, we do not imagine that, with all the knowledge his friends had (and all the world now has) of his qualifications, any one would have thought of visiting his memory with such a reproach.

We know of no code of morality which makes it imperative on every man of extraordinary talent, or learning, to write a large book: — and could readily point to instances where such persons have gone with unquestioned honour to their graves without leaving any such memorial — and been judged to have acted up to the last article of their duty, merely by enlightening society by their lives and conversation, and discharging with ability and integrity the offices of magistracy or legislation, to which they may have been called. But looking even to the sort of debt which may be thought to have been contracted by the announcement of these works, we cannot but think that the public has received a very respectable dividend — and, being at the best but a gratuitous creditor — ought not now to withhold a thankful discharge and acquittance. The discourse on Ethical Philosophy is full payment, we conceive, of one moiety of the first engagement, — and we are persuaded will be so received by all who can judge of its value; and though the other moiety, which relates to Legislation, has not yet been tendered in form, there is reason to believe that there are assets in the hands of the executors, from which this also may soon be liquidated. That great subject was certainly fully treated of in the Lectures of 1799 — and as it appears from some citations in these Memoirs, that, though for the most part delivered extempore, various notes and manuscripts relating to them have been preserved, we think it not unlikely that, with due diligence, the outline at least and main features of that interesting disquisition may still be recovered. On the bill for History, too, it cannot be denied that a large payment has been made to account — and as it was only due for the period of the Revolution, any shortcoming that may appear upon that score, may be fairly held as compensated by the voluntary advances of value to a much greater extent, though referring to an earlier period.

But, in truth, there never was any such debt or engagement on the part of Sir James: and the public was, and continues, the only debtor on the transaction, for whatever it may have received of service or instruction at his hand. We have expressed elsewhere our estimate of the greatness of this debt; and of the value especially of the Histories he has left behind him. We have, to be sure, since seen some sneering remarks on the dulness and uselessness of these works; and an attempt made to hold them up to ridicule, under the appellation of *Philosophical* histories. We are not aware that such a name was ever applied to them by their author or their admirers. But if they really deserve it, we are at a loss to conceive how it should be taken for a name of reproach; and it will scarcely be pretended that their execution is such as to justify its application in the way of derision. We do not perceive, indeed, that this *is* pretended; and, strange as it may appear, the objection seems really to be, rather to the kind of writing in general, than to the defects of its execution in this particular instance — the objector having a singular notion that history should consist of narrative only; and that nothing can be so tiresome and useless as any addition of explanation or remark.

We have no longer room to expose, as it deserves, the strange misconceptions of the objects and uses of history, which we humbly conceive to be implied in such an opinion; and shall therefore content ourselves with asking, whether any man really imagines that the modern history of any considerable State, with its complicated system of foreign relations, and the play of its domestic parties, *could* be written in the manner of Herodotus? — or be made intelligible (much less instructive) by the naked recital of transactions and occurrences? These, in fact, are but the crude materials from which history should be constructed; the mere alphabet out of which its lessons are afterwards

to be spelled. If every reader had indeed the talents of an accomplished Historian,—that knowledge of human nature, that large acquaintance with all collateral facts, and that force of understanding which are implied in such a name — and, at the same time, that leisure and love for the subject which would be necessary for this particular application of such gifts, the mere detail of facts, if full and impartial, might be sufficient for *his* purposes. But to every other class of readers, we will venture to say, that one half of such a history would be an insoluble enigma; and the other half the source of the most gross misconceptions.

Without some explanation of the views and motives of the prime agents in great transactions — of the origin and state of opposite interests and opinions in large bodies of the people — and of their tendencies respectively to ascendency or decline — what intelligible account could be given, of any thing worth knowing in the history of the world for the last two hundred years? above all, what useful lessons could be learned, for people or for rulers, from a mere series of events presented in detail, without any other information as to their causes or consequences, than might be inferred from the sequence in which they appeared? To us it appears that a mere record of the different places of the stars, and their successive changes of position, would be as good a system of Astronomy, as such a set of annals would be of History; and that it would be about as reasonable to sneer at Newton and La Place for seeking to supersede the honest old star-gazers, by their *philosophical histories* of the heavens, as to speak in the same tone, of what Voltaire and Montesquieu and Mackintosh have attempted to do for our lower world. We have named these three, as having attended more peculiarly, and *more impartially*, than any others, at least in modern times, to this highest part of their duty. But, in truth, all eminent historians have attended to it — from the time of Thucydides downwards;—the ancients putting the necessary explanations more frequently into the shape of imaginary orations — and the moderns into that of remark and dissertation. The very first, perhaps, of Hume's many excellences consists in these *philosophical* summaries of the reasons and considerations by which he supposes parties to have been actuated in great political movements; which are more completely abstracted from the mere story, and very frequently less careful and complete, than the parallel explanations of Sir James Mackintosh. For, with all his unrivalled sagacity, it is true, as Sir James has himself somewhere remarked, that Hume was too little of an antiquary to be always able to estimate the effect of motives in distant ages; and by referring too confidently to the principles of human nature as developed in our own times, has often represented our ancestors as more reasonable, and much more argumentative, than they really were.

That there may be, and have often been, abuses of this best part of history, is a reason only for valuing more highly what is exempt from such abuses; and those who feel most veneration and gratitude for the lights afforded by a truly philosophical historian, will be sure to look with most aversion on a counterfeit. No one, we suppose, will stand up for the introduction of ignorant conjecture, shallow dogmatism, mawkish morality, or factious injustice into the pages of history — or deny that the shortest and simplest annals are greatly preferable to such a perversion. As to political partiality, however, it is a great mistake to suppose that it could be in any degree excluded by confining history to a mere chronicle of facts — the truth being, that it is chiefly in the statement of facts that this partiality displays itself; and that it is more frequently exposed to detection than assisted, by the arguments and explanations which are supposed to be its best resources. We shall not resume what we have said in another place as to the merit of the Histories which are now in question; but we fear not to put this on record, as our deliberate and, we think, impartial judgment — that they are the most candid, the most judicious, and the most pregnant with thought, and moral and political wisdom, of any in which our domestic story has ever yet been recorded.

But even if we should discount his Histories, and his Ethical Dissertation, we should still be of opinion, that Sir James Mackintosh had not died indebted to his country for the use he made of his talents. In the volumes before us, he seems to us to have left them a

rich legacy, and given abundant proofs of the industry with which he sought to the last to qualify himself for their instruction,—and the honourable place which his name must ever hold as the associate and successor of Romilly in the great and humane work of ameliorating our criminal law, might alone suffice to protect him from the imputation of having done less than was required of him, in the course of his unsettled life. But, without dwelling upon the part he took in Parliament, on these and many other important questions both of domestic and foreign policy, we must be permitted to say, that they judge ill of the relative value of men's contributions to the cause of general improvement, who make small account of the influence which one of high reputation for judgment and honesty may exercise, by his mere presence and conversation, in the higher classes of society,—and still more by such occasional publications as he may find leisure to make, in Journals of wide circulation—like this on which the reader is now looking—we trust with his accustomed indulgence.

It is now admitted, that the mature and enlightened opinion of the public must ultimately rule the country; and we really know no other way in which this opinion can be so effectually matured and enlightened. It is not by every man studying elaborate treatises and systems for himself, that the face of the world is changed, with the change of opinion, and the progress of conviction in those who must ultimately lead it. It is by the mastery which strong minds have over weak, in the daily intercourse of society; and by the gradual and almost imperceptible infusion which such minds are constantly effecting, of the practical results and manageable summaries of their preceding studies, into the minds immediately below them, that this great process is carried on. The first discovery of a great truth, or practical principle, may often require much labour; but when once discovered, it is generally easy not only to convince others of its importance, but to enable them to defend and maintain it, by plain and irrefragable arguments; and this conviction, and this practical knowledge, it will generally be most easy to communicate, when men's minds are excited to inquiry, by the pursuit of some immediate interest, to which such general truths may appear to be subservient. It is at such times that important principles are familiarly started in conversation; and disquisitions eagerly pursued, in societies, where, in more tranquil periods, they would be listened to with impatience. It is at such times, too, that the intelligent part of the lower and middling classes look anxiously through such publications as treat intelligibly of the subjects to which their attention is directed; and are thus led, while seeking only for reasons to justify their previous inclinings, to imbibe principles and digest arguments which are impressed on their understandings for ever, and may fructify in the end to far more important conclusions. It is, no doubt, true, that in this way, the full exposition of the truth will often be sacrificed for the sake of its temporary application; and it will not unfrequently happen that, in order to favour that application, the exposition will not be made with absolute fairness. But still the principle is brought into view; the criterion of true judgment is laid before the public; and the disputes of adverse parties will speedily settle the correct or debatable rule of its application.

For our own parts we have long been of opinion, that a man of powerful understanding and popular talents, who should, at such a season, devote himself to the task of announcing such principles, and rendering such discussions familiar, in the way and by the means we have mentioned, would probably do more to direct and accelerate the rectification of public opinion upon all practical questions, than by any other use he could possibly make of his faculties. His name, indeed, might not go down to a remote posterity in connection with any work of celebrity; and the greater part even of his contemporaries might be ignorant of the very existence of their benefactor. But the benefits conferred would not be the less real; nor the consciousness of conferring them less delightful; nor the gratitude of the judicious less ardent and sincere. So far, then, from regretting that Sir James Mackintosh did not forego all other occupations, and devote himself exclusively to the compilation of the two great works he had projected, or from thinking that his country has been deprived of any services it might otherwise have received from him, by the

course which he actually pursued, we firmly believe that, by constantly maintaining humane and generous opinions, in the most engaging manner, and with the greatest possible ability, in the highest and most influencing circles of society,—by acting as the respected adviser of many youths of great promise and ambition, and as the bosom counsellor of many practical statesmen, as well as by the timely publication of many admirable papers, in this and in other Journals, on such branches of politics, history, or philosophy as the course of events had rendered peculiarly interesting or important,—he did far more to enlighten the public mind in his own day, and to ensure its further improvement in the days that are to follow, than could possibly have been effected by the most successful completion of the works he had undertaken.

Such great works acquire for their authors a deserved reputation with the studious few; and are the treasuries and armories from which the actual and future apostles of the truth derive the means of propagating and defending it. But, in order to be so effective, the arms and the treasures must be taken forth from their well-ordered repositories, and disseminated and applied where they are needed and required. It is by the tongue, at last, and not by the pen, that multitudes, or the individuals composing multitudes, are ever really persuaded or converted,—by conversation and not by harangues—or by such short and occasional writings as come in aid of conversation, and require little more study or continued attention than men capable of conversation are generally willing to bestow. If a man, therefore, who is capable of writing such a book, is also eminently qualified to disseminate and render popular its most important doctrines, by conversation and by such lighter publications, is he to be blamed if, when the times are urgent, he intermits the severer study, and applies himself, with caution and candour, to give an earlier popularity to that which can never be useful till it is truly popular? To us it appears, that he fulfils the higher duty; and that to act otherwise would be to act like a general who should starve his troops on the eve of battle, in order to replenish his magazines for a future campaign—or like a farmer who should cut off the rills from his parching crops, that he may have a fuller reservoir against the possible drought of another year.

But we must cut this short. If we are at all right in the views we have now taken, Sir James Mackintosh must have been wrong in the regret and self-reproach with which he certainly seems to have looked back on the unaccomplished projects of his earlier years:—and we humbly think that he was wrong. He had failed, no doubt, to perform all that he had once intended, and had been drawn aside from the task he had set himself, by other pursuits. But he had performed things as important, which were not originally intended; and been drawn aside by pursuits not less worthy than those to which he had tasked himself. In blaming himself—not for this idleness, but for this change of occupation—we think he was misled, in part at least, by one very common error—we mean that of thinking, that, because the use he actually made of his intellect was *more agreeable* than that which he had intended to make, it was therefore less meritorious. We need not say, that there cannot be a worse criterion of merit: but tender consciences are apt to fall into such illusions. Another cause of regret may have been a little, though we really think but a little, more substantial. By the course he followed, he probably felt, that his name would be less illustrious, and his reputation less enduring, than if he had fairly taken his place as the author of some finished work of great interest and importance. If he got over the first illusion, however, and took the view we have done of the real utility of his exertions, we cannot believe that this would have weighed very heavily on a mind like Sir James Mackintosh's; and while we cannot but regret that his declining years should have been occasionally darkened by these shadows of a self-reproach for which we think there was no real foundation, we trust that he is not to be added to the many instances of men who have embittered their existence by a mistaken sense of the obligation of some rash vow made in early life, for the performance of some laborious and perhaps impracticable task.

Cases of this kind we believe to be more common than is generally imagined. An ambitious young man is dazzled with the notion of filling up some blank in the literature of his

country, by the execution of a great and important work—reads with a view to it, and allows himself to be referred to as engaged in its preparation. By degrees he finds it more irksome than he had expected; and is tempted by other studies, altogether as suitable and less charged with responsibility, into long fits of intermission. Then the very expectation that has been excited by this protracted incubation makes him more ashamed of having done so little, and more dissatisfied with the little he has done! And so his life is passed, in a melancholy alternation of distasteful, and of course unsuccessful attempts; and long fits of bitter, but really groundless, self-reproach, for not having made those attempts with more energy and perseverance: and at last he dies,—not only without doing what he could not attempt without pain and mortification, but prevented by this imaginary engagement from doing many other things which he could have done with success and alacrity—some one of which it is probable, and all of which it is nearly certain, would have done him more credit, and been of more service to the world, than any constrained and distressful completion he could in any case have given to the other. For our own parts we have already said, that we do not think that any man, whatever his gifts and attainments may be, is really bound in duty to leave an excellent book to posterity; or is liable to any reproach for not having chosen to be an author. But, at all events, we are quite confident that he can be under no obligation to make himself unhappy in trying to make such a book: and that as soon as he finds the endeavour painful and depressing, he will do well, both for himself and for others, to give up the undertaking, and let his talents and sense of duty take a course more likely to promote both his own enjoyment and their ultimate reputation.

NOTICES OF ERSKINE, PLAYFAIR, AND WATT.

THE following brief notices, of three lamented and honoured Friends, certainly were not contributed to the Edinburgh Review: but as I am not likely ever to appear again as an author, I have been tempted to include them in this publication—chiefly, I fear, from a fond desire to associate my humble name with those of persons so amiable and distinguished: — but partly also, from an opinion—which has been frequently confirmed to me by those most competent to judge—that, imperfect as these sketches are, they give a truer and more graphic view of the manners, dispositions, and personal characters of the eminent individuals concerned, than is yet to be found, or now likely to be furnished, from any other quarter.

(*From the "Edinburgh Courant" Newspaper of the* 16*th of October*, 1817.)

THE HONOURABLE HENRY ERSKINE.

DIED, at his seat of Ammondell, Linlithgowshire, on the 8th instant, in the 71st year of his age, the Honourable Henry Erskine, second son of the late Henry David, Earl of Buchan.

Mr. Erskine was called to the Scottish Bar, of which he was long the brightest ornament, in the year 1768, and was for several years Dean of the Faculty of Advocates: he was twice appointed Lord Advocate, — in 1782 and in 1806, under the Rockingham and the Grenville administrations. During the years 1806 and 1807 he sat in parliament for the Dunbar and Dumfries district of boroughs.

In his long and splendid career at the bar, Mr. Erskine was distinguished not only by the peculiar brilliancy of his wit, and the gracefulness, ease, and vivacity of his eloquence, but by the still rarer power of keeping those seducing qualities in perfect subordination to his judgment. By their assistance he could not only make the most repulsive subject agreeable, but the most abstruse easy and intelligible. In his profession, indeed, all his wit was argument; and each of his delightful illustrations a material step in his reasoning. To himself, indeed, it seemed always as if they were recommended rather for their use than their beauty, and unquestionably they often enabled him to state a fine argument, or a nice distinction, not only in a more striking and pleasing way, but actually with greater precision than could have been attained by the severer forms of reasoning.

In this extraordinary talent, as well as in the charming facility of his eloquence, and the constant radiance of good humour and gaiety which encircled his manner of debate, he had no rival in his own times, and as yet has had no successor. That part of eloquence is now mute — that honour in abeyance.

As a politician, he was eminently distinguished for the two great virtues of inflexible steadiness to his principles, and invariable gentleness and urbanity in his manner of asserting them. Such indeed was the habitual sweetness of his temper, and the fascination of his manners, that, though placed by his rank and talents in the obnoxious station of a Leader of opposition, at a period when political animosities were carried to a lamentable height, no individual, it is believed, was ever known to speak or to think of him with any thing approaching to personal hostility. In return, it may be said, with equal correctness, that, though baffled in some of his pursuits, and not quite handsomely disappointed of some of the honours to which his claim was universally admitted, he never allowed the slightest shade of

discontent to rest upon his mind, nor the least drop of bitterness to mingle with his blood. He was so utterly incapable of rancour, that even the rancorous felt that he ought not to be made its victim.

He possessed, in an eminent degree, that deep sense of revealed religion, and that zealous attachment to the Presbyterian establishment, which had long been hereditary in his family. His habits were always strictly moral and temperate, and in the latter part of his life even abstemious. Though the life and ornament of every society into which he entered, he was always most happy and most delightful at home; where the buoyancy of his spirit and the kindness of his heart found all that they required of exercise or enjoyment; and though without taste for expensive pleasures in his own person, he was ever most indulgent and munificent to his children, and a liberal benefactor to all who depended on his bounty.

He finally retired from the exercise of that profession, the highest honours of which he had at least *deserved*, about the year 1812, and spent the remainder of his days in domestic retirement, at that beautiful villa which had been formed by his own taste, and in the improvement and adornment of which he found his latest occupation. Passing thus at once from all the bustle and excitement of a public life to a scene of comparative inactivity, he never felt one moment of ennui or dejection; but retained unimpaired, till within a day or two of his death, not only all his intellectual activity and social affections, but, when not under the immediate affliction of a painful and incurable disease, all that gaiety of spirit, and all that playful and kindly sympathy with innocent enjoyment, which made him the idol of the young, and the object of cordial attachment and unenvying admiration to his friends of all ages.

NOTICE AND CHARACTER OF PROFESSOR PLAYFAIR.*

Of Mr. Playfair's scientific attainments, — of his proficiency in those studies to which he was peculiarly devoted, we are but slenderly qualified to judge: but, we believe we hazard nothing in saying that he was one of the most learned Mathematicians of his age, and among the first, if not the very first, who introduced the beautiful discoveries of the later continental geometers to the knowledge of his countrymen; and gave their just value and true place, in the scheme of European knowledge, to those important improvements by which the whole aspect of the abstract sciences has been renovated since the days of our illustrious Newton. If he did not signalize himself by any brilliant or original invention, he must, at least, be allowed to have been a most generous and intelligent judge of the achievements of others; as well as the most eloquent expounder of that great and magnificent system of knowledge which has been gradually evolved by the successive labours of so many gifted individuals. He possessed, indeed, in the highest degree, all the characteristics both of a fine and a powerful understanding, — at once penetrating and vigilant, — but more distinguished, perhaps, for the caution and sureness of its march, than for the brilliancy or rapidity of its movements, — and guided and adorned through all its progress, by the most genuine enthusiasm for all that is grand, and the justest taste for all that is beautiful in the Truth or the Intellectual Energy with which he was habitually conversant.

To what account these rare qualities might have been turned, and what more brilliant or lasting fruits they might have produced, if his whole life had been dedicated to the solitary cultivation of science, it is not for us to conjecture; but it cannot be doubted that they added incalculably to his eminence and utility as a teacher; both by enabling him to direct his pupils to the most simple and luminous methods of inquiry, and to imbue their minds, from the very commencement of the study, with that fine relish for the truths it disclosed, and that high sense of the majesty with which they were invested, that predominated in his own bosom. While he left nothing unexplained or unreduced to its proper place in the system, he took care that they should never be perplexed by petty difficulties, or bewildered in useless details; and formed them betimes to those clear, masculine, and direct methods of

* Originally printed in an Edinburgh paper of Aug. 1819. A few introductory sentences are now omitted.

investigation, by which, with the least labour, the greatest advances might be accomplished.

Mr. Playfair, however, was not merely a teacher: and has fortunately left behind him a variety of works; from which other generations may be enabled to judge of some of those qualifications which so powerfully recommended and endeared him to his contemporaries. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that so much of his time, and so large a proportion of his publications, should have been devoted to the subjects of the Indian Astronomy, and the Huttonian Theory of the Earth: and though it is impossible to think too highly of the ingenuity, the vigour, and the eloquence of those publications, we are of opinion that a juster estimate of his talent, and a truer picture of his genius and understanding, is to be found in his other writings; — in the papers, both biographical and scientific, with which he has enriched the Transactions of our Royal Society; his account of Laplace, and other articles which he contributed to the Edinburgh Review, — the Outlines of his Lectures on Natural Philosophy, — and, above all, his Introductory Discourse to the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, with the final correction of which he was occupied up to the last moments that the progress of his disease allowed him to dedicate to any intellectual exertion.

With reference to these works, we do not think we are influenced by any national, or other partiality, when we say that he was certainly one of the best writers of his age; and even that we do not now recollect any one of his contemporaries who was so great a master of composition. There is a certain mellowness and richness about his style, which adorns, without disguising the weight and nervousness which is its other great characteristic, — a sedate gracefulness and manly simplicity in the more level passages, — and a mild majesty and considerate enthusiasm where he rises above them, of which we scarcely know where to find any other example. There is great equability, too, and sustained force in every part of his writings. He never exhausts himself in flashes and epigrams, nor languishes into tameness or insipidity; at first sight you would say that plainness and good sense were the predominating qualities; but by and bye, this simplicity is enriched with the delicate and vivid colours of a fine imagination, — the free and forcible touches of a most powerful intellect, — and the lights and shades of an unerring and harmonizing taste. In comparing it with the styles of his most celebrated contemporaries, we would say that it was more purely and peculiarly a *written* style, — and, therefore, rejected those ornaments that more properly belong to oratory. It had no impetuosity, hurry, or vehemence, — no bursts or sudden turns or abruptions, like that of Burke; and though eminently smooth and melodious, it was not modulated to an uniform system of solemn declamation, like that of Johnson, nor spread out in the richer and more voluminous elocution of Stewart; nor, still less, broken into that patchwork of scholastic pedantry and conversational smartness which has found its admirers in Gibbon. It is a style, in short, of great freedom, force, and beauty; but the deliberate style of a man of thought and of learning; and neither that of a wit throwing out his extempores with an affectation of careless grace, — nor of a rhetorician thinking more of his manner than his matter, and determined to be admired for his expression, whatever may be the fate of his sentiments.

His habits of composition were not perhaps exactly what might have been expected from their results. He wrote rather slowly, — and his first sketches were often very slight and imperfect, — like the rude chalking for a masterly picture. His chief effort and greatest pleasure was in their revisal and correction; and there were no limits to the improvement which resulted from this application. It was not the style merely, nor indeed chiefly, that gained by it: the whole reasoning, and sentiment, and illustration, were enlarged and new modelled in the course of it; and a naked outline became gradually informed with life, colour, and expression. It was not at all like the common finishing and polishing to which careful authors generally subject the first draughts of their compositions, — nor even like the fastidious and tentative alterations with which some more anxious writers assay their choicer passages. It was, in fact, the great filling in of the picture, — the working up of the figured *weft*, on the naked and meagre *woof* that had been stretched to receive it; and the singular thing in his case was,

not only that he left this most material part of his work to be performed after the whole outline had been finished, but that he could proceed with it to an indefinite extent, and enrich and improve as long as he thought fit, without any risk either of destroying the proportions of that outline, or injuring the harmony and unity of the original design. He was perfectly aware, too, of the possession of this extraordinary power; and it was partly, we presume, in consequence of it that he was not only at all times ready to go on with any work in which he was engaged, without waiting for favourable moments or hours of greater alacrity, but that he never felt any of those doubts and misgivings as to his being able to get creditably through with his undertaking, to which we believe most authors are occasionally liable. As he never wrote upon any subject of which he was not perfectly master, he was secure against all blunders in the substance of what he had to say; and felt quite assured, that if he was only allowed time enough, he should finally come to say it in the very best way of which he was capable. He had no anxiety, therefore, either in undertaking or proceeding with his tasks; and intermitted and resumed them at his convenience, with the comfortable certainty, that all the time he bestowed on them was turned to account, and that what was left imperfect at one sitting might be finished with equal ease and advantage at another. Being thus perfectly sure both of his end and his means, he experienced, in the course of his compositions, none of that little fever of the spirits with which that operation is so apt to be accompanied. He had no capricious visitings of fancy, which it was necessary to fix on the spot or to lose for ever, — no casual inspirations to invoke and to wait for, — no transitory and evanescent lights to catch before they faded. All that was in his mind was subject to his control, and amenable to his call, though it might not obey at the moment; and while his taste was so sure, that he was in no danger of over-working any thing that he had designed, all his thoughts and sentiments had that unity and congruity, that they fell almost spontaneously into harmony and order; and the last added, incorporated, and assimilated with the first, as if they had sprung simultaneously from the same happy conception.

But we need dwell no longer on qualities that may be gathered hereafter from the works he has left behind him. They who lived with him mourn the most for those which will be traced in no such memorial! and prize far above those talents which gained him his high name in philosophy, that Personal Character which endeared him to his friends, and shed a grace and a dignity over all the society in which he moved. The same admirable taste which is conspicuous in his writings, or rather the higher principles from which that taste was but an emanation, spread a similar charm over his whole life and conversation; and gave to the most learned Philosopher of his day the manners and deportment of the most perfect Gentleman. Nor was this in him the result merely of good sense and good temper, assisted by an early familiarity with good company, and a consequent knowledge of his own place and that of all around him. His good breeding was of a higher descent; and his powers of pleasing rested on something better than mere companionable qualities. With the greatest kindness and generosity of nature, he united the most manly firmness, and the highest principles of honour, — and the most cheerful and social dispositions, with the gentlest and steadiest affections.

Towards Women he had always the most chivalrous feelings of regard and attention, and was, beyond almost all men, acceptable and agreeable in their society, — though without the least levity or pretension unbecoming his age or condition: and such, indeed, was the fascination of the perfect simplicity and mildness of his manners, that the same tone and deportment seemed equally appropriate in all societies, and enabled him to delight the young and the gay with the same sort of conversation which instructed the learned and the grave. There never, indeed, was a man of learning and talent who appeared in society so perfectly free from all sorts of pretension or notion of his own importance, or so little solicitous to distinguish himself, or so sincerely willing to give place to every one else. Even upon subjects which he had thoroughly studied, he was never in the least impatient to speak, and spoke at all times without any tone of authority; while, so far from wishing to set off what he had to say by any brilliancy or

emphasis of expression, it seemed generally as if he had studied to disguise the weight and originality of his thoughts under the plainest forms of speech and the most quiet and indifferent manner: so that the profoundest remarks and subtlest observations were often dropped, not only without any solicitude that their value should be observed, but without any apparent consciousness that they possessed any.

Though the most social of human beings, and the most disposed to encourage and sympathize with the gaiety and even joviality of others, his own spirits were in general rather cheerful than gay, or at least never rose to any turbulence or tumult of merriment; and while he would listen with the kindest indulgence to the more extravagant sallies of his younger friends, and prompt them by the heartiest approbation, his own satisfaction might generally be traced in a slow and temperate smile, gradually mantling over his benevolent and intelligent features, and lighting up the countenance of the Sage with the expression of the mildest and most genuine philanthropy. It was wonderful, indeed, considering the measure of his own intellect, and the rigid and undeviating propriety of his own conduct, how tolerant he was of the defects and errors of other men. He was too indulgent, in truth, and favourable to his friends!—and made a kind and liberal allowance for the faults of all mankind—except only faults of Baseness or of Cruelty,—against which he never failed to manifest the most open scorn and detestation. Independent, in short, of his high attainments, Mr. Playfair was one of the most amiable and estimable of men: delightful in his manners, inflexible in his principles, and generous in his affections, he had all that could charm in society or attach in private; and while his friends enjoyed the free and unstudied conversation of an easy and intelligent associate, they had at all times the proud and inward assurance that he was a being upon whose perfect honour and generosity they might rely with the most implicit confidence, in life and in death,—and of whom it was equally impossible, that under any circumstances, he should ever perform a mean, a selfish, or a *questionable* action, as that his body should cease to gravitate or his soul to live!

If we do not greatly deceive ourselves, there is nothing here of exaggeration or partial feeling,—and nothing with which an indifferent and honest chronicler would not heartily concur. Nor is it altogether idle to have dwelt so long on the personal character of this distinguished individual: for we are ourselves persuaded, that this personal character has done almost as much for the cause of science and philosophy among us, as the great talents and attainments with which it was combined,—and has contributed in a very eminent degree to give to the better society of this our city that tone of intelligence and liberality by which it is so honourably distinguished. It is not a little advantageous to philosophy that it is in fashion—and it is still more advantageous, perhaps, to the society which is led to confer on it this apparently trivial distinction. It is a great thing for the country at large,—for its happiness, its prosperity, and its renown,—that the upper and influencing classes of its population should be made familiar, even in their untasked and social hours, with sound and liberal information, and be taught to know and respect those who have distinguished themselves for great intellectual attainments. Nor is it, after all, a slight or despicable reward for a man of genius, to be received with honour in the highest and most elegant society around him, and to receive in his living person that homage and applause which is too often reserved for his memory. Now, those desirable ends can never be effectually accomplished, unless the manners of our leading philosophers are agreeable, and their personal habits and dispositions engaging and amiable. From the time of Hume and Robertson, we have been fortunate, in Edinburgh, in possessing a succession of distinguished men, who have kept up this salutary connexion between the learned and the fashionable world; but there never, perhaps, was any one who contributed so powerfully to confirm and extend it, and that in times when it was peculiarly difficult, as the lamented individual of whom we are now speaking: and they who have had most opportunity to observe how superior the society of Edinburgh is to that of most other places of the same size, and how much of that superiority is owing to the cordial combination of the two aristocracies, of rank and of let-

ters*, — of both of which it happens to be the chief provincial seat,—will be best able to judge of the importance of the service he has thus rendered to its inhabitants, and through them, and by their example, to all the rest of the country.

NOTICE AND CHARACTER OF JAMES WATT.†

Mr. James Watt, the great improver of the steam-engine, died on the 25th of August, 1819, at his seat of Heathfield, near Birmingham, in the 84th year of his age.

This name fortunately needs no commemoration of ours; for he that bore it survived to see it crowned with undisputed and unenvied honours; and many generations will probably pass away, before it shall have gathered "all its fame." We have said that Mr. Watt was the great *Improver* of the steam-engine; but, in truth, as to all that is admirable in its structure, or vast in its utility, he should rather be described as its *Inventor*. It was by his inventions that its action was so regulated, as to make it capable of being applied to the finest and most delicate manufactures, and its power so increased, as to set weight and solidity at defiance. By his admirable contrivance, it has become a thing stupendous alike for its force and its flexibility, — for the prodigious power which it can exert, and the ease, and precision, and ductility, with which that power can be varied, distributed, and applied. The trunk of an elephant, that can pick up a pin or rend an oak, is as nothing to it. It can engrave a seal, and crush masses of obdurate metal before it — draw out, without breaking, a thread as fine as gossamer, and lift a ship of war like a bauble in the air. It can embroider muslin and forge anchors,— cut steel into ribands, and impel loaded vessels against the fury of the winds and waves.

It would be difficult to estimate the value of the benefits which these inventions have conferred upon this country. There is no branch of industry that has not been indebted to them; and, in all the most material, they have not only widened most magnificently the field of its exertions, but multiplied a thousand-fold the amount of its productions. It was our improved Steam-engine, in short, that fought the battles of Europe, and exalted and sustained, through the late tremendous contest, the political greatness of our land. It is the same great power which now enables us to pay the interest of our debt, and to maintain the arduous struggle in which we are still engaged [1819] with the skill and capital of countries less oppressed with taxation. But these are poor and narrow views of its importance. It has increased indefinitely the mass of human comforts and enjoyments; and rendered cheap and accessible, all over the world, the materials of wealth and prosperity. It has armed the feeble hand of man, in short, with a power to which no limits can be assigned; completed the dominion of mind over the most refractory qualities of matter; and laid a sure foundation for all those future miracles of mechanic power which are to aid and reward the labours of after generations. It is to the genius of one man, too, that all this is mainly owing! And certainly no man ever bestowed such a gift on his kind. The blessing is not only universal, but unbounded; and the fabled inventors of the plough and the loom, who were deified by the erring gratitude of their rude contemporaries, conferred less important benefits on mankind than the inventor of our present steam-engine.

This will be the fame of Watt with future generations: and it is sufficient for his race and his country. But to those to whom he

---

* In addition to the two distinguished persons mentioned in the text (the first of whom was, no doubt, before my time), I can, from my own recollection, and without referring to any who are still living — give the names of the following residents in Edinburgh, who were equally acceptable in polite society and eminent for literary or scientific attainments, and alike at home in good company and in learned convocations: — Lord Hailes and Lord Monboddo, Dr. Joseph Black, Dr. Hugh Blair, Dr. Adam Fergusson, Mr. John Home, Mr. John Robison, Mr. Dugald Stewart, Sir James Hall, Lord Meadowbank, Mr. Henry Mackenzie, Dr. James Gregory, Rev. A. Alison, Dr. Thomas Brown, Lord Webb Seymour, Lord Woodhouselee, and Sir Walter Scott; — without reckoning Mr. Horner, the Rev. Sydney Smith, and Mr. George Wilson, who were settled in Edinburgh for several years, in the earlier part of the period referred to.

† First published in an Edinburgh newspaper ("The Scotsman") of the 4th September, 1819.

more immediately belonged, who lived in his society and enjoyed his conversation, it is not, perhaps, the character in which he will be most frequently recalled — most deeply lamented — or even most highly admired. Independently of his great attainments in mechanics, Mr. Watt was an extraordinary, and in many respects a wonderful man. Perhaps no individual in his age possessed so much and such varied and exact information, — had read so much, or remembered what he had read so accurately and well. He had infinite quickness of apprehension, a prodigious memory, and a certain rectifying and methodising power of understanding, which extracted something precious out of all that was presented to it. His stores of miscellaneous knowledge were immense,—and yet less astonishing than the command he had at all times over them. It seemed as if every subject that was casually started in conversation with him, had been that which he had been last occupied in studying and exhausting; — such was the copiousness, the precision, and the admirable clearness of the information which he poured out upon it, without effort or hesitation. Nor was this promptitude and compass of knowledge confined in any degree to the studies connected with his ordinary pursuits. That he should have been minutely and extensively skilled in chemistry and the arts, and in most of the branches of physical science, might perhaps have been conjectured: but it could not have been inferred from his usual occupations, and probably is not generally known, that he was curiously learned in many branches of antiquity, metaphysics, medicine, and etymology, and perfectly at home in all the details of architecture, music, and law. He was well acquainted, too, with most of the modern languages — and familiar with their most recent literature. Nor was it at all extraordinary to hear the great mechanician and engineer detailing and expounding, for hours together, the metaphysical theories of the German logicians, or criticising the measures or the matter of the German poetry.

His astonishing memory was aided, no doubt, in a great measure, by a still higher and rarer faculty—by his power of digesting and arranging in its proper place all the information he received, and of casting aside and rejecting, as it were instinctively, whatever was worthless or immaterial. Every conception that was suggested to his mind seemed instantly to take its proper place among its other rich furniture; and to be condensed into the smallest and most convenient form. He never appeared, therefore, to be at all encumbered or perplexed with the *verbiage* of the dull books he perused, or the idle talk to which he listened; but to have at once extracted, by a kind of intellectual alchemy, all that was worthy of attention, and to have reduced it, for his own use, to its true value and to its simplest form. And thus it often happened, that a great deal more was learned from his brief and vigorous account of the theories and arguments of tedious writers, than an ordinary student could ever have derived from the most painful study of the originals,—and that errors and absurdities became manifest from the mere clearness and plainness of his statement of them, which might have deluded and perplexed most of his hearers without that invaluable assistance.

It is needless to say, that, with those vast resources, his conversation was at all times rich and instructive in no ordinary degree: but it was, if possible, still more pleasing than wise, and had all the charms of familiarity, with all the substantial treasures of knowledge. No man could be more social in his spirit, less assuming or fastidious in his manners, or more kind and indulgent towards all who approached him. He rather liked to talk — at least in his latter years: but though he took a considerable share of the conversation, he rarely suggested the topics on which it was to turn, but readily and quietly took up whatever was presented by those around him; and astonished the idle and barren propounders of an ordinary theme, by the treasures which he drew from the mine they had unconsciously opened. He generally seemed, indeed, to have no choice or predilection for one subject of discourse rather than another; but allowed his mind, like a great cyclopædia, to be opened at any letter his associates might choose to turn up, and only endeavoured to select, from his inexhaustible stores, what might be best adapted to the taste of his present hearers. As to their capacity he gave himself no trouble; and, indeed, such was his singular talent for making all things plain, clear, and intelligible,

that scarcely any one could be aware of such a deficiency in his presence. His talk, too, though overflowing with information, had no resemblance to lecturing or solemn discoursing, but, on the contrary, was full of colloquial spirit and pleasantry. He had a certain quiet and grave humour, which ran through most of his conversation, and a vein of temperate jocularity, which gave infinite zest and effect to the condensed and inexhaustible information, which formed its main staple and characteristic. There was a little air of affected testiness, too, and a tone of pretended rebuke and contradiction, with which he used to address his younger friends, that was always felt by them as an endearing mark of his kindness and familiarity, — and prized accordingly, far beyond all the solemn compliments that ever proceeded from the lips of authority. His voice was deep and powerful, — though he commonly spoke in a low and somewhat monotonous tone, which harmonized admirably with the weight and brevity of his observations; and set off to the greatest advantage the pleasant anecdotes, which he delivered with the same grave brow, and the same calm smile playing soberly on his lips. There was nothing of effort indeed, or impatience, any more than of pride or levity, in his demeanour; and there was a finer expression of reposing strength, and mild self-possession in his manner, than we ever recollect to have met with in any other person. He had in his character the utmost abhorrence for all sorts of forwardness, parade, and pretensions; and, indeed, never failed to put all such impostures out of countenance, by the manly plainness and honest intrepidity of his language and deportment.

In his temper and dispositions he was not only kind and affectionate, but generous, and considerate of the feelings of all around him; and gave the most liberal assistance and encouragement to all young persons who showed any indications of talent, or applied to him for patronage or advice. His health, which was delicate from his youth upwards, seemed to become firmer as he advanced in years; and he preserved, up almost to the last moment of his existence, not only the full command of his extraordinary intellect, but all the alacrity of spirit, and the social gaiety which had illumined his happiest days. His friends in this part of the country never saw him more full of intellectual vigour and colloquial animation, — never more delightful or more instructive, — than in his last visit to Scotland in autumn 1817. Indeed, it was after that time that he applied himself, with all the ardour of early life, to the invention of a machine for mechanically copying all sorts of sculpture and statuary; — and distributed among his friends some of its earliest performances, as the productions of "a young artist, just entering on his eighty-third year!"

This happy and useful life came, at last, to a gentle close. He had suffered some inconvenience through the summer; but was not seriously indisposed till within a few weeks from his death. He then became perfectly aware of the event which was approaching; and with his usual tranquillity and benevolence of nature, seemed only anxious to point out to the friends around him, the many sources of consolation which were afforded by the circumstances under which it was about to take place. He expressed his sincere gratitude to Providence for the length of days, with which he had been blessed, and his exemption from most of the infirmities of age; as well as for the calm and cheerful evening of life that he had been permitted to enjoy, after the honourable labours of the day had been concluded. And thus, full of years and honours, in all calmness and tranquillity, he yielded up his soul, without pang or struggle, — and passed from the bosom of his family to that of his God.

INDEX.

A.

C.

D.

H.

I.

N.

O.

Q.

R.

S.

T.

U

V.

W.

X.

Y.

Z.

THE END.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODE and SHAW
New-street-square.